

# Imagining the Next Generation of Talent

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Transportation and Logistics

# Aims

- To provide a broad and critical perspective on society's ongoing dialogue about "millennials."
- To discuss research undertaken with millennials on issues related to hyperconnection in society, comparison, advancement and other themes.
- To share observations and engage in dialogue with participants on the idea of "talent" and the "next generation" of leadership within transportation and logistics.

# Outline of session\*

- A brief background on the idea of millennials within society.
- Themes/conditions shaping individuals' experiences in developing careers.
- Implications of these themes/conditions on individual and organizational levels.
- Challenges for transportation and logistics.
- Helpful considerations in addressing these issues.
- \*Three occasions for dialogue over the course of the session.

# Experience in this space

- Worked and consulted in this space over the last 3 years (co-founded company Gen Y Inc., originally a recruitment firm): views have evolved considerably over this time.
- Clients have been across Canada, the US, UK and Israel.
- Hundreds of interviews and many more pages of transcriptions.
- Background is primarily in philosophy (educational and political). Interest is more on individual than organizational level.
- Human resources does not adequately capture this discussion; must ultimately deal in the particular. There are no quick answers!

Background on the  
idea of **Millennials**  
within work and  
society

# Contrary to common understanding, millennials are *not* much different than other generations

- Scholarly research shows that millennials want and care about very similar things in their work as is true in other generations (George Washington University and the Department of Defense).
- Individuals tend to sit on one side of the fence, either believing that millennials are an entirely unique/foreign species, or that there is very little difference between people of different generations.
- Bruce Pfau (KPMG) in the *Harvard Business Review*: “What Do Millennials Really Want at Work? The Same Things the Rest of Us Do.”

# So why does this myth persist?

- Makes for great headlines, and people read it.
- Millennial success stories (Forbes Top 30, startups, prodigies) receive a lot of coverage, even if they are not necessarily representative of the generation.
- We live in an age where misinformation can be spread extremely quickly, people search for fast answers to complex problems.
- We have legitimately seen young people help create change in a number of parts of society; namely, in politics and tech (e.g. NDP within Alberta; Don Iveson and Naheed Nenshi at the municipal levels).
- Lucrative space in HR, especially for consultants, who feed the myth.

# There is not a typical millennial\*

- There is significant variation within this population (level of education, stage of life, industry, gender, etc.).
- People are complex, and so ultimately we must consider individual differences from situation to situation.
- People change over the course of their lives, with stage of life playing a key role in a person's interests (major differences between high school, university, first 5 years in work, next 5 years, management, etc.).
- \*Significant tension between increasingly bleak opportunities for young people, and millennial stories that are really a matter of affluence.



# But there are *conditions* worth considering

- There are important conditions that we should consider that shape how young people entering work nowadays think about their lives and careers.
- Less about millennials and more about social, economic, cultural, technological questions. Millennials navigating this but affects all people.
- My interest in this presentation is in exploring the conditions/factors that I have seen to be most relevant in my work over the last years.
- Fascinating elements are less about millennials *per se*, and more about broader social, technological and economic change. We are living through it...

What themes and  
conditions should we  
consider?

# We live in a society of affluence

“As we know more now than ever before about the kinds of lives it is possible to live – and affluence has allowed more people than ever before to think of their lives in terms of choices and options – we are always haunted by the myth of our potential, of what we might have it in ourselves to be or do.” – Adam Phillips, *Missing Out: In Praise of the Unlived Life*

- Individuals, and young people (millennials) especially, think of their lives in terms of potential.
- “High potential leaders”: many companies/employers now have these special tracks for their junior staff. Everyone is now considered *talent*.
- A constant striving is ingrained in young people through educational system.

# A belief in options and choice

“As a culture, we are enamored of freedom, self-determination, and variety, and we are reluctant to give up any of our options... clinging tenaciously to all the choices available to us contributes to bad decisions, to anxiety, stress, and dissatisfaction – even to clinical depression” – Barry Schwartz, *The Paradox of Choice*

- Entrepreneurship as an example of something that is now looked favourably upon. Value placed on autonomy, freedom from constraint.
- Liberal society where we glorify the individual (it is up to the individual to determine what they will do).
- Society is changing quickly, and therefore many new types of jobs.

