

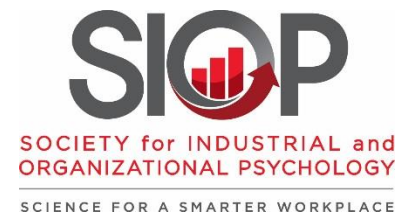
New Talent Strategy: Attract, Process, Educate, Empower, Engage and Retain the Best

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ABSTRACT

In reaction to the dramatic changes the millennial culture is bringing to the workplace and the coincidence of dramatic business disruptions that are driving the need for more innovative employees, human resource departments are changing their existing approaches to talent acquisition and retention based on the new strategic realities. These new realities were revealed by researchers contracted by PricewaterhouseCoopers, LLP to identify the reasons their younger (under the age of 30) employees globally were resigning from high-paying professional positions before completing two years of employment. These positions in the past were held by the same employees for 40-plus years. In addition, the recent competition for the best talent worldwide has favored the new global technology companies. These "Google-like" organizations treat their employees as important as their customers. Their new talent strategies are attracting and retaining the best innovators. This white paper will introduce several new approaches firms may employ to compete for the best talent in a changing world of work. The recommendation is that human resource practitioners begin training for their many new career opportunities.

"Nothing is more important than the quality of hiring."

Eric Schmidt, Chairman of Google
(Schmidt & Rosenberg, 2014)

According to *the 2014 Annual Global CEO Survey*, companies are preparing to implement new talent strategies for their firms (PwC, 2014). In sharp contrast to their existing talent strategies, the new ones focus on hiring and retaining employees whose new product and service innovations will sustain their firms. Questions these data raise are: (1) What new developments in business strategy are fueling this change? (2) What developments in talent strategy realities are influencers? and (3) What are the implications for human resource professionals?

Taking a global perspective for understanding new developments in business strategy, we can refer to the work of the UK Department of Business Innovation and publications of that department's Design Council that point to "governments across the

globe who are investing heavily in sponsoring and promoting design¹ as a key route to stimulating innovation, jobs and exports and as a means to systematically address challenges. China's Premier Minister, Wen Jiabao stated a desire to move from 'Made in China' to 'Designed in China.' Over recent years China has driven national and regional design policy, with investment in education and national promotions. Other Asian governments are vigorously committed to the promotion of design, notably those in Singapore, Korea and Malaysia" (Temple, 2010, p. 1).

The discipline of design has been positioned between the sciences and the humanities (Banathy, 1996), where the domain of science represents the knowing of the natural world and the humanities represent the knowing of the human experience. Design represents the knowing of the manmade world. Design capabilities draw from multiple disciplines, perhaps most heavily from psychology. Emergent design practice is founded on industrial psychology, industrial design and human factors, or what has been standardized by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) (2010) as "Human-Centered Design." In the U.S., the "d-school" at Stanford in its partnership with the industrial design firm, IDEO, have popularized the term "design thinking" (Kelley and Kelley, 2013) as a "how-to-guide" for innovation and created a highly teachable set of methods and tools for doing end-to-end design work. Pertinent to our discussion here, these methods and tools can be adopted for any design context, including talent management, and we recommend that you explore this knowledge

¹ "The ability to imagine that which does not yet exist, to make it appear in concrete form as a new, purposeful addition to the real world" (Nelson & Stolterman, 2004).

base to inform your talent management strategy within your unique business environment.

Because of the ubiquity of the Internet, a wide variety of new markets have emerged and companies with the best talent have become the new “Wall Street stars.” The good news is human resource departments within the new “star companies,” organizations that recruited and retained the best innovators, have exploded in influence and status. New organizational structures are being designed to facilitate and institutionalize innovative behavior across entire employee populations in order to maximize business value yield. Clearly, a new world of opportunities has appeared for professionals in what Google-like companies call “people operations” departments. This new organizational structure is charged with concentrating on attracting, processing (placing), educating (in design), empowering (sharing team leadership), engaging (making a difference) and retaining the best innovators, many of whom are Millennials. This structure is driving not just a relabeling but a profound restructuring of the job of HR professionals. It follows that professional members of SHRM need to be prepared for more powerful talent-centric approaches as a part of emergent business strategies and to become very familiar with the attributes of workplace culture that appeal to those professionals (many of whom are Millennials) who can strengthen the innovative core of businesses.

