

Millennial preferences in training messages: The role of teamwork and corporate social responsibility

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Abstract.

BACKGROUND: As the last of the millennial generation is graduating and entering the work force, it has become imperative to devise new ways of engaging this group in safety initiatives.

OBJECTIVE: This study seeks to investigate if messages aligned with particular identified millennial workplace culture preferences (i.e. teamwork and CSR) can more effectively engage millennial workers.

METHODS: Thirty participants completed surveys to determine their predisposed attitudes of teamwork and CSR. They then viewed three versions of a safety presentation each addressing the same topic and information, but each with a different theme behind their safety message (i.e. control, teamwork, and CSR).

RESULTS: The pooled teamwork and CSR data showed that these messages were favored in larger proportion than the control message. No statistically significant differences were found between the three messages when analyzed individually.

CONCLUSIONS: ANOVA analyses showed a significant difference between the control presentation data and the pooled teamwork and CSR presentation data indicating that millennials prefer safety messages aligned with teamwork and social responsibility to a safety message with no extrinsic motivational theme.

Keywords: Millennial, safety, training, teamwork, corporate social responsibility

1. Introduction

Over the past few decades, the millennial generation has been the subject of extensive research. Early on, this research focused on establishing a set of characteristics commonly shared among millennials in an effort to create a profile of defining traits associated with this cohort. Later, as millennials began graduating from college and entering the

job market, it became more important for leaders to understand how millennials interact with and operate in the modern workplace. Following this trend, the body of millennial research shifted its focus to concentrate more specifically on millennial workers and how they assimilate into the working world [1]. Much of this work focused on using these millennial characteristics established by previous research to devise strategies for managing and leading millennial workers.

Now, as the last of the veteran generation reaches retirement, we notice that the last of the millennial generation are graduating college and entering the workforce. Millennials are rapidly making up a larger

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and larger portion of the candidate pool as well as the workforce. In 2015, 35 percent of the workforce consisted of millennials and some believe that by 2025, three quarters of the working population will be millennials [1]. With the growth of the millennial workforce, leaders are realizing that future success is dependent on their ability to connect with these young workers. It is imperative that leaders learn to attract, retain, and engage this young population in order to maintain a competitive edge in the years to come.

While researchers continue to study the trends of millennials' work habits and preferences, few studies have addressed how millennials engage in safety programs. With safety engagement being imperative to the development of a successful safety culture, it is important to consider how this new work group engages in safety and how they can be motivated to follow safe work practices. Similar to previous generational research, this study approaches millennial safety engagement from the perspective of previously identified work preferences/characteristics that engage millennials. The study looks at how safety messages targeted toward the millennial workforce using their identified work preferences can engage them in safety.

2. Millennial characteristics profile

With the rapidly growing millennial candidate pool and the need for companies to hire new talent, companies are placing higher importance on connecting with this group [1, 2]. Generational experts have done a large amount of research on engaging this millennial cohort in organizational goals; however, little has been done to investigate how these factors influence the way this group responds to safety messages. Earlier observational research has focused on determining a set of characteristics to generalize the millennial population and their values. Popular generational researchers Neil Howe and William Strauss [3], in their book *Millennials Rising*, noted seven defining traits and values they observed to be common amongst the millennial generation: "special, sheltered, confident, team-oriented, achieving, pressured, and conventional." This set of traits served as the basis of millennial research until later, Ron Alsup [4] published an updated list of millennial traits in his book, *The Trophy Kids Grow Up*. Utilizing assessments of case studies and interviews, he describes the generation as "entitled, optimistic, civic minded,

close parental involvement, values work-life balance, impatient, multitasking, and team-oriented." While other researchers have proposed other distinguishing characteristics, most are similar to or can be traced back to these core traits.

Similarly, generational research that has focused specifically on millennials in the workplace has identified a number of cultural preferences that millennials desire in their work environment: work-life balance, team environment, meaningful work, corporate social responsibility (CSR), opportunities for achievement/advancement, frequent feedback, mentorship, and career development opportunities to name a few [5–8]. This study focuses specifically on the millennial preferences of team-orientation and civic engagement/CSR in relation to how these values can influence their engagement in safety messages.

3. Teamwork

While researchers generally accept teamwork as common work preference among millennials, a variety of theories exist as to how this group developed this trait. One logical explanation commonly held among researchers is that this group grew up in a team-oriented environment that developed their collaboration skills and made them team learners [1, 9, 10]. Another theory suggests that millennials are social learners and are inclined to collaborate because they see their peers as sources of learning [8]. Other behavioral researchers suggest that they share the common personality trait of affiliation, which is responsible for their affinity for teamwork [11–13]. Some even contend that their desire to work in teams can be attributed to a shared disposition for risk avoidance among the generation [7, 14]. In order to better understand the millennial team attitude, it may be helpful to explore some of the theories behind the millennial team dynamic.

One widely accepted theory for the millennial teamwork phenomenon explains that this cohort grew up in an environment that emphasized teamwork [3, 4, 10]. In schools, teamwork was reinforced through curricula that promoted a more interactive and collaborative learning environment where a higher emphasis was placed on class participation and group work/projects [1, 10]. Millennial children had more opportunities to participate in extracurricular group activities including sports teams, social groups, and even school uniforms [1, 3, 10]. Jan Ferri-Reed [9] explains that no other age groups were as widely

exposed to team activities such as sports teams, group school work, and now, digital social networks, as much as millennials. She believes that in order to engage millennials to perform at their highest potential employers must embrace the team mentality that has been reinforced throughout their life experiences.

Millennials are attracted to collaborative work because they aspire for learning and knowledge; they view the connections they make with their colleagues as opportunities for learning [8]. For this same reason, they see their managers as a source for learning and therefore prefer to work for someone who is able to provide them frequent, quality feedback [8].

