

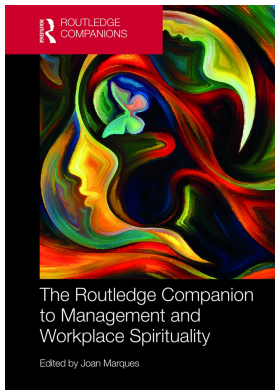
This article was downloaded by: 10.2.97.136

On: 27 Mar 2023

Access details: *subscription number*

Publisher: *Routledge*

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: 5 Howick Place, London SW1P 1WG, UK



The Routledge Companion to Management and Workplace Spirituality

Joan Marques

Spirituality as a Reflection of Value-Centeredness

Publication details

<https://test.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781351015110-27>

Sylvia W. Burgess, Karen Martin-Jones

Published online on: 11 Mar 2019

How to cite :- Sylvia W. Burgess, Karen Martin-Jones. 11 Mar 2019, *Spirituality as a Reflection of Value-Centeredness from: The Routledge Companion to Management and Workplace Spirituality*
Routledge

Accessed on: 27 Mar 2023

<https://test.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781351015110-27>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR DOCUMENT

Full terms and conditions of use: <https://test.routledgehandbooks.com/legal-notices/terms>

This Document PDF may be used for research, teaching and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproductions, re-distribution, re-selling, loan or sub-licensing, systematic supply or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

The publisher does not give any warranty express or implied or make any representation that the contents will be complete or accurate or up to date. The publisher shall not be liable for an loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of this material.

26

SPIRITUALITY AS A REFLECTION OF VALUE-CENTEREDNESS

Sylvia W. Burgess and Karen Martin-Jones

Introduction

In the past 10 years spirituality in the workplace has gained more traction. Historically, all attempts to leave everything spiritual out of the workplace has been the norm. As the workplace has been transformed by the various generations continuously entering the workforce, a look at value systems is critical to the ongoing success of organizations. The introduction of the connection between spirituality and spiritual capital as an asset that everyone possesses and can use in various ways creates a foundation for understanding the meaning and importance of spiritual capital as a means of sustainability for those in leadership roles.

Leaders in organizations need to be able to create a workplace culture that is evolving and sustainable for future generations. Thus, leading to the importance of empowering workers to lead using spiritual capital's intrinsic value system as a moral compass to build relationships, enhance trust, and create organizational change as a tool to support the intergenerational workplace that is forced with knowing how to effectively communicate and build relationships. Spiritual capital while not directly representative of any religion or religious practice is born out of one's personal spirituality. Spirituality is an interconnected duality between a leader's intrinsic value system and the world around them. These intrinsic values are reflective of the leader's spirituality. It is important that leaders understand the importance of spirituality and the role that it plays in assisting us in working together, building trust in our relationships and our fundamental wholeness as individuals. This value-centered approach emphasizes the importance of treating spirituality as a resource in this rapidly changing work environment, with the hopes of bridging any existing conflictual generational gaps.

Spiritual capital is defined as the intrinsic values of an individual that are aligned with trust, culture, and deep commitment to relationship building, to better serve society as well as to satisfy our internal human need to serve. These intrinsic factors are value-based and not focused on religious constructs (Lloyd, 2010). Spiritual capital is dependent upon having faith in one another that is not necessarily bound by traditional contractual agreements for working together. Spiritual capital has nothing to do with one's personal religious practices (Burgess, 2011). Traditionally, the church has played a significant role in helping us develop our value systems, but it does not stop there. When cultivated in the right way, spiritual capital can help individuals go beyond just working together to foster repeatable and sustainable relationships in the workplace.

In 2011, Burgess conducted research examining the relationship between engagement and spiritual capital. The results indicated that as an individual's spiritual capital increases so does their willingness to engage and participate. As such, spiritual capital can be used as an asset to build organizational participation among workers. Spiritual capital is a resource that is not possessed by select leaders, but by all humans. By helping leaders understand that they already possess an intrinsic nature to participate and engage with others can change the organizational climate in very positive ways; especially considering the multiple generations currently in the workplace and the challenges associated with this. As the makeup of organizations continues to rapidly change, leaders will need more tools to bridge the gaps between differences in the workforce.