The purposes of this paper are to present a brief overview of the problem of talent acquisition and retention, especially of the Millennial workforce, to discuss research related to the challenges faced and to provide practical tips for implementing

change. Highlights of the paper include the results of benchmark studies conducted at PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) and Google that set the bar for talent acquisition, retention and promising approaches for HR research and practice. The paper concludes that human resource practitioners must develop new talent acquisition and retention strategies that match the workplace culture talented employees are demanding.

What Is Known

Recent big data studies (“big data” being a collection of large and complex data sets) in the human resources domain show that the individuals under the age of 30 (Millennials) are rejecting the prevailing definitions of “professional careers,” “work” and “peer-like collaborative communities.” In what PwC claims is “the largest global generational study ever conducted”, PwC turned to researchers at the University of Southern California and the London Business School to identify the critical expectations and preferences of the their employees with regard to continued employment (PwC, 2013a). Resulting from this research, PwC is proactively redesigning its talent strategy to match the identified Millennials’ reality. In addition, PwC’s 16th *Annual Global CEO Survey* showed that 77 percent of CEOs were redesigning their talent strategies for the next year (PwC, 2013b). The above two-year global investigation of PwC employees should help clarify the argument regarding the significance of generational differences for talent strategies. Millennials are being hired into critical organizational roles more every day, but they are resigning at a much more alarming rate compared with previous generations. This could be due, in part, to talent strategies that were designed for Baby Boomers, who had different priorities and

different expectations of an employer. This recent phenomena of the revolving door for new (especially Millennial) hires is occurring across industries in disturbing numbers, and the majority of those employees are leaving before two years on the job. This disconnect between expectations of young workers and traditional business work cultures is threatening the availability of talent and will affect the survival of corporations that do not adapt to the new reality.

What PricewaterhouseCoopers found

The PwC study involved 18 global territories, 44,000 web-based surveys, 1,000 Millennials and 45 managers in online “jam” sessions, 300 interviews and 30 focus groups (PwC, 2013a). This massive effort was in response to the observation that under-30 hires were showing a lack of interest in traditional professional services career paths and were resigning before they reached their second year of employment. PwC employs 180,529 people in 158 countries, and its study has global implications. By 2016, almost 80 percent of the PwC workforce will be Millennials. An intergeneration analysis of 9,120 Millennials and 4,030 Baby Boomer senior associates and managers was conducted at the entry years in 2011 and 2012. This study found:

1. More Millennials reject the traditional work/life balance accepted by Baby Boomers.
2. Both cohorts seek greater flexibility at work.
3. Millennials seek more collaborative team-oriented work settings.
4. Both cohorts are equally committed to their work.
5. Millennials from the U.S./Canada and Western Europe were similar.

6. Millennials place greater importance on mutual trust, respect, support and positive feedback.

The new talent strategy components recommended are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. The PwC Study Recommendations

1. A flexible work culture based on unique talent and engagement
2. Access to the best tools for collaboration and operation
3. Transparent performance and reward decisions
4. Building workplace culture maintained by unit (team) managers
5. Greater opportunities as expats
6. Improving the impact of Millennials as contingency workers
7. Connecting and staying connected with all employees
8. On size does not fit all

What is Google doing?

Lazlo Bock (2011), senior vice president of Google's "People Operations Program" (POP), operates his organization as a component of the top strategy team of the Google Company. Talent acquisition and retention at Google are considered strategic and mission-critical; the organizational culture that enhances the Google brand is based on design principles increasingly being recognized as enablers of employee innovation (Kelley & Kelley, 2013). The new collaborative design environment that seems to work well with Google's strategic trajectory was described by Steiber (2011):

1. **An innovative and flexible culture and management system** that replaces rules with guidelines, and commands with peer-oriented negotiating among associates across pay levels.