Millennials also prefer a social atmosphere at work where there is opportunity to bond with coworkers [6]. As reflected in their desire for work-life integration, they prefer a workplace where their associates are also their friends [6]. They tend to engage in their workplace social relationships more than the work itself [14]. In this way, their team mentality may be related more to their sociability making it easy for them to build relationships in the workplace, but may not necessarily make them more productive.

Behavioral theorists have taken a different approach to explaining the millennial teamwork dynamic [11–13]. They suggest that millennial teamwork could be linked with their generational motivation and personality characteristics. These researchers have performed studies to evaluate the motives and personality traits of generations in order to develop generational personality profiles and draw conclusions about their collective behavior. Many of these studies have found that the millennial generation tends to display the personality trait of affiliation more so than other generations. Affiliation is the motivation or fondness of interacting with others and building and maintaining relationships or a social group [11–13].

One study used the Hogan Motives Values Preferences Inventory (HMVI) to examine how millennial motives differ compared to other generations [12]. Their results convincingly showed that millennials have a higher need for affiliation than other generations, which led them to conclude that millennials are more likely to enjoy working in teams and building social relationships at work due to their higher need for affiliation. Additionally, participants in this study completed the Hogan Personality Inventory (HPI) assessment that showed millennials score significantly higher than other generations in the personality dimensions of sociability and interpersonal sensitivity. These findings support their conclusion that

millennials enjoy building and maintaining personal relationships.

An Australian study evaluated and compared the personality styles of participants from modern generations using an Occupational Personality Questionnaire (OPQ32) [13]. They found that millennials scored significantly higher than other generations in the affiliation and achievement personality traits [13]. These findings were also supported in another study that tested Millennial and Generation X students on the achievement and affiliation motives and found that the Millennial students scored higher than Generation X students on both factors [11]. This indicates that Millennials value social interaction more than Generation X and have a higher need for social camaraderie as well as a greater aptitude for team and relationship building [11].

Wong et al. [13] postulated that generational differences in these work values may be more related to age rather than generational cohort. They theorized that since older workers typically hold higher-level, senior roles due to their longer working careers, they tend to be more content in their positions. Conversely, younger generations who hold junior roles may see networking as a means to advance their careers [13]. In this way, the correlation between the millennial generation and the need for affiliation in the workplace could actually be due to their higher need for achievement that results from their young age and lack of seniority. Therefore, age and achievement could be confounding variables in the correlation between generations and the affiliation trait.

Millennials also favor teamwork because it allows them to distribute work based on individual strengths [7, 14]. While this can be beneficial to the team, it prevents millennials from achieving individually [7]. Millennials tend to be risk avoidant because they are not accustomed to failure [7, 14]. Since the responsibility for the work is shared amongst the group, teams enable millennials to avoid personal failure [7]. In this way, teams can make managing work groups difficult because leaders are unable to distinguish the individual efforts of each team member [7]. It is important for managers to place millennials in situations where they can produce and succeed individually [7]. By enabling them to work independently, they can demonstrate their unique talents and insights, and they can develop new career skills [7].

The millennial employee's aptitude for team communication and group learning will prove favorable in building professional relationships; however, these traits will also be beneficial to employers as an asset

to the emergent trend towards autonomous work team environments [14]. As organizations are realizing the benefits of a connected workplace, millennials are becoming more and more valuable contributors [15].

As millennials seek to connect and collaborate with their coworkers, they tend to thrive in this type of environment and actively engage in and subscribe to the shared leadership dynamic [15]. In these types of work structures, millennials can be catalysts for innovation by promoting a synergistic environment. A collaborative approach to leadership can be beneficial because it empowers each employee to be a leader and creates an environment where ideas are shared based on knowledge rather than rank [15]. Shared leadership is appealing to millennials and can be advantageous to organizations that can benefit from increased personal responsibility, CSR, team collaboration, productivity and reduced overall employee costs [14, 15].

Hershatter and Epstein [16] explain that many of the traits that earlier millennial research identified indicated that this generation would be a tremendous asset to the workforce. Time has revealed, however, that their notions of this ideal millennial employee have not quite materialized as expected [16]. The teamwork mentality, among other identified millennial traits, is a desirable characteristic that most employers value in an employee; however, millennials are selective in the tasks they are willing to engage in [16]. Jan Ferri-Reed [9] explains that while millennials may not possess every skill required to succeed in a collaborative work environment, leaders must learn to recognize their strengths and work to build upon their weaknesses.

One strategy suggests using opportunities for teamwork as a reward system for millennials because they prefer and enjoy collaborating on projects [7]. Caraher [5] suggests frequently reiterating the goals of the team and each individual's contributions toward that goal. She suggests explaining how the individual's work fits into the team goal during the onboarding process and reexamining the entire team dynamic when new members are added to the team. She also suggests frequently asking for feedback and input from team members to engage them in the group effort.

4. Civic engagement

Another quintessential trait of the millennial worker is their ambition for meaningful work [1, 5,

15]. Some millennials derive meaningfulness from significant contributions they make in their organization, while others experience meaningfulness by making a difference in the societal issues that they value [5–8, 15]. Millennials have displayed a strong affinity for civic engagement and the need to “change the world” [4–6, 17, 10]. This preference for social responsibility and civic engagement suggests another consideration for engaging millennial workers in safety.

Generational research has long established a link between millennials and civic engagement substantiated by multiple cooperative theories. Researchers attribute the millennial generation's penchant for social responsibility and civic engagement to a combination of social constructs contemporary to the era in which they were raised [7]. Most consider that throughout their upbringing, society gained a heightened awareness to global societal issues and, as a result, a higher emphasis was placed on community values and public service [1, 7].

Because of these differences in priorities, the millennial generation has been more attune to global issues than previous generations [1]. More so than any generation before them, they have been closer to the devastation from all of the catastrophic events and natural disasters that have occurred around the world in their lifetimes [1]. Perhaps the proliferation of technology that occurred during this era contributed to the public awareness of these disasters. More communication technologies and outlets for media access have brought these stories to the front of the minds of millennials leading to their profound commitment to social responsibility.