Currently, there is a great deal of discussion about organizational leadership and generational challenges that exist in the workplace. The topic around generational differences has become an ever-increasing discussion in many arenas. Much of it revolves around the fact that for the first time in history, four generations are in the workplace and a fifth generation (GenZ) is not far behind. Thus, the ability to collaborate effectively is integral for leaders not only in the workplace, but in every environment. With each successive generation, the advancements and access to technology changes the way in which we communicate, engage, and collaborate (Martin-Jones, 2012). Furthermore, technology significantly impacts our values and beliefs. After all, people's values are reflective of what is important to them.

Generational Differences

Historically, generational differences are always at play. However, with multiple generations in the workplace vying for the available leadership roles, the relationship and collaboration gap is more noticeable. Of note is the notion that Millennials are challenging the leadership status quo. But, more importantly, they are challenging the value system exhibited by others in the workplace. In the past, salaries and material rewards were considered measures of success. While these are still important, they rank less important than more intangible values to the Millennial generation (Bottomley & Burgess, 2017). It is important to understand the generational differences and their perspectives on spirituality in the workplace.

According to Mannheim (1972), generation is defined as a group of individuals who are the same age and have experienced similar social events in time. The term generation is most often used to describe ancestral affinity, but it has been adopted into common use to describe broader social trends (Joshi, Dencker, & Gentz, 2011; Pilcher, 1994; Ryder, 1965). However, from a social perspective, it is defined as individuals born during the same time, sharing similar historical and socio-cultural experiences. Thus, relegating them to a specific age group implies that their historical and social experiences are in fact similar. However, much of the literature suggests that this demarcation is indicative of a generational cohort (Sessa, Kabacoff, Deal, & Brown, 2007).

Although there are many inconsistencies in the literature as it relates to the start and end date of these generations, for this chapter generations are defined as follows: Silent (1928–1943), Baby Boomers (1944–1964), Generation X (1965–1980), Generation Y, most commonly referred to as the Millennials (1981–1995), and most recently Generation Z (born after 1996). Each generation has experienced significant events which have shaped who they are and more importantly what they value (Gursoy, Chi, & Karadag, 2013). Many of the generational experiences between Generations X, Y, and Z are not significantly different (Twenge, 2010). After all, many of the experiences parallel events that have transpired over decades (i.e., equality, social, and political movements). Understanding these similar, yet prominent, experiences are key to creating a culture that is inclusive and supportive of all generations.

The largest generational gap exists between the Millennials and Boomers. Millennials have far surpassed Boomers and are the largest living generation in the nation. Millennials number over 75.4 million versus 74.9 million Boomers (Pew Research Center, 2010). As a result, the Millennials are setting the pace of growth and leadership styles in the workplace. This is causing organizations to rethink their operating and leadership strategies. Gone are the days when GenXers and Boomers stay with their organizations until retirement and longer. Along with the Millennial population growth in organizations, they are also the dominant culture in most church organizations. After all, if one is to believe that church is one of the fundamental places where spirituality is cultivated, values are formed, and leaders developed, this is certainly a critical point to examine in terms of how spirituality is impacting the workplace with multiple generations present who no longer worship in the same traditional manners. According to a study conducted by Pew Research, 36% of Americans attend religious services weekly and 61% use streaming services to watch shows. Furthermore, 88% of individuals between ages 18 and 29 use some form of social media (Snapchat, Instagram, YouTube) multiple times a day. This research suggests that technology is being utilized as a key component in shaping values and how intergenerational communication is occurring (Pew Research Center, 2010).

Baby Boomers. High births were prominent during this time, hence the name “baby boomers.” As a result, this generation has a strong presence in the workforce. They are described as self-indulgent, entitled, and career oriented. This is a generation who experienced post-war economic prosperity. They believe that hard work pays off and is the key to success and promotion. They are defined as workaholics, who respect hierarchical organizational structures. Some of the literature suggests that this has been a point of contention for baby boomers and younger generations who believe that there should be more flexibility in the workplace (Burke, 2016). In terms of spirituality, the Boomer generation is representative of those who rejected religious institutions at an early age, but later in life sought some spiritual confirmation that may be a result of aging. This generation’s approach to spirituality includes both traditional and non-traditional practices for spiritual growth. Interestingly, Boomers may choose to experience several approaches to spirituality in their lifetime.