# We are living longer than ever

- Life expectancy nearly doubled in the 20th century.
- Means that individuals have much more time to explore before they make decisions about what they will do and be in their lives, select partners, settle in a particular city. Not necessarily a good strategy for individuals (Meg Jay).
- Changes how we must think about education and the training/experiences employers should provide to individuals early in their careers. This space for exploration is often seen as “laziness”, but will increasingly become the norm.
- Laura Carstensen of Stanford leading this thinking on ageing, reality that we will soon to 100 years on average.

# Narratives and reality about speed of change in society

- Millennials constantly hear that the majority of their demographic lacks the basic skills required to perform in their work (employers constantly complain but few invest in training).
- Messages about industries rising and falling, and on how many of the jobs of tomorrow are unknown to us today.
- Higher education does this especially: universities often talk about preparing students for an uncertain world, where the most important quality a person can develop is *adaptability*.

# Living in a hyperconnected world

- Pace and frequency of communication is rapid, extremely difficult to disconnect.
- Enormous amount of information around us creates challenges in separating good from bad. Facebook 'false news' during US elections.
- “Young people live in multiple timeframes, but in which shorter and quicker timeframes squeeze out those that are longer and slower” (Professor Ronald Barnett, University of London Institute of Education)
- Pressure to be constantly connected and a feeling of *missing out* should a person not respond to something quickly.

# Increased pressure to manage multiple selves, specifically through social media

- Individuals must now represent themselves online, must actively manage these “brands” (rise of the term *personal brand*, i.e. individuals are commodities, as reflected in instrumental/performative language).
- Social acceptance often requires that individuals are actively on these forms of media.
- There is a savvy required for individuals as they switch between these various profiles and “curate” what they will read, think about, publish, and how/with whom they will interact.
- Studies show (University of Michigan) that the more time a person spends on social media, the worse they feel



# Unprecedented success stories are presented in the media

- Many lists that celebrate the successes of young people (Forbes Top 30 Under 30; *Real Leaders* Top 100; Avenue Top 40, etc.).
- On one hand, they highlight young people's journeys and successes, but on the other, remind millennials that they're never doing enough.
- Meteoric successes do sometimes take place, but they are rare, and they often require lucky breaks, great connections, or years of diligent and unrewarding work realities, which is glossed over in most media profiles.
- Young people begin to think that these stories are the standard, without having a sense of work required to achieve a particular kind of success.

# Automation and Artificial Intelligence

- Likelihood that routine jobs, including professional services, will be automated in the coming years.
- Significant implications regarding skills and life-long learning. Both social and political risks.
- Increasing focus on how to mitigate potentially catastrophic risk from such technologies (University of Cambridge Centre for the Study of Existential Risk).
- Much more focus now in the media. Widespread concern.

# Shift in purposes of higher education

- Gradual shift from a public to private good. Result of decrease in government funding; price for the individual/family increases.
- Thus, education increasingly seen as a private investment (human capital). Parents look for return on investment.
- Knowledge economy means universities/colleges seen as contributors to economic growth.
- Investments required in skills, often in technical jobs.
- Students feel pressure to invest in themselves, aware of increasing competition.

What are the  
**implications** for  
individuals? (Being)

# Anxiety

- Especially through constant comparison to one's colleagues and friends.
- “We are a generation that is ruthlessly comparing ourselves with those around us and our role models at the same time. And if we are not doing something exceptional or don't feel important and fulfilled for what we are doing, we have a hard time.” – Interviewee on recent client project
- Rise of mental health issues on university/college campuses.

# Fast rhythms of work and focus on the short-term as opposed to projects that require commitment over years

“So the modern world requires us to live in different time-frames – but this is beyond the ways in which younger people understand themselves and their relationship to the world. Their timeframes are limited to the short-term and instantaneous and have a rapid rhythm” – Professor Ronald Barnett

- “Freedom is illusory; we are in a bigger rat race than ever.” – Interviewee on recent client project

# Standards for personal success are often external rather than internal

Albert Bandura, one of the world's great psychologists (highest-cited living psychologist), states that comparison takes place in three ways:

- comparison with others
- comparison to the future (expectations)
- self-comparison

There is very little space for critical self-comparison; our society favours the two first kinds. Interviewees have referred to this as “ruthless comparison”

# Belief in uncertainty discourages deep/full commitment to a particular task/job.

- A belief in always having one foot in and another foot out while in a particular role.
- It is a risk to settle/fully commit to a particular employer.
- The idea of obligation is meaningless. Sense of belonging that is episodic (Elcott and Himmelfarb).
- Fear of missing out (FOMO).