This heightened awareness of global issues also led to a societal emphasis on the importance of service and humanitarianism that gave rise to the increase of volunteer and charity opportunities in schools and communities [1, 7]. As these activities became more widespread, accessible, and in some cases required, millennial participation grew as well [1, 7]. Concurrently, the rapid increase in college enrollment among young adults led to more demanding application requirements [1, 7]. College admissions began focusing more on volunteer work and community service when evaluating college applications [7, 18].

The emphasis on corporate social responsibility has also increased in the post-secondary education environment as universities incorporate more civics and social responsibility coursework into required curriculum [4]. Charity work has also become more prevalent on campuses and in university student

organizations [4]. The combined effect of the proliferation of community service and volunteer opportunities and the academic incentive for millennials to participate has shaped this cohort into a generation of socially conscious humanitarians and environmentalists [1, 7].

Some researchers attribute millennial civic engagement to their Baby Boomer parents, a generation to whom the millennials are often compared [16]. The Boomers, known for their involvement in a number of social movements throughout their lives, made their own contributions towards social change and community values and raised awareness of national and international social, political, and environmental issues [7].

Other theories draw connections between team attitudes and civic responsibility suggesting that these two traits are reciprocal [17]. Team-orientation is what gives millennials their drive to be socially engaged [17]. They desire to contribute for the benefit of the group; if society is the group, then social activism is their way of contributing to the team [17]. Some associate millennials' proclivity towards community service and volunteering with their penchant for teamwork [18]. Since they are used to doing these activities with their peers they may view them as another group project or social activity [18]. Thus, their civic engagement may be a manifestation of both their dedication to the team effort, in building a community that works together, as well as their dedication to social causes.

Myers and Sadaghiani [14] assess the trend of millennials graduating college and struggling to find work due to a competitive job market. They observe that more millennials are opting for travel, volunteering abroad, or pursuing graduate studies and many are willing to work at low-paying jobs or volunteer organizations and put off their desired careers. They believe this may contribute to their heightened social consciousness because it gives them a more global perspective and a higher sensitivity to problems affecting other cultures around the world. This may have implications for the companies looking to hire these young workers.

When looking at behavioral research, studies on generational personality characteristics have shown conflicting results on whether millennials are more concerned with social affairs than other generations. These studies observe that scores on the characteristics typically associated with social responsibility are equal among millennials and other generations [12, 19, 20]. Behaviorists have shown that altruistic

values appear to be constant across age cohorts [12, 20]. Likewise, research shows that all generations share an equal level of concern with social issues [19]. Yet despite these findings, millennials are still volunteering and participating in community service in higher numbers than their predecessors [17, 21]. This shows that while all generations equally value social responsibility, millennials are more likely to act on their principles. This propensity for activism is due to their tendency to personalize their sentiments of social responsibility more so than their predecessors and in so doing, make them more motivated to take action in response to societal concerns [15, 22].

Millennials also exhibit this devotion to activism in their willingness to incorporate the social values that are important to them in their everyday lives [5]. In this way, millennials tend to be more proactive in their social concerns and consider social responsibility in much of their decision-making [15]. Beyond their volunteer and charity efforts, millennials are also conscientious of the organizations they support. Millennials believe that companies have an obligation to CSR and expect them to take action in resolving social issues. They prefer to support organizations that value CSR and see this as an important factor in making decisions on how they spend their time and money [4, 8, 16]. They research and seek out socially responsible organizations and prefer to purchase products from those that value CSR [4, 8]. The 2017 CONE Communications CSR Study found that, "[Millennials] are the most likely group to seek out responsible products whenever possible (85% vs. 79% U.S. average)" and that "51% of Millennials have reported they have researched a company's business practices (vs. 39%)" (p. 31). Millennials believe companies have an obligation to CSR and expect them to be proactive in alleviating social issues (80% vs 70% U.S. average [24]) [5].

Millennials consider these same concerns when making career decisions as well. The CSR factor has shown promise in attracting millennials as they prefer to work for companies whose corporate values align with their own [5, 16]. They place a higher value on CSR when making decisions on the companies they work for compared to other generations [15]. While both organizational commitment and job satisfaction are positively correlated with worker perceptions of CSR [23], millennials show a preference for companies with strong CSR values [15].

While millennials, motivated by social responsibility, are attracted to organizations that share their values, it is important to understand how corpora-

tions can use this insight to engage millennials in organizational goals [5, 16]. The strategy that most professionals recommend is aligning your organization's CSR values with the values of those you wish to engage. Jessica Warnell [15] suggests that the first step in this process is to know your audience. She suggests that companies present their CSR values in a way that their members and prospective employees can relate to. By framing these goals and values in a way that resonates with millennials, organizations can build a more specialized recruiting campaign geared towards this generation. For millennials, this can be difficult since values can vary by the individual, so try to narrow the focus toward the specific types of individuals they wish to attract [15].

Once corporate values are established, it is recommended to align them across all facets of the company in order to emphasize the organization's commitment to these values and cultivate a cohesive workforce that shares those values [7, 26]. This includes drawing connections between how their work directly influences their values and the company's CSR values [5, 7]. This can be useful as a recruitment technique, but also as a tool to invigorate the workforce [7, 26]. Incorporating company values into training programs thus can engage millennials in the message as it relates to their own values [15, 26]. Some professionals suggest offering employees opportunities for community outreach that allow them to serve a cause while on company time [6].

Warnell [15] takes this concept a step further asserting that simply aligning employee and CSR values is not enough and that companies must fully integrate corporate values across every aspect of the organization. She suggests that integrating CSR into all company strategies can increase job satisfaction and promote collaboration by establishing a common ground between employees and building connections based on values. In this way, CSR can be a means to stimulate and reinforce engagement as well as unify the workforce based on personal values [15]. In this way, comprehensive integration of CSR values throughout the organization can represent a strong commitment to social values.