GenX. Generation X is known as the “latch-key” generation. They are the generation who had to learn to balance work and family life. The generation that saw fewer nuclear families and more single parent and blended families. Many of the salient events that occurred during this time were layoffs, divorce, economic recession, and Watergate. They represent 33% of the workforce. They are known for staying on their job for long periods of time. As a result, they value independence and the potential for advancement at work. They are comfortable with diversity and tend to focus on similarities rather than differences. They compete with Millennials for upper management jobs (Stark & Farner, 2015). Unlike their Boomer parents, GenXers are more likely to stay attached to religious institutions for their spiritual growth. They often change institutions but are likely to keep trying to find the right connection until they land in a place of contentment for their spirituality. GenXers have tended to embrace God, religious beliefs, and spirituality in non-traditional ways which translated into raising their children with a strong sense of right and wrong as well as making decisions for themselves based on examining information critically.

Millennials. Stapleton, Wen, Starrett, and Kilburn (2007) describe Millennials as independent, inclusive, innovative, and instantaneous—wanting things quickly. They value personal development and work–life balance over money and status. They would rather be happy than to stay at a job they dislike. As a result, their résumés reflect a varied work history. This is a generation who appreciates diversity. Thus, a culturally diverse workplace is what they desire. This generation is concerned with making a name for themselves through altruistic acts, and long to have those acts praised and recognized (Stevens, 2010). They have a higher technical skill set than

their prior generations. Their access to technology makes them a generation who has changed the way in which we acquire knowledge and access information. They too are a generation who have experienced non-traditional family structures. Contrary to popular belief, just because Millennials are not necessarily attending traditional church does not mean that they have forsaken their spirituality. They are seeking alternative avenues to address their spirituality. Technology has created venues that were not available to Boomers and GenXers in the same way it is for Millennials. Their spirituality is more often expressed through the things that they care deeply about. Traditional religious practices are being replaced with a new way of thinking about spirituality that does not require putting a label on it. Their focus is on doing things for the greater good of the world and respecting the beliefs of others as opposed to focusing on what they should believe based on their parents' traditions.

Generation Z. GenZ makes up approximately 26% of the US population. GenZ is considered a generation that is less focused because they live with constant updates. They must process a lot of information and at a rapid pace. This tags them as great multi-taskers. GenZs are considered to be early starters with most joining the workforce between the ages of 16 and 18. They tend to opt for more non-traditional education such as online. Further, they tend to be more entrepreneurial as they prefer more independent work environments. Lastly, this group tends to be more global with the ever-changing advances in technology (Beal, 2017). This generation is noted to be more anti-religion than any other generation. Does this mean that they are not spiritual? No, but their perspectives on God and religion may be more flexible and non-traditional than any former generations. They often ask spiritual questions and many of them pray, but their views are more liberal than those of their parents. It may be too soon to try and predict the path that this generation will take as they are currently teenagers and still have many choices to make. However, all signs suggest that this is a generation who will use technology and will fight for what they believe is fair and equitable for all people.

One of the major themes that resonates throughout the research on generational differences are the similarities that Generation X and the Millennials possess as it relates to the importance of work-life balance and flexibility. Retention of these generations is contingent upon creating a culture that values work-life balance and flexibility as well as altruistic and social values as key components to their job satisfaction (Twenge, 2010). This culture should include space for individual spirituality. Although the expression of spirituality for each generation may be different, it is important to take note of how individual spirituality will impact the value systems in the workplace.

There are many differences in value systems among generations. These differences in values have often served to widen the gap of understanding between generations. A chief factor to remember is that although value systems may be different, they are all important. Leaders are often defined by their values and the values often emphasize what things are essential to success. It is vital for good leaders to hold on to their values even if they are unpopular, as long as they are helping the organization succeed. However, when the values become outdated or no longer applicable to organizational success, the leader must recognize this and change. When the values of leaders are instilled in the organization this creates an opportunity for others to have a way by which to respond in times of crisis or turbulence that is consistent with the value system of the leaders (Bottomley & Burgess, 2017). Operating from this perspective, it gives credibility to the need to appreciate multiple value systems. It also should encourage relationship building across generations, which encompasses values from all leaders within the workplace. The challenge is in blending these values in such a manner that is more inclusive for those involved and enhances productivity in the work environment. There are many ways to accomplish this, which include being present in the moment, being comfortable in the work community, accepting limits, and building positive relationships even in conflictual situations.