2. **A company strategy that values employees and customers equally** and demonstrates this belief by selecting the best and treating those employees as main contributors by providing proper career opportunities and rewards, and trusting them with inside information.
3. **Encouraging and training managers at all levels to work with individuals in appropriate ways** by tailoring mentoring and coaching activities and clearing away impediments.
4. **Balancing the emphasis on innovation and operational excellence** by fostering the development of subcultures that are equally valued.
5. **Extending strategic networks** for externally developed technical innovations, forming cooperative alliances with leading universities/researchers, and investing in new technologies and ventures.
6. **Designing collaborative communities** of professional peers learning from each other.
7. **Overall emphasis on having fun** while serving the greater good.

The concept of a collaborative design culture and its increasing importance to global business may be unfamiliar to you; however, the popularity of design as an innovation method (Grace & Graen, 2014) is driving change in organizations and therefore deserves the attention of SHRM members. Organizations across the globe are shifting their focus from their output (products and the metrics associated with a product-focused culture) to the front end of their value streams, where customer knowledge increases in importance. In the new reality, innovation methods are

increasingly top-of-the-mind of executives like Bock. Human resource executives are increasingly focused on technology enablers such as advanced analytics (the discovery and communication of meaningful patterns in research data to enable critical decision-making), and, as a result, significant challenges exist for HR professionals in getting up-to-speed with these new tools and with regards to acquiring and retaining the talent needed for this dynamic new work space.

Clearly, the talent strategies suggested by PwC and Google require a multilevel approach with collaborative organizational design at the strategic and operational levels. Teams of professional managers and designers are needed to collaborate to identify what works, what to build and what to live with. The advent of big data analytical techniques has made it possible to consolidate data pools across various data streams not previously accessible to many organizations. This disruptive technology now allows employees to create new intelligence for decision-making, so what is assumed to be fact in one company can be benchmarked against others with similar business models or industry reference. In fact, many of the most critical questions that companies are beginning to ask about their talent strategies can't be fully answered without external perspectives. External talent data benchmarking lends context to internal talent data and provides insight into how talent strategies

HR Design for a Good Manager

Continuous education concerning:

- ❖ Clear vision and strategy
- ❖ Good coaching and communications
- ❖ One-on-one discussions about expectations
- ❖ Action for employee's well-being
- ❖ Assessment by employees

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must evolve to support an organization's strategic agenda. Increasingly, HR professionals will need to understand how to query talent analytics tools and use the available human capital data to predict the next generation of people strategies.

In the next section, we summarize alternative talent management approaches and discuss their applicability to the challenge of attracting and retaining Millennials and mid-career professionals who are looking to refresh their skills and potentially transition their careers to adjacent or different opportunities. Throughout, we make recommendations for action you can take to enhance retention of talented individuals in your organization.

Alternative Approaches

Unfolding approach

Talent strategies have two basic functions: (1) to attract, process, educate, empower, engage and retain valued employees, and (2) to enable optimal team performance. Today's reality (as revealed by the PwC study) is that Millennial employees are saying "I quit" to their first career jobs within the first two years of employment. This voluntary turnover may be healthy or unhealthy, and if unhealthy, avoidable or unavoidable. In the case of Millennials, the disconnect appears to be unhealthy for the companies, and the question of avoidability is yet to be determined. What is clearly established by turnover research is that one size does not fit all (Allen, 2010).

Turnover research was advanced significantly by the development of the "unfolding model" (Allen, 2010). Unfolding assumes four different paths to quitting a

job: (1) dissatisfaction, (2) better alternatives, (3) following a plan, and (4) having no plan. It is a comprehensive approach that offers ways to detect which paths are pertinent for your unique workplace situation and recommends retention strategies. In the case of the two studies cited in this paper, Millennial employees are placed on path four (quitting their selected career jobs before their second year and having no plan). Research suggests that because Millennials understand their role within their workplace clearly, yet they are finding a disconnect between their experience and their personal vision for their career, they do not see their position as a path to a future they seek.