5. Participants

The sample consisted of thirty men and women from a large Midwestern university born between 1981 and 1996. A mass email sent out to students in the engineering college to recruit millennial

participants. Subjects who completed the experiment received \$10 in compensation for their full participation. The Institutional Review Board approved the study and all subjects participated on an informed consent basis.

6. Procedure

All surveys, questionnaires, and video presentations were administered using Qualtrics online survey software. Individual sessions conducted for each participant took place in a university lab setting at a desktop computer. The researcher administered individual sessions for each participant.

The first step in the experiment was to brief the participants on what would be expected of them in the session. The researcher read the briefing, which included a description of the study and an explanation of the procedure to the participants. Before beginning the experiment, the researcher asked the participants if they had any questions regarding the study. Once all questions were answered, the participants began the online survey starting with a demographic questionnaire.

The demographic questionnaire collected descriptive statistics of the sample. It gathered data on birth year, gender, student status (enrolled/not enrolled), level of education, field of study/work, and employment status. Once the demographic questionnaire was completed, participants began the pre-assessment surveys. Participants completed two pre-assessment surveys including the team attitude survey (TAS) (Appendix 1.1) and the civic engagement survey (CES) (Appendix 1.2). The participants completed these surveys at the beginning of the study, prior to receiving details of the safety topic, the company, or their job role. Once the surveys were completed, the survey paused and instructed the participant to inform the researcher before continuing.

At this point, the researcher read aloud a scenario that provided the participant with a back-story for the rest of the experiment. This included brief description of a fictitious company called Health Supplies, Inc. (HSI) and explained that HSI is a healthcare supplier of medical supplies and devices. It also provided a description of a hypothetical role that the participant would assume as a warehouse worker for HSI. It discussed the subject's position including the typical tasks and responsibilities involved with the job. The purpose of this scenario was to introduce and provide enough information to set the scene for the safety

presentations that followed, but not so much that they could gather an impression of the company or the job. The description also explained that warehouse management had put together three versions of a training program to educate the warehouse workers on manual material handling and lifting safety/ergonomics. The researcher informed the participants that each of the presentations would discuss the same safety topic and cover the same basic information; however, each presented a different theme behind the safety message. Once this was finished, participants were instructed to continue in the survey to view all three presentations and evaluate them afterward.

The three audio-visual video presentations presented the messages from the perspective of the company. The participants viewed the presentations in random order as presented by the Qualtrics software. The videos took three different approaches to the safety message including a control, teamwork, and a CSR presentation. The control presentation acted as the control test providing only the basic information regarding the safety topic. The other two presentations each incorporated one of the identified millennial workplace culture preferences. The teamwork presentation took an approach that emphasized teamwork as a crucial part of safety while the CSR presentation introduced safety as a means of civic engagement by helping to fulfill the company's CSR goals. Once the participant had viewed all three presentations, they continued to the cumulative evaluation (see Safety Presentations for more details).

Once the participants had viewed all three presentations, they completed two follow-up evaluations to assess their reactions to the presentations. This cumulative evaluation included both a rated-response survey and a short response survey in which the participants evaluated, compared, and ranked the three presentations as well as provided feedback of their feelings regarding the videos and safety motivation in general (see Cumulative Evaluation section for more details).

6.1. Pre-assessment surveys

Each participant completed two surveys at the beginning of the study to assess their attitudes towards teamwork and civic engagement. These surveys provided a score for each of these variables representing the participants' predisposed attitudes that may have affected their response. These scores were used as covariates that served as control variables in the data analysis process. The surveys

were administered using Qualtrics online survey software.

The team attitude survey (TAS) utilized the Team Attitude Scale devised by Baker, Horvath, Campion, Offermann, and Salas [27]. The TAS contains fifteen statements to which participants responded with their level of agreement or disagreement on a five-point Likert scale with negative statements being reverse-scored (Appendix 1.1). Responses to the TAS provided a totaled score that indicated the participant's attitudes towards teamwork. This score served as a covariate to control for individual differences in teamwork attitudes.

The civic engagement survey (CES) utilized the Civic Engagement Scale created by Doolittle and Faul [28]. This scale is divided into two categories: Civic Engagement Attitudes Scale (CEAS) and Civic Engagement Behavior Scale (CEBS). The CEAS survey contains eight questions and the CEBS survey contains six questions (Appendix 1.2). Participants responded with their level of agreement or disagreement on a seven-point Likert scale. Responses to these surveys provided total scores that indicated the participant's level of civic engagement. Both the CEAS and the CEBS surveys each provided their own individual score. These scores served as covariates to control for individual differences in civic engagement attitudes and behaviors.

6.2. Safety presentations

The subjects viewed three versions of a safety training presentation designed by the company to educate warehouse employees on manual material handling and lifting safety/ergonomics. Each six to eight minute presentation discussed the same lift safety information each using a slightly different approach to convey the safety message. The topic and basic information were constant throughout each presentation in order to maintain consistency and eliminate bias. The presentations, created in mp4 video format using the Microsoft PowerPoint screen-recording tool, featured the screen view of the PowerPoint slides as well as a voice over recording of the presenter. The Qualtrics program presented the videos directly in an online survey stream and was set to appear in random order for each participant. The three versions of the presentation are the control presentation, the teamwork presentation, and the CSR presentation.

The control presentation focused specifically on the topic of lifting safety and ergonomics. The language was concise and to the point and did not discuss

safety in terms of company values or how it affects others. There was no reference to company culture or its CSR outreach. The images used depicted cartoons and objects rather than pictures of actual humans. There was no overarching theme or value behind the safety message besides the lifting safety message itself.

The teamwork presentation took an approach to safety that targeted the millennial work preference of team-oriented work environments. The presentation conveyed this theme by establishing that the company strongly values teamwork in their organization and that the same approach is given to safety. It explained the consequences of unsafe lifting in regard to how actions affect coworkers and the warehouse team. It also showed how every part of the lift safety process involves the entire work team, rather than the individual, and in this way, the entire work team is responsible for each other's safety.