Table 26.1 Overview of the Currently Working Generations

Generation	Key Characteristics	Spirituality
Baby boomers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hard worker • Respect hierarchical structures • Stay on the job for long periods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rejected religious institutions at early an age • Seek spiritual growth later in life (traditional and non-traditional) • Experience several approaches to spirituality
GenX	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Latch-key generation • Had to learn to balance work/family life • Seek flexibility in the workplace • Stay on the job for long periods of time • Experienced non-traditional family structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More likely to stay attached to their spiritual institutions for spiritual growth • Tend to embrace religious beliefs and God in non-traditional ways • Access to information through technology started
Millennials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent • Instantaneous • Value work–life balance over money • Consistently switch jobs • Appreciates diversity • Altruistic • Experienced non-traditional family structures • Connected to technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek non-traditional avenues for spirituality • Access to technology provides more non-traditional spiritual opportunities • Spirituality is closely aligned with their altruistic acts
GenZ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connected to technology and constantly receiving updates and immediate feedback • Non-traditional family structures • Value diversity and inclusion • Tend to prefer more online non-traditional education • Globally connected • Entrepreneurial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted to be more agnostic than other generations • More flexible in their views on religion and God • Spiritually inquisitive • Liberal

Generational Values and Leadership

Values also play an important role in individual relationships. They serve as guiding principles for decision-making and lifestyle choices. Individuals differ in what constitutes values, but that they are recognizable and universal in some ways (Schwartz, 2012). Spiritual values take different forms for different people. There are some commonalities across spiritual values which include: (a) a connection with God; (b) alignment with nature; (c) less emphasis on material and personal desires; and (d) a social connection with other people. Values are influential in the workplace. Values are often indicative of the decisions we will make (Rokeach, 1973). They can be self-determining, but also provides space for group cooperation within the workplace. Further, values can set the tone for all of an individual's interaction and defines the culture of an organization (Kraemer, 2011). Values promote personal, collective, and relationship building among individuals.

Values are learned within a social context. They are the result of life experiences. Many of the younger generations (X, Y, Z) have grown up with technology as a constant fixture in their lives. As a result, technology has significantly shaped the value system of these generations who use technology as their social medium. A member of GenZ was asked about what she values, and her response was, "technology." I went on to ask, "what about technology do you value?" and she responded by saying, "I value the freedom that technology provides." She went on to say, "It is the medium which our generation (Z) uses to invoke change, both locally and globally" (A. Martin, personal communication, April 2018). In effect, values are what a person believes to be right or wrong. Therefore, these generations choose to be the voice of change that shifts the dynamics from the status quo and realigns the value system to one that is inclusive and equitable from a global perspective. The pervasiveness and freedom that technology provides allows for injustices and inequalities to be exposed.

Values are an intrinsic compass that guide the choices and decisions that one will make. Although values are an eternal component of one's being developed over time, they are in effect malleable (Lyons & Kuron, 2014). Suggesting that they can change over time depending upon their influences. Social scientists propose that every individual possesses a unique set of values that are shaped by culture, life experiences, and family dynamics (Weber, 2017). Thus, a generation who is shaped as mere infants by a culture that is deeply rooted in technology and family, both traditional and non-traditional will likely value similar aspects in the workplace. Additionally, it is important to note that for younger generations the freedom that technology provides is an additional variable that can potentially be used to shape their values. After all, it has been access to technology that the younger generations have used to expose inequalities or injustices that exist. For example, Google's equal pay for women, Black Lives Matter movements and protests, gun laws, and recorded police brutality using social media have all been initiated by younger generations. Baby boomers whose value system may not have aligned with the younger generations are now forced to engage with a generation who did not grow up with segregation. Therefore, it is time for the current leaders to actually consider the values of younger generations who are taking a stand and making a change.