# Private spheres in life are crowded out as more things become public

- Individuals can be accessed just about everywhere they are, and through multiple mediums.
- Consequence is less time for critical self-reflection, solitude.
- Could mean less time to truly reflect on work and careers over one's life-course.

# Multifaceted and perhaps uncertain self-identities

- Identity is uncertain and ever-changing. No dominant paradigms, focus on diversity and on criticality. Increasingly the culture in universities/colleges.
- Lack of time in particular time/places encourages individuals to think in terms of ‘connections.’
- Reinforced through social networking (LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook).
- The person comes first. In Jewish interfaith research, idea of “relationship before religion” (Continuum).

What are the  
**implications** for  
employers?

# A desire for variety and constant learning

- Inevitable that people will want to move as they desire variety, especially in the early parts of their lives/careers.
- 2015 Deloitte Millennial Survey: “only 28 percent of Millennials feel that their current organizations are making ‘full use’ of the skills they currently have to offer.”
- Focus on “retention” is misguided. Individuals will switch jobs on many occasions. Anything beyond 2-3 years is considered long by millennials.
- Important to think about how an employee’s job fits within the broader vision they have set for themselves.

# Pursuit of short-term projects

- A commitment to succeeding in short-term projects and tasks, because millennials are aware of the competition around them, and on the importance of short-term success.
- This theme emerges in conversation with millennials.
- Employees “need to see themselves as custodians of their institutions, improving them before passing them along to their successors” – Mark Carney

# Wanting to advance rapidly

- Individuals will want to advance faster than they have in the past.
- Higher education provides individuals with a belief that they are greater than they really are (club involvement, leadership development programmes, etc.)
- Gallup Poll longitudinal study: since 1950s, Gallup has asked high-school seniors in the United States whether they consider themselves to be very important people. 12% said yes in 1950; 80% in 2005.
- Important to provide opportunities for learning without necessarily providing individual with new job.

# Leadership programming

- Increasing desire for leadership development (personal/professional growth) over the life-course.
- More prevalent in universities/colleges (Peter Loughheed Leadership College; Business Insider “Emerging Leaders” and so forth).
- Seen as competitive/high stakes for career development. Especially early in a millennial’s career.
- Seen as a must for millennials. Companies that offer are desired.
- Not always available in particular sectors, especially in early career stages.

# The networked career

- Millennials increasingly think of themselves in terms of networks. Interested in where they fit within large systems (positional view).
- Thinking in terms of connections. Less hierarchical than lateral.
- Awareness that it is important to collaborate with individuals outside of one's sector. Strategy in keeping options open.
- Willingness to pursue volunteering activities with individuals from other companies/sectors.
- Social network analyses as technology for visualizing relationships (Gephi).



# Primacy of the individual

- Individuals think about themselves first; there is very little desire to consider oneself a part of a greater whole.
- Religion is one's own light; meeting people "where they are."
- Robert Putnam shows how far less individuals convene in person nowadays than they did in the past; strength of social bonds is weakening.
- Work is not seen as a place where long-term, durable relationships/friendships can be formed; it is increasingly transactional .
- Belief in personal impact. Work as a means to achieve fulfillment and help change the world.

# Strategies for millennials

# Reflect on “golden threads” that connect one’s own hobbies and activities

- Through our education, reading, work and hobbies, particular themes emerge in the kinds of activities and things we care about.
- It is worth reflecting on these in order to see what might be true across seemingly disparate parts of life.
- Requires an emergent rather than reductionist/compartmentalized view of the individual. Not easy considering Canadian higher education culture.
- These golden threads can then inform the decisions we make in the present and future.

# Adopt a long view of vocation

- Hard to do in a world that encourages short-term thinking, but is nevertheless critical as a person.
- “For the first time in human history, we’ve got more time. So we could make young adulthood longer. We could enter the workforce more gradually and exit more gradually. We could reach the peak of our careers in our 60s and 70s instead of our 40s and 50s” – Laura Carstensen
- Very likely that individuals will switch careers on several occasions. Should be embraced.

# Need for a more flexible sense of self

- In a world of tremendous complexity and change, the frameworks we use to look at the world are *themselves* contested.
- Individuals will experience more change in their lives, much of which we currently cannot predict.
- Flexible sense of self requires that we think about *qualities* and *dispositions* rather than *skills* (holistic vs. instrumental language).
- Must be careful about how work contributes to individual identity.