The introduction to the presentation began by discussing how the company values teamwork as a means to success. It described the importance that the company places on teamwork and collective effort and explains that these themes are represented in the company motto: "Together we are strong." The narrator then explained that this motto and its supporting values are the inspiration behind the company's safety program. In this way, the program emphasized working together towards the goal of safety and that each employee is responsible for the safety of his or her teammates.

When addressing the reasons why lift safety is important, it explained the consequences of unsafe lifting in terms of the negative impact on the individual and their teammates including how injuries can hinder the warehouse team from reaching their goal. Later, when the steps to lifting safely were discussed, the narrator described how different tasks are completed by the team as a whole rather than individually. They suggested asking for help and feedback whenever possible, discussing a plan with teammates, and relying on one another to safely complete tasks. This contextualized work safety as a group effort and encouraged collaboration and group thinking in order to achieve group goals.

Other strategies were used to help portray the team-oriented message. The video used media such as photographs of warehouse teams discussing, working together, and helping one another to depict the team activities described in the safety message. These pictures helped to emphasize the importance and benefit of teamwork. The narrator also discusses how the

company motto is a representation of their team values. The motto "Together We Are Strong" is printed in on each slide to reiterate the team focus.

The CSR presentation took an approach to safety that targeted the millennial preference for civic engagement. The presentation conveyed this theme by establishing that the company values helping those in need and that their products allow them to accomplish this by facilitating healthcare initiatives for all. By showing that the company values social responsibility and contributes to social issues, this message should appeal to the millennial preference of working for a company that makes socially responsible contributions. Additionally, by connecting the company's societal contribution to the work of the individual, the message appeals to the millennial need for individual civic engagement.

The presentation begins by asserting the company's sincere concern for the wellbeing of the people that use and benefit from their products. The narrator affirms their dedication to the health and safety of the community by noting their mission statement that reads, "It is our mission to improve the lives of those we serve with a commitment to health and safety for all." The presentation then discusses how families, children, the elderly, and those in poverty from cultures around the world depend on the company for healthcare and that their products make it possible for healthcare professionals and mission workers to heal those in need. This tactic shows that the company's products help all types of people and provides a variety of different groups that the viewer may identify and sympathize with their own personal values.

The presentation explains that the company's belief that every employee has "the power to heal." This motto shows that the company attributes their ability to help these people to the efforts of their employees. The motto appears on each slide to emphasize the employee's part in serving the mission. It also explains that in order to continue these good works, they rely on their employees to work safely. In this way, the presentation relates the individual's ability to contribute towards the CSR effort to working safely.

Other language was used to relate the company CSR mission to safe work. When addressing the reasons why lift safety is important, the presentation explains the consequences of unsafe lifting in terms of the negative impact on their ability to help patients and those in need. Later, when discussing the steps to lifting safely, the presentation reiterates that safety is important to the goal of helping

others and that the steps to lift safety will help them to do so.

As with the team presentation, the CSR used a variety of photographs depicting families and individuals who depend on the healthcare products the company provides. It displays pictures of children, elderly patients, and people of poverty-stricken cultures who are ill and receiving treatment. It also shows healthcare practitioners providing healthcare services to these groups. These pictures help to illustrate how the work that the employee is doing helps people and focuses the viewers' attention to those individuals in order to elicit feelings of empathy.

6.3. Cumulative evaluation

After viewing the three safety presentations, the participant completed a cumulative evaluation. This evaluation consisted of a rated-response survey, in which subjects compared and rated their opinions of each of the videos, and an open-response survey, wherein participants responded verbally to questions asked by the researcher regarding the presentations.

The rated-response survey was a follow-up evaluation that asked participants to rate and compare the three presentations they had just viewed (Appendix 2.1). It included five statements regarding the presentations to which the participants rated their level of agreement or disagreement on a seven-point Likert scale. The responses to these statements assessed the level of engagement that the participants felt from each presentation. This survey gathered fifteen data points (five from each presentation) from each participant. This quantitative data was used in conjunction with the pre-assessment covariate scores for the ANOVA analyses.

The open-response survey that followed the rated-response survey consisted of eight questions administered by the researcher who read each question to the participant directly and recorded their responses (Appendix 2.2). This survey gathered qualitative data that could help to explain the responses to the rated-response survey. The first five questions pertaining to the presentations intended to gain deeper insight into the participants' opinions of the presentations. These questions asked the participant to single out which presentation they felt: was most motivating to work safely, had the best message, was most relatable, took the best approach to safety, and best held their attention. The questions also asked them to explain their answers to why they felt a particular presentation satisfied these points more than others

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics

	Count	Avg Age
Male	15	23.9
Female	15	25.0
Total	30	24.4

Table 2
Pre-assessment Surveys (covariate) Statistics

Scale	N	Mean	SE Mean	StDev	Median
TW	90	54.23	1.03	9.74	53.0
CEA	90	44.03	0.80	7.60	45.5
CEB	90	27.77	0.59	5.62	28.0

did. These questions focused on both the "how" to do the work task as well as the "why is it important" to do the work task a specific way.

The final three questions were unrelated to the presentations and investigated the participants' thoughts on safety motivation in general. Questions six and seven asked participants to express their opinions of what would motivate them individually to work safely as well as what factors they feel motivate their peers to work safely. The eighth question asked if the participants would like to add anything or comment on the presentations, the experiment, or motivation in general. The data from these open-response questions were used in comparison to the rated-response data to provide a deeper explanation of and draw conclusions from the scores.

7. Results

The results of this study were assessed using quantitative and qualitative analysis techniques. Descriptive statistics gathered from the demographics questionnaire showed that the sample was equally male (15) and female (15). The average age of the entire population was 24.4 years old (see Table 1). Quantitative data gathered from the answers to the rated-response survey were computed using Minitab statistical analysis software. Qualitative data gathered from responses to the open-response survey interviews was examined for patterns of similar responses from participants.