Moreover, it is in fact these differing values, cognitions, and behaviors across generations that have led to many of the intergenerational conflicts (Stark, & Farner, 2015). Furthermore, work values among generations serve as a source of contention in many organizational units (Gursoy et al., 2013). Some research suggests that generations do not exist and that young leaders do not lead any differently from older leaders. This may very well be true, however there is an increase in the number of young people in leadership positions and the conflicts are becoming ever increasing. After all, according to data obtained from the Bureau

of Labor Statistics, in 2011 there were 290 individuals between the ages of 16 and 19 in management positions and by 2017 there were 435. This is a 50% increase in just 6 years. Additionally, in 2011 there were 2611 individuals between the ages of 20 and 24 in management positions and in 2017 that number rose to 3275. This is an increase of 25% over the last 6 years (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2011). These data support the notion that more Millennials and GenZs are entering the workforce. Which leads us to question are generational differences the problem or are the conflicts due in large part to generations who have the power and ability to shift the status quo by using their voices through technology to invoke change? Is the generational conflict due in part to a younger generation whose values are closely aligned with their generational characteristics (altruism, diversity, etc.)? Have our older generations conformed to the norm that they themselves set and now we have a generation who is creating a workplace that challenges the structures that are in place? Disrupting the norm creates an uncomfortable environment for older generations who have become accustomed to the way things have always been. Additionally, Fry (2005) suggests that generations are likely have similar attitudes and values toward leadership and workplace culture. Thus, understanding generational values is integral to addressing the issues that could arise in an intergenerational workplace.

Rokeach (1973) contends that “a value system is an enduring organization of beliefs concerning preferable modes of conduct or end states of existence along a continuum of relative importance” (p. 5). What one believes dictates how one behaves and responds to situations. Along this continuum of life generational experiences shape the value-centered belief systems. Although values are one variable impacting behaviors in organizations, researchers suggest that there are multiple variables that impact a person’s decision-making. The new variable impacting and shaping Millennials and GenZ is their access to technology. This is a generation who has used social media as a driving force in shaping and defining their values and self-worth through the number of likes or followers they have. Gursoy et al. (2013) suggests that, for some, values are a measure of their worth. Gehman, Treviño, and Garud (2013) argue that values play an integral role in organization performance and behavior.

The impact of values on leadership is immense. From a leadership perspective, values can take multiple forms. Values help to determine how leaders make decisions. While past theories have promoted the natural innate qualities of leadership, values help shape leaders and their behavior. In addition, a leader’s values help determine how the organizational value system is developed. In developing a value system within the organization, leaders help to create the strategy and focus for the workplace. It is important that leaders understand that their values influence organizational strategy which also directs the organizational culture. It is also necessary for leaders to understand the role that their personal value system plays in challenging the status quo. Thus, it is important for leaders to embrace the idea that with the multiple generations in the workplace there will be varied value systems in play as well.

Burgess (2011) noted that the connection between leadership and spiritual capital is one such value system that can shape the values of an organization and impact participation and engagement. When spiritual capital is viewed as an intrinsic value, there are enhanced opportunities to use it to create change through building better relationships, enhancing the trust and faith among individuals, and using it as an intentional resource with the premise that the organization will be better and a more cohesive and collaborative place to work. Incorporating spiritual capital as a tool for effective leadership and recognizing that there are multiple layers depending on which generation is putting it forth can provide leverage for leaders to build the foundation of value-centered culture within the organization that becomes more inclusive while bridging the generational gaps (Burgess, 2011).