Unfolding theory suggests ways HR professionals can redesign retention strategies to address this disconnect and enable young employees to see an attractive path in their future with their current employers. For example, human resource professionals should begin to assess the particular career paths available in their company for these target groups and communicate these paths in a systemic manner.



New innovation team approach

Today most organizations have some form of assigning groups of people to work together toward common goals (Hills, 2007; Kozlowski & Bell, 2003; Lawler,

Mohrman & Ledford, 1995; Morgenson, DeRue & Karam, 2010). Unfortunately, most teams fail to achieve their full potential due to the incomplete use of leadership sharing (Graen, 2013; Hogan & Ahmad, 2010). In contrast, innovation teams are expected to encourage the individual expression of both intellect and personality in a Millennial-friendly culture of collaborating peers on a common mission (Graen & Schiemann, 2013). In a sense, the innovation team culture is designed to become a safe haven to try new ideas and have fun in the process of experiential learning and helping the team succeed. Teams may achieve their full potential by engaging each other in "leadership sharing." Leadership sharing involves building partnerships of respect and trust with other team members who agree to exchange acts of leadership. Leadership sharing actions have been cataloged for ready reference (Morgenson, DeRue & Karam, 2010). As the example in Table 2 shows, the authors list actions expected to move the team forward.

HR analytics are becoming more mainstream. Companies are using models to identify the optimal employee profile for recruiting and hiring and can identify attrition risks for proactive employee engagement, training and retention activities. Two of these are IBM's Smarter Workforce and Google's Big Query.

Table 2. Examples of Leadership Sharing in Teams

• Alert team to flaws in team procedures or output
• Explain team's actions to concerned stakeholders
• Suggest new ways of doing things
• "Pitch in" and help team members
• Participate in problem solving with the team
• Help team acquire needed resources
• Encourage team to take care of its own problems
• Go beyond own interests for the team

The sharing of leadership can be infectious in teams and enables them to reach their full potential. However, a transformation of teams into cultures attractive to Millennials may not happen without the proper intervention of HR professionals (Kaiser, Hogan & Craig, 2008). First, people joining a team need to become team players who are likely to respect the competence and trust the ideas of each other. Competence alone is not adequate for admission. Second, teams need to be trained together in leadership sharing methods and goals. Teams may be taught by an HR instructor with a respected executive to clarify and validate the company's expectations of leadership sharing. Training includes simulations that demonstrate how partnerships may move the team forward. Third, teams need to be coached during their missions to fine-tune their operations and sustain team focus. Finally, teams need to be recognized formally for their accomplishments in both procedures and performance. Several teams may be coordinated by a person trained in supporting innovation teams.

These interventions need to be monitored by their coach for effectiveness at the proper times. Periodic interviews with team members individually may be useful to successively approximate full potential. For example, to assess partnership quality, one set of progress questions asks all team members about six characteristics of each of their potential partners (Graen & Schiemann, 2013). This "LMX Team"² measure asks pairs of teammates about:

1. Having confidence in one another's ideas.
2. Helping one another cooperatively toward common goals.
3. Having respect for one another's capabilities.
4. Having trust in one another's dependability.
5. Having an excellent working relationship.
6. Having confidence in one another's work.

The higher the agreement with these six characteristics of partnership, the more leadership sharing can be expected. Teams with higher proportions of pairs sharing leadership are the goal of training. Big data research finds that those fortunate enough to share leadership most completely achieve the most opportunities to tailor their personal contributions and rewards (Dulebohn, Bommer, Liden, Brouer & Ferris, 2012; Gerstner & Day, 1997; Ilies, Nahgong & Morgeson, 2007; Rockstuhl, Dulebohn, Ang & Shore, 2012). Fortunately, these opportunities seem to be those most valued by the under-30 professionals. This use of innovation teams may be a first step in modifying the culture of the entire organization to value employees as highly as customers.

² LMX-Team is a diagnostic device validated to identify problem areas in the development of team partners.