Analysis of the pre-assessment survey scores showed a mean of 52 out of a possible 75 in the TAS, 44 out of a possible 56 in the CEAS, and 28 out of a possible 42 for the CEBS (Table 2). The fifteen data points gathered from each participant's responses

Table 3
Rated-Response Survey Statistics

Statement	Q	N	Mean	SE Mean	StDev	Median
S1	Control	30	4.67	0.28	1.54	5.0
	Team	30	5.50	0.26	1.41	6.0
	CSR	30	5.53	0.18	1.01	6.0
S2	Control	30	5.20	0.22	1.22	5.5
	Team	30	5.73	0.24	1.31	6.0
	CSR	30	5.53	0.21	1.14	6.0
S3	Control	30	5.07	0.22	1.20	5.0
	Team	30	5.67	0.25	1.35	6.0
	CSR	30	5.60	0.19	1.04	6.0
S4	Control	30	4.93	0.31	1.72	5.0
	Team	30	5.13	0.30	1.66	5.5
	CSR	30	5.47	0.24	1.33	5.0
S5	Control	30	5.00	0.25	1.37	5.0
	Team	30	5.70	0.26	1.42	6.0
	CSR	30	5.57	0.23	1.25	6.0

to the rated-response survey provided the quantitative data used in the ANOVA analyses (Table 3). The ANOVA tests performed for each of the five rated-response statements used scores from the Team Attitude Scale (TAS) and the Civic Engagement Scales (CES) as covariate data to control for individual differences. Results from these ANOVA analyses showed significant effect at the $p < 0.05$ level in Statement 1, "This video would motivate me to work safely," only. Additionally, only the CEB portion of the CES for Statements 4 and 5 showed significance at that level. See Table 4 for the specific ANOVA results. Rated-response statements can be viewed in Appendix 2.1.

Power calculations were performed for each of these tests based on the range and standard deviation of the data. Being as the range of possible responses was limited to the seven-point Likert scale, the expected difference was set to 1.5 in order to detect a difference greater than one place on the scale. These calculations yielded power ranging between 75.1 percent and 99.4 percent. The lack of significant data in the initial ANOVA analyses was then compared with an examination of the qualitative data from the open-response interviews.

The open-response questions were examined for frequency of similar responses across participants by tallying the number of responses categorically. The eight questions were divided by question type for this analysis. These open-response questions can be viewed in Appendix 2.2. The first five of these questions that asked the participant to single out which of the three presentations they felt best answered the question and why. Responses to these questions were recorded individually and a tally of which video the

participants singled out was calculated for each of the five questions. These figures are represented in Table 5. Additionally, similar responses in language and reasoning behind presentation favoritism were noted. In the analysis of the responses to these five questions, it was found from looking at the overall totals for each video, that participants tended to single out both the teamwork (62 times) and the CSR (56 times) presentations more often than the control presentation (chosen 32 times). The individual analysis of the responses to the first five questions reflected this result.

Analysis of the individual totals of each question in the open response survey showed that overall the participants clearly favored both the teamwork and CSR presentations over the control presentation. Responses to the first, second, and third questions preferred both the teamwork and the CSR presentations relatively evenly with both being chosen substantially more frequently than the control presentation. Responses to the fourth question heavily favored the Teamwork presentation over the control and CSR presentations and responses to the fifth question greatly favor the CSR presentation over the control and team presentations.

Of the participants that favored the teamwork presentation, some identified the teamwork element and mentioned this as the reason they preferred this presentation. Others seemed to think that this presentation took a more "thorough," comprehensive approach that "focused on the worker rather than the company." They felt that it provided more options for working safely and that it applied more to the safety message as it pertains to the individual's safety rather than the company agenda. Many of the participants that favored the CSR presentation identified the visuals as the reason they preferred this presentation saying that they made the presentation more "relatable" and "empathetic." They commented that it discussed how the work benefitted the community and how it had a "positive effect on others." Others commented that they appreciated "seeing where the products go."

The final three questions were unrelated to the presentations and asked participants to comment on safety and motivation in general. These questions were assessed separately from the first five. Questions 6 asked participants about their personal motivations for safety and question 7 asked what they felt motivated their peers to work safety. A large portion of the responses to both of these questions remarked, in one way or another, that

Table 4
Rated-response Statements ANOVA (with covariates)

Statement #	Source	DF	Adj SS	Adj MS	F-Value	P-Value
1	TAS	1	0.003	0.003	0.00	0.967
	CEAS	1	0.00	0.00012	0.00	0.993
	CEBS	1	3.86	3.86	2.20	0.141
	Q	2	14.47	7.23	4.13	0.019
	Error	84	147.10	1.75		
	Total	89	170.10			
2	TAS	1	0.72	0.72	0.50	0.481
	CEAS	1	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.861
	CEBS	1	3.94	3.94	2.75	0.101
	Q	2	4.36	2.18	1.52	0.225
	Error	84	120.38	1.43		
	Total	89	134.49			
3	TAS	1	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.882
	CEAS	1	0.57	0.57	0.39	0.533
	CEBS	1	0.63	0.63	0.44	0.510
	Q	2	6.49	3.24	2.25	0.112
	Error	84	121.36	1.44		
	Total	89	132.22			
4	TAS	1	1.93	1.93	0.92	0.340
	CEAS	1	0.57	0.57	0.27	0.605
	CEBS	1	15.25	15.21	7.25	0.009
	Q	2	4.36	2.18	1.04	0.359
	Error	84	176.30	2.10		
	Total	89	221.16			
5	TAS	1	0.99	0.99	0.62	0.433
	CEAS	1	0.11	0.11	0.07	0.797
	CEBS	1	10.62	10.62	6.69	0.011
	Q	2	8.29	4.14	2.61	0.079
	Error	84	133.35	1.59		
	Total	89	165.96			

Table 5
Open-response Survey Data

Question	Control	Team	CSR
Which presentation most motivated you to work safely and why?	4	15	11
Which presentation did you think had the best message and why?	4	12	14
Which presentation did you think was most relatable and why?	8	11	11
Which presentation did you think took the best approach to safety and why?	9	16	5
Which presentation did you think best held your attention and why?	7	8	15
Total	32	62	56

awareness of the negative consequences of unsafe work would motivate them and/or their peers to follow safe work practices. Many suggested showing what has or could go wrong in situations where workers do not follow safe practices. One trend that noticed that a number of respondents who commented that messages showing how the consequences affect others as well as themselves would motivate them to follow safe work practices, but when discussing their peers' safety motivation they only

mentioned that they would react to the personal consequences.