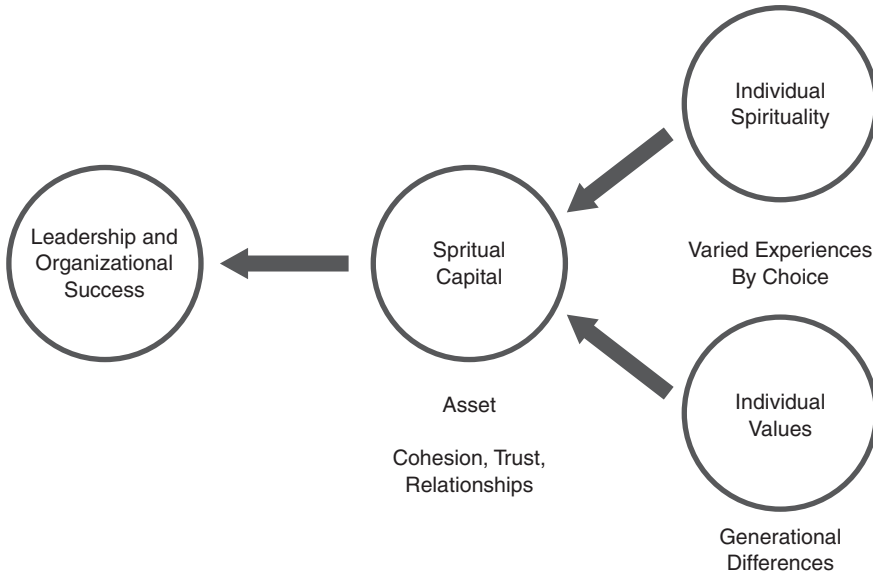


Figure 26.1 Link Between Individual Spirituality and Individual Values

Spiritual capital is universal. It is not something that only a few possess. We all have spiritual capital. The use of this capital should be intentional, as it helps individuals engage and create relationships that extend beyond just being colleagues. It helps us establish connections that give us advantages in situations where material wealth cannot. It raises the common good among individuals. Spiritual capital is a resource that can be used to bridge the gaps between generations in the workplace when used as a relational asset that brings groups together. The ultimate goal of spiritual capital is the utilization of it as an asset to help leaders and their teams understand the importance of their influence and relationship building to create a climate of participation, trust, and harmony. Further, the use of spiritual capital is a method by which leaders can connect to their teams and to other leaders by building the trust and working through faith in others to facilitate better working conditions. It is important for leaders to understand the benefits of spiritual capital and how it can provide space for greater participation among individuals (Burgess, 2011).

Continuing to work from the earlier premise that spiritual capital is born out of one’s personal spirituality helps to solidify the relationship between values and spirituality. When the link between individual spirituality and individual values is made it reinforces cohesion, trust, and relationship building, which is the foundation for spiritual capital (see Figure 26.1). The intentional understanding of the connection between values, spirituality, and spiritual capital then creates a process whereby the generational differences can be better managed and subsequently influence leadership behavior and organizational success.

The Future of Leadership in the Workplace

Leadership and generations have been a topic of concern for ages, but as access and the advance of technology become even more pervasive the ability to lead multiple generations is critical to organizational growth and sustainability. Smola and Sutton (2002) propose that “continued

enquiry into this field is important to business leaders as they attempt to understand motivate, and successfully lead the individuals in their organizations and function as good corporate citizens” (p. 381). “Leadership is about the growth and positive change that a leader can bring about while working with others” (Kraemer, 2011).

A leader’s values are a measure of what they stand for and believe. Transformational leadership is a leader/follower model, in which the leader is able to transfer his/her values and beliefs to an organization creating a following of individuals who respect and value the leader’s vision. A leader’s value system is clear and transformative throughout the entire organization. The more a leader can transfer their values and beliefs, the better an organization is able to cooperate. Thus, creating an environment that is conducive for multiple generations to work together. The ability to understand a leader’s values creates a culture and climate of intergenerational cohesion within the organization, in which collaboration and respect are mutually exclusive. In effect, leadership becomes a seamless process. Regardless of one’s values, if there is a clear understanding and respect of the leader’s values the more likely an organization is to succeed. Values-centered leadership is undergirded by four main pillars: (1) self-reflection, (2) balance, (3), self-confidence, and (4) humility.