In summary, the building of a comprehensive set of innovation teams with complete sharing of leadership may be useful in transforming companies using unfolding tools to become more likely to hire and retain the best. Finally, a more long-term program of successive, more inclusive innovation teams may be tailored for career growth and continued retention of the best talent. We foresee new career opportunities for HR practitioners in this transformation.

An integrated approach: Collaborative design

The development of the innovation team approach lays the foundations for the next level of collaborative design (Grace & Graen, 2014), which is focused on creating a workplace culture that deeply engages employees in the most challenging problems faced by business today—how to differentiate their company in the marketplace. “The discipline of design, which instructs on the purposeful creation of things, and the mind-set of design thinking, both a paradigm and a rich set of methods and tools, have proven to be competitive differentiators. Over the last several decades, design has moved up the business value chain from enhancing the aesthetic appeal and style of products, to taking center stage in new-product development, and within the last decade, to proving its worth to corporate innovation initiatives” (Grace, 2014, pp. 3-4).

Today, we know that the design of the new team-based organizations must begin with primary intentions to build a flexible organization that is able to adapt and innovate more quickly in the rapidly changing market conditions. Tailoring jobs and habitats for the new innovators as they advance through an organization is a function of this new strategy. Executives too often can’t foresee what is over the horizon, and so

they stay the course until it is too late to change. This may be fatal for their company. But a human resource-inspired organizational culture of collaborative designing and workforce planning can shift the strategy from quickly patching up the old design to building a new one for the future. A collaborative design focus can create an innovative and flexible management system that can then be tuned to balancing innovation and operational excellence. The whole system is thus continuously seeded through a commitment to searching for opportunities everywhere while leveraging alliances with universities, consultants, peer companies, customers and suppliers, and investing in new technology and ventures (adapted from Steiber, 2011). The basic principles of collaborative design for career attraction, processing, education, empowerment, engagement and retention according to recent research can be seen in Table 3.