Lastly, question 8 asked participants to comment on the presentations, the experiment, or motivation in general. Many responded that they thought the presentations were well made and professional. Many felt that they all presented the information well. One reoccurring comment was that many participants appreciated a short presentation. Many subjects noted brevity as an important factor in these messages saying that short is best and noting that they liked the control presentation because "it was shortest." The fifth open-response question regarding which presentation best held their attention, some respondents chose the control presentation because it was "short and to the point" without unnecessary material that did not relate directly to the safety topic. Some respondents said that they chose the control presentation because it resembled the types of presentations that they were used to seeing.

Upon analysis of the qualitative data, it became clear that the difference was not between all three presentations individually, but rather between the control presentation and the teamwork and CSR

Table 6
Grouping Information Using the Tukey Method and 95% Confidence

Presentation	N	Mean	Grouping
CSR	30	5.53	A
TW	30	5.50	A
C	30	4.67	B

Means that do not share a letter are significantly different.

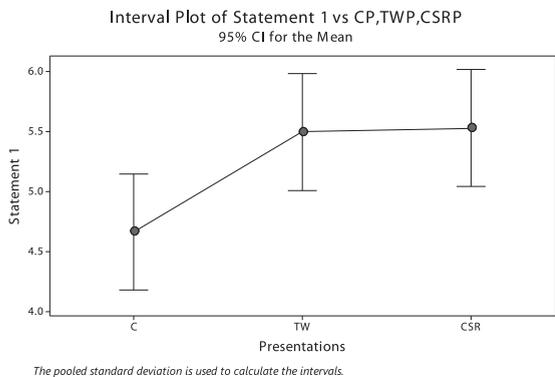


Fig. 1. Tukey Method Interval Plot Diagram.

presentations. This assumption, confirmed using the *post-hoc* Tukey Method, determined that the means and ranges for the teamwork and CSR presentations were relatively the same and were significantly higher than the control presentation. See Table 6 for Tukey Method data and Fig. 1 for the interval plot diagram. This led to a reassessment of the quantitative data. This time, the data from the teamwork and CSR presentations were pooled together and the ANOVA analyses were recalculated. The covariate data were excluded in these calculations because they were shown to have little significance. The ANOVA results found significance in statements 1, 3, and 5 at the $p < 0.05$ level (ANOVA results in Table 7).

8. Conclusion

The idea for this work was derived from a Ted Talk by the author and motivational speaker Simon Sinek. In his talk, “How great leaders inspire action,” Sinek discusses some of the concepts from his book, *Start With Why*, which suggest that inspiration and human action is induced by the ‘why’ rather than by the ‘how’ or ‘what’ [29]. He reasons that humans are more strongly motivated by the deeper psychological needs that an action fulfills rather than by the superficial benefits of the action. He uses marketing as an

example saying, “People don’t buy what you do, they buy why you do it,” noting that many of the most successful companies built their empire on the concept of their brand rather than the products that they sell. This research sought to apply this “start with why” concept to motivating safe work behavior.

Results indicated that similarities could be drawn between the open-response answers and the results from the pooled ANOVA tests. Primarily, both analyses indicated that the millennial participants did exhibit an attraction to the messages that incorporated teamwork or civic engagement. With the pooled ANOVA scores of the ranked responses showing significance on three of the five statements, safety messages that incorporate teamwork and civic engagement values may be seen to be more engaging to millennial workers. The answers to open-response questions reflect this trend in the combined totals across the three presentations showing that participants chose the teamwork and CSR messages more frequently than the control message. This again shows that this group tends to prefer both teamwork and civic engagement messages.

From the overall positive responses received regarding the videos, there is a strong indication that the millennial audience appreciates these messages. These results suggest that it may be worthwhile to utilize both of these strategies in safety presentations. Considering these factors from a practical perspective, each satisfies a different rationale behind motivation. The teamwork factor provides the means of ‘how’ safety is achieved and civic engagement/CSR answers ‘why’ the safe work is important. Incorporating these as well as other millennial focused themes may be an effective strategy in developing the framework of a millennial oriented safety program.

Furthermore, it may be useful to consider some of the feedback from the control presentation as well. Keeping safety messages short and to the point seems to be a point of value for millennials and may be an important consideration in creating safety-training materials for millennials. What has been characterized as a short attention span may in fact be an actual need for more efficient messaging and communication.

8.1. Limitations

One limitation associated with most generational research is that while the goal is to find commonalities between individuals of the same generation in order

Table 7
Pooled Rated-response Statements ANOVA (without covariates)

Statement #	Source	DF	Adj SS	Adj MS	F-Value	P-Value
1	Q _p	1	14.45	14.450	8.17	0.005
	Error	88	155.65	1.769		
	Total	89	170.10			
2	Q _p	1	3.756	3.756	2.53	0.115
	Error	88	130.733	1.486		
	Total	89	134.489			
3	Q _p	1	6.422	6.422	4.49	0.037
	Error	88	125.800	1.430		
	Total	89	132.222			
4	Q _p	1	2.689	2.689	1.08	0.301
	Error	88	218.467	2.483		
	Total	89	221.156			
5	Q _p	1	8.022	8.022	4.47	0.037
	Error	88	157.933	1.795		
	Total	89	165.956			

to develop generalizations of that cohort, individual differences can still be vastly different depending on individual personalities and preferences. For this reason, it is important to gather a large sample in order to determine the effect of these commonalities.