The importance of self-reflection speaks to the need to know yourself. Through self-reflection the leader can navigate through the maze of complexity within organizations. Good leaders will take the time for self-reflection by turning off the noise and looking through their spiritual capital lens to answer what are my values and how will they help me in this situation? Self-reflection should be a daily routine. Second, balance is often spoken of as a necessity. It is difficult to find balance if you do not know what you value. One approach to creating balance is to observe and understand the value systems of those in the workplace and align values with the rules, processes, and procedures. This process begins by ensuring that people in the organization are secure, respected, trusted, and treated fairly. Leaders who have values that guide organizational behavior and are applied consistently increase the chance for balance. Allowing employees to own these guiding values creates a climate of adaptability and responsibility which adds to balance. Establishing organizational values allows for alignment with policies and procedures that are necessary for success. Third, having self-confidence and being clear about your skills and strengths create value alignment. When you lack self-confidence, it is likely that your values are not aligned. Self-confidence helps us see clearly where we are going and helps in our decision-making. It is vital that we do not mistake self-confidence for arrogance and in turn dismiss the value of individuals whom we may misjudge. Lastly, humility is often considered a soft value. Humility does not represent softness and lack of drive. It does represent finding value in the right place in the organization. When individuals exhibit humility, they support the belief that others can have good ideas, minds can be changed, and that old values should be re-examined for current usability. Examining these pillars through one’s spiritual capital lens allows for the creation of cohesion, strong relationships, and trust. This is a key component to using values to bridge the generation divide around value-centeredness.

Finally, leaders need to understand the differences of each generation and build upon them and they also need to learn how to take those similarities and differences to create an environment that allows each generation to thrive collectively. After all, Mikitka (2009) posits this is a critical component of organizational success. Studies suggest that understanding workplace values is the first step in understanding how to address generational differences in the workplace. According to a study examining the perceptions of Millennials on value-centered leadership, the study contends that value-centered leadership is the most viable leadership model for addressing the intergenerational organizational structure (Maier, Tavanti, Bombard, Gentile, & Bradford, 2015). The researchers liken the value-centered model to the transformational leadership theory in that it is a

leader follower model. The value-centered leadership theory focuses on creating an organizational structure that is inclusive, respects and embraces diversity while supporting common values of all entities (Maier et al., 2015). Values-based leadership is leading by example and creating a culture that is concerned about the organization as a whole, “the greater good” (Kraemer, 2011). The values-based leadership approach speaks to generations, especially a generation rooted in creating change and being change agents. Ultimately, leadership is in and of itself the ability to lead regardless of the challenges, albeit age, generational conflict, or differences, etc. Leaders need to engage in intergenerational dialogue to find out what they would like to see in the workplace. Therefore, the future of leadership must be malleable, flexible, consistent, and equitable. Thus, these aspects resonate with the descriptions of how generations describe their individual spirituality.

Conclusion

Spirituality can produce a synergy that may help bridge intentional or unintentional gaps between generations in the workplace. Value-centeredness approaches are a unique way that spirituality is acceptable in many work environments. We proffer spiritual capital as the mechanism through which this can occur. The effective use of spiritual capital can promote a climate of cohesion, strong relationships, trust, and faith in one another that goes beyond just working together daily. It creates a repeatable and sustainable climate for success through deliberate participation.

Leaders already possess spiritual capital and thus the foundation for focusing on values is in place. Spiritual capital is based on our intrinsic value system that has evolved from our experiences of spirituality and the impact of technology. This coupled with an emphasis on building relationships and understanding that there are multiple value systems operating within any organization at the same time, sets the stage for a more open-minded acceptance of others. It will take leaders that are not afraid to challenge the status quo to create an environment where intergenerational groups can co-exist, and organizational goals are accomplished with less conflict because of differences in values. This will require building mutually beneficial relationships across generations and through leaders who are intentional about incorporating values in the workplace (Burgess, 2011).

As more leaders become engaged in using value-centered approaches within their teams, the use of spiritual capital can rise as an opportunity to focus on creating organizational synergy through building relationships, building trust, and having faith in others to do their part. This is the intentional use of spiritual capital as a resource. This resource can and should yield a high return on the investment required for organizational success. It is necessary for leaders to find a place for their spirituality in the workplace. Just as the knowledge and skills you bring to work are considered a value to the success of the organization, so should your spirituality. We suggest that through the lens of spiritual capital individual spirituality can and does have a place in the work environment. Spiritual capital is an integral part of every person. Individuals should be entitled to bring their “whole” self to work. Highlighting spiritual capital as part of the success factors for organizational outcomes positions it as a resource owned by everyone. This resource along with knowledge and skills can help frame the way leaders perceive spirituality not only as a useful asset, but as a necessary requirement for intergenerational success.