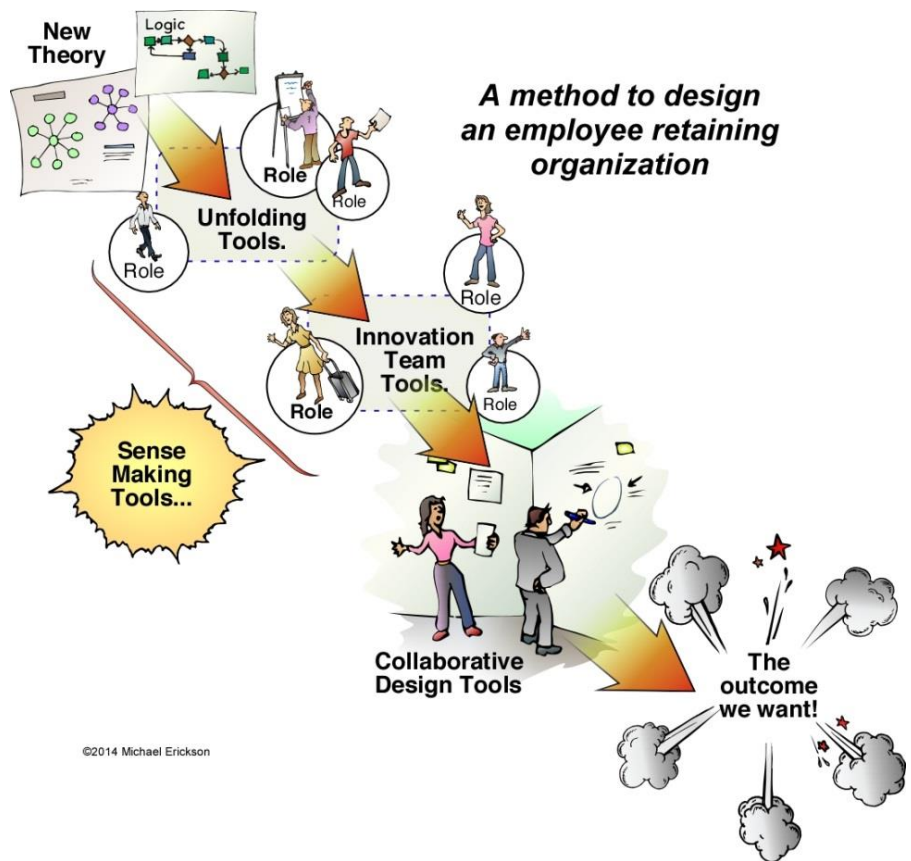


Table 3. Collaborative Design Principles

• Employees are as valuable as customers
• Employees need periodic changes in different aspects of their jobs over the life of their careers
• Talent strategies must be explored continuously and changed to match workforce realities
• Big data on workforce realities are as valuable as those on customer realities
• Policies and practices need to be consistent with talent strategies
• Organizational talent strategies change slowly and require consistent executive and managerial action until achieved company-wide
<i>(Grace & Graen, 2014)</i>

The collaborative design method, much like a good story, engages people around the development of empathy for the stakeholders involved in a particular context (for example, a specific problem situation) and provides easy-to-learn tools and techniques that generate insights about the behavior of the target individuals, looked at from multiple perspectives, and instructs on how to reach a shared point of view for effective change. This shared point of view combines quantitative and qualitative analysis to enable more evidence-based business decision-making.

Recommendations for Future Action

Exploring and then implementing the following steps toward the creation of a collaborative design capability in your organization is where you can start. The typical phases of the design method, tailored for a talent management context, thus would include the following:

1. Forming an innovation design team focused on a small but important talent management problem (team composition is important, see Grace, 2009 and Graen and Schiemann, 2013).

2. Getting to know the people involved and deeply understanding the specific context of the problem space (qualitative analysis).
3. Considering investing in and becoming proficient with HR analytics tools to enrich insights (quantitative analysis).
4. Discovering aspects of common dysfunctions in present talent strategies.
5. Trying out different talent strategies in small, iterative in-house experiments to inform the team.
6. Designing new talent strategies based on this work.
7. Implementing the new strategies with a small scope and continuously improving on them.

Throughout the process, the team continuously realigns to retain a shared point of view relative to the goals, ensuring that they are solving the right problem, and continuously asking “Why?” with regard to their assumptions, so that the end result hits the mark. People professionals—like you—play critical roles in this design process. Your knowledge of the particular context in your workplace enables you to assist in accurate problem finding, solution analysis and implementation at appropriate levels.

Based on the analysis on the engagement of Millennials cited in this paper and available from other sources, you should accelerate any current efforts in your organization to match talent strategies to the new workforce realities for professionals. Leverage the latest technology in collaborative design to find and build the most promising talent strategies for various talent categories within industrial classifications

(Grace & Graen, 2014). Actions that you can take now to get up to speed are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Getting Up to Speed

• Alert colleagues and collaborate as peers • Generate interest in new opportunities
• Gather information available in your company • Seek new information by communicating with colleagues
• Search the Internet, including social media, to stay informed • Talk to those in university placement roles
• Reach outside to HR professionals • Discover what your competition is doing
• Brief management and continuously update



You should prepare now for the emergence of more challenging and responsible “people operations” positions than exist today. Make it a habit to study leading-edge companies and watch them as they change their organizational and talent strategy designs. Today, information age companies are turning this trend on its head. The new marching orders to HR professionals are to attract, process, educate, empower, engage and retain the best talent. With this direction, ask yourself the questions in Table 5. Your answers will inform you as to where you need to place your professional development emphasis over the next several years. Ask your peers to answer these same questions and compare results. Your collective responses will suggest where to put your

organizational emphasis and potentially highlight a problem area to explore using the design process outlined above.

Table 5. Self-Evaluation Questions

Foundation	Do I grasp the huge changes needed? Do I see the significance of a People Operations Department? Can I develop partnerships with co-workers in other departments?
Growth	Have I taken steps to learn new skills and learn new areas? Have I kept up with the new wave? Have I become enthused about the emerging career opportunities?
Evaluation	How are the goals and expectations of the talent strategy changing? How do I expect to design new homes for innovation teams? How quickly do I expect change to occur? How will the changes affect my career? Am I preparing for my future?