Using college students as subjects can have an impact of the results since these students often have had less experience working in industrial environments where safety is a more highly regarded, and necessary, subject of training and discussion. For this reason, it may be more appropriate to test individuals working in the field who may have more of a connection to safety messages as they apply to their work. In addition, the use of a hypothetical scenario may not elicit the same response in someone who is unfamiliar with the work and is not personally concerned with the information compared to someone who is actually working in a position to which the safety message applies. This would also allow researchers to test other identified millennial work preferences such as achievement and feedback because participants would be able to relate these themes to their current work relationships.

Another factor related to the college student sample is that the majority of current college students have birth years near the end of this cohort's range creating a skewed sample that is not fully representative of the population. With the age range of this population in 2018 being from 21 to 37 and the average age of the sample being 24, the sample is more representative of later millennials.

Another limitation is in the repetition of the same safety topic. This was intentionally designed in order to eliminate bias and to focus the viewers' attention specifically on the theme behind the message

rather than the messages themselves. However, it introduced a new problem in the attention of the subjects. After watching one or two six to eight minute presentations on the same subject with the same information, subjects may become less focused on the presentations making it more difficult to report on the message behind the presentation. In addition, the length and repetitiveness of the study may have had a recency effect with the last presentation being the most easily recalled than the earlier viewed. While the randomized order of the presentations controlled for this effect, the results showing little to no difference in millennial preference may indicate that this could have played a role in their scoring of the presentations.

8.2. Suggestions for future research

In future studies, it may be beneficial to test these methods in a real company with workers who are actually performing the work that pertains to the safety topic. This has the potential to show more statistically significant results as subjects are more familiar and involved with the work. In the case of the teamwork theme, workers would be able to relate the team tactics to the coworkers they already know and work with. Similarly, showing the consequences in terms of their effect on teammates and coworkers may have a stronger effect if they can see that it could happen to someone specific that they care about. A similar effect may be the case for CSR messages as well; familiarity with the company's specific CSR goal and their level of commitment to that goal may yield a stronger affect.

Use of a cross-sequential design would be effective in this scenario as it would provide comparative results between groups as well as longitudinal data that would show the effect over time. It would provide before and after results for comparison as well. Additionally, performing this type of a study in an actual work setting would allow for more meaningful and measurable results. For instance, data for pre- and post-study accident and injury rates would be a more indicative measure of effectiveness in achieving the end goal behind this initiative. Qualitative data could also be gathered using performance reviews and interview data from workers and their direct managers. Data could also be collected by implementing these safety messages for only certain work teams allowing for comparison between teams that were or were not administered a themed safety message.

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Conflict of interest

None to report.

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Appendices

Appendix 1.1: Team Attitude Survey (TAS)

For each item, please indicate your response by circling the appropriate number for each item in the scale below [27]

1.	Teamwork skills deserve more attention in the workplace.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Teams make better decisions than individuals.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Given a choice, I would rather work alone than do a job where I have to work in a team.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	It is impossible to function in today's society without being a good team player.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	I prefer to participate in team-oriented activities.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Teams always outperform individuals.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Everyone should be taught to be a good team player.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	I prefer to work on teams where team members perform their own tasks independently rather than working together.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	I find that working as a member of a team increases my ability to perform effectively.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	I find working in a team to be very satisfying.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	Teamwork is one of the most important skills in life.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	I prefer to be rewarded for my team's performance rather than my individual performance.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	People with strong teamwork skills will always be successful.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	Teams plan better than individuals.	1	2	3	4	5
15.	I prefer working as part of a team to working alone.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix 1.2: Civic Engagement Survey (CES)

Civic Engagement Attitudes Survey [28]

1.	I feel responsible for my community.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	I believe I should make a difference in my community.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	I believe that I have a responsibility to help the poor and the hungry.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.	I am committed to serve in my community.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.	I believe that all citizens have a responsibility to their community.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.	I believe that it is important to be informed of community issues.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7.	I believe that it is important to volunteer.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8.	I believe that it is important to financially support charitable organizations.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Civic Engagement Behavior Survey

1.	I am involved in structured volunteer position(s) in the community.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	When working with others, I make positive changes in the community.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	I help members of my community. I stay informed of events in my community.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.	I participate in discussions that raise issues of social responsibility.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.	I contribute to charitable organizations within the community.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Appendix 2.1: Rated-response Survey

Rate the extent to which you agree with the following statements based on each of the presentations you just watched

1.	This video would motivate me to work safely.							
	Video 1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Video 2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Video 3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	This video presented the information in a manner in which I can relate.							
	Video 1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Video 2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Video 3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	Based on this company's work safety values, I could see myself working for this company.							
	Video 1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Video 2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Video 3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.	I find this presentation interesting and easy to pay attention to.							
	Video 1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Video 2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Video 3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.	I feel that this presentation, in general, would motivate my peers to work safely.							
	Video 1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Video 2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Video 3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Appendix 2.2: Open-response Survey

Date:

Time:

Participant #:

1. Which presentation (1, 2, or 3) most motivated you to work safely and why?
 2. Which presentation (1, 2, or 3) did you think had the best message and why?
 3. Which presentation (1, 2, or 3) did you think was most relatable and why?
 4. Which presentation (1, 2, or 3) did you think took the best approach to safety and why?
 5. Which presentation (1, 2, or 3) did you think best held your attention and why?
 6. Overall, what types of messages do you think would motivate you to follow safety practices?
 7. What do you think motivates your peers to follow safety practices?
 8. Would you like to add anything else or comment on the presentations, the experiment, or motivation in general?
-