References

- Beal, G. (2017). 8 key differences between GenZ and Millennials. Retrieved from www.huffingtonpost.com/george-beall/8-key-differences-between_b_12814200.html.
- Bottomley, K., & Burgess, S. (2017, October). Leadership skills for millennials: Challenging the status quo. Presentation at the International Leadership Association 19th Annual Global Conference, Brussels, Belgium.
- Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2011). Retrieved from www.bls.gov/.

- Burgess, S. W. (2011). *Spiritual capital: Relationship with civic engagement among faith-based leaders*. (Doctoral dissertation), North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, Greensboro, NC.
- Burke, K. (2016). Millennials and baby boomers have this one thing in common. *MarketWatch*. Retrieved from www.marketwatch.com/story/millennials-and-baby-boomers-have-this-one-thing-in-common-2016-07-21.
- Fry, L. W. (2005). Introduction to the Leadership Quarterly special issue: Toward a paradigm of spiritual leadership. *Leadership Quarterly*, 16(5), 619–622.
- Gehman, J., Treviño, L. K., & Garud, R. (2013). Values work: A process study of the emergence and performance of organizational values practices. *Academy of Management Journal*, 56(1), 84.
- Gursoy, D., Chi, C. G. Q., & Karadag, E. (2013). Generational differences in work values and attitudes among frontline and service contact employees. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 32(1), 40–48.
- Joshi, A., Dencker, J., & Gentz, F. (2011). Generations in organizations. *Research Organizational Behavior*, 31, 177–205.
- Kraemer, H. M. (2011). *From Values to Action: The Four Principles of Values-Based Leadership*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- Lloyd, C. M. (2010). *University relations*. (Doctoral dissertation), North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, Greensboro, NC.
- Lyons, S., & Kuron, L. (2014). Generational differences in the workplace: A review of the evidence and directions for future research. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 35(S1), S139–S157.
- Maier, T., Tavanti, M., Bombard, P., Gentile, M., & Bradford, B. (2015). Millennial generation perceptions of value-centered leadership principles. *Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality & Tourism*, 14(4), 382.
- Mannheim, K. (1972). *Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Martin-Jones, K. (2012). *Emergent technology and the millennial generation: Examining the perceptions of students and implications for higher education*. (Doctoral dissertation), North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, Greensboro, NC.
- Mikitka, M. J. (2009). Managing the multi-generational workforce. *Material Handling Management*, 64(8), 11.
- Pew Research Center. (2010). Millennials: A portrait of generation next. *Pew Research Center*. Retrieved from www.pewsocialtrends.org/files/2010/10/millennials-confident-connected-open-to-change.pdf.
- Pilcher, J. (1994). Mannheim's sociology of generations: An undervalued legacy. *British Journal of Sociology*, 45, 481–495.
- Rokeach, M. (1973). *The Nature of Human Values*. New York: Free Press.
- Ryder, N. B. (1965). The cohort as a concept in the study of social change. *American Sociological Review*, 30, 843–861.
- Schwartz, S. H. (2012). An overview of the Schwartz theory of basic values. *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture*, 2(1).
- Sessa, V. I., Kabacoff, R. I., Deal, J., & Brown, H. (2007). Generational differences in leader values and leadership behaviors. *Psychologist-Manager Journal*, 10(1), 47–74.
- Smola, K. W., & Sutton, C. D. (2002). Generational differences: Revisiting generational work values for the new millennium. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 23(4), 363–382.
- Stapleton, J. L., Wen, H. J., Starrett, D., & Kilburn, M. (2007). Generational differences in using online learning systems. *Human Systems Management*, 26(2), 99.
- Stark, E., & Farner, S. (2015). Intergenerational warfare in the U.S. workplace, or nothing more than growing pains? *Sam Advanced Management Journal*, 80(1).
- Stevens, R. H. (2010). Managing human capital: How to use knowledge management to transfer knowledge in today's multi-generational workforce. *International Business Research*, 3(3) 77–83.
- Twenge, J. M. (2010). A review of the empirical evidence on generational differences in work attitudes. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 25(2), 201–210.
- Weber, J. (2017). Discovering the Millennials' personal values orientation: A comparison to two managerial populations. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 143(3), 517–529.