Adapted from Dugan and O'Shea, 2014 p. 8

Summary

This white paper has described some of the most promising research and practice approaches that enable the matching of talent strategies to the new workforce realities.

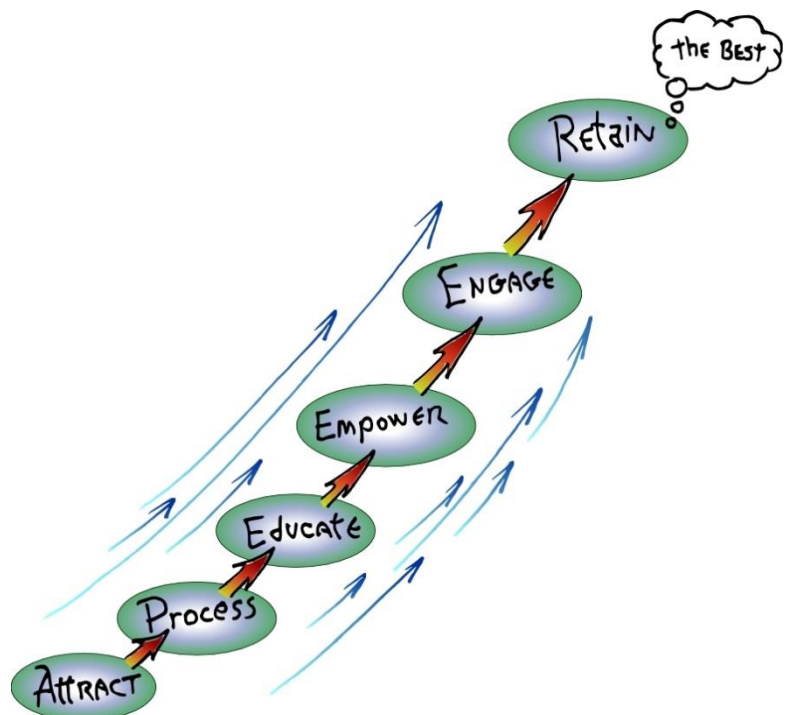
- We have looked at the PwC and Google studies and found that leveraging HR analytics offers tremendous opportunities to study and understand workplace trends and inform strategic decision-making.
- We have looked at alternative approaches to change and found that an integrative model that leverages the latest thinking in collaborative design offers a holistic method that addresses talent acquisition, engagement and retention.

- We have looked at the dynamics and complexities HR professionals face in the transition from the traditional approaches that worked for the Baby Boom generation to the requirements of Millennials.
- We have looked at recommendations for future action and presented several promising areas for future action.

Conclusion

Roger Martin, Dean of the Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto, summed up the business challenge of the 21st century: "Now it's no longer enough to get better; you have to 'get different'" (Martin, 2004). Getting different means learning how to turn our information into knowledge, attracting young people to our businesses, having a vigorous and innovative workplace culture, and maintaining dynamic and creative design processes. Human resource research and practice has a growing array of promising approaches that may enable it to more effectively match talent acquisition and retention

strategies with the unrelenting new workforce realities. This growing array of promising approaches to the matching of Millennial employee workplace needs with workplace realities offers HR professionals an



excellent opportunity. The time is now to seize this new interpretation of the HR function and concentrate on attracting, processing, educating, empowering, engaging and retaining the best Millennial innovators available. Efforts to match talent strategies applied to the new workforce realities for professionals should be accelerated. SHRM members need to step up and lead their colleagues with talent-related innovations and by proactively preparing for more talent-centric approaches. This paper recognizes the important role that organizations such as SHRM play in developing out-of-the-box thinking throughout their membership.

"CEOs who are able to come up with their twist on 'Googleyness'—whether through internships, training programs, flexible hiring processes or transparency with employees – will probably have an easier time attracting rock stars." (Lev-Ram, 2014, p. 101).

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