# Embracing psychological demands of uncertainty

- Uncertainty will increasingly be a way of life. Individuals will need to cope.
- Development of skills to position oneself, find work, develop relationships will be needed.
- This will be very stressful for many. Not necessarily desirable on aggregate level but possibly the reality in society.
- How to can individuals continually invest in their skills? Who ultimately pays?
- Probably role for government but change will be slow.

# Discussion

# Questions

- What do you agree/disagree with?
- What is most relevant to your own organization?
- Have you acted on these considerations over past months/years?



**Trends** in  
transportation and  
logistics.

# Five Important Advances

- Autonomous and semi-autonomous driving capabilities.
- New technology enabled models of taxi services and public transit.
- Technology affecting freight and urban goods movement.
- New forms of technology-enabled shared use mobility.
- Advances in traveler information, transportation system operation, and travel demand management.

# Autonomous and semi-autonomous driving capabilities

- “By facilitating personal independence and mobility, while enhancing safety and making travel time more productive (for reading, working, relaxing, etc.), CV AVs could significantly increase the demand for automobile travel.”
- “Blurring and shifting the lines of responsibility between the human driver and the car manufacturer, AV technology could “change the amount, type, and purchase of automobile insurance” and how liability is defined entirely.”<sup>17</sup>
- “Experts in cybersecurity indicate that widespread hacks on cars and other connected devices in transportation are destined to come, and the ramifications are potentially severe in a fully connected transportation system.”<sup>23</sup>

# New technology enabled models of taxi services and public transit

- “Smartphones are enabling new business models for interacting with customers to provide transportation services.”
- “Supporters view ride-sourcing as part of a suite of transport options that serve a previously unmet demand for fast, flexible, and convenient mobility in urban areas.”

# Technology affecting freight and urban goods movement

- “For instance, Uber has begun experimenting with local delivery services, with the aim of becoming as disruptive in logistics and urban deliveries as it has been in the taxi business. In the urban realm, some speculate that Uber could dominate freight services in large part due to the fact that it has lower costs compared to UPS or FedEx, which have to maintain a vehicle fleet.”<sup>43</sup>
- “Currently most 3D printing applications are limited to manufacturing rather than widespread consumer use. But depending on how and if the technology is successfully deployed, it is important for policymakers to consider how this could disrupt current supply chain and freight flows.”

# New forms of technology-enabled shared use mobility

- “Through the shared use economy, people have access to a wide array of travel options, such as on-demand transportation companies, private transit, public transit, car sharing, and bike sharing.”
- “According to Dr. Susan Shaheen, the time has come to “no longer think of these services--ridesharing, carsharing,bikesharing, scooter-sharing—discretely but rather as a package of mobility services.”<sup>55</sup>
- “Many lower income communities that do not have access to technology might face challenges accessing options, and for-profit companies might also be less inclined to serve them.”

# Advances in traveler information, transportation system operation, and travel demand management.

- “While this has occurred outside the public sector, the idea of working with municipalities is central to the efforts of these start-ups, who position themselves as mobility managers rather than just consumer-focused app developers.”
- “For example, Rio de Janeiro collaborated with Waze in order to collect real-time data about drivers and apply it to their transportation planning systems.”<sup>7</sup>
- The concept of “Smart Cities,” defined as “a system of interconnected systems... that transmit and process data about all sorts of activities within the city,” is gaining attention.”<sup>70</sup>

# Social Implications (1/2)

- “The mobility sector is not only one of the biggest employers (providing over 8.9 million jobs in the US alone in automotive transport services), but has also been repeatedly characterized as one of the biggest factors in **escaping poverty**. It enables people to meet one another, provides access to jobs and makes it possible to send and receive goods and services.” (“How Will We Travel in the Cities of Tomorrow,” *World Economic Forum*.)
- “Already today the average modern car has about **16 clear attack points** - where hackers could target electronic systems, from brakes to locks.” (“How Will We Travel in the Cities of Tomorrow,” *World Economic Forum*.)



# Social Implications (2/2)

- “Some cities (such as Bremen, Toronto, Munich, Anaheim and Amarillo) have already been investing in the development of the so-called **multi-modal hubs**, integrated transportation terminals where passengers and cargo are exchanged between different forms of transport like trains, subways, trams, buses, ferries, taxis, ride-, car and bike sharing as well as private cars.” (“How Will We Travel in the Cities of Tomorrow,” World Economic Forum.)

# Talent Attraction (Literature; Challenges)

- *Storytelling*. “If the logistics industry is to become an attractive career option, the industry needs to think long-term; more carefully and creatively about how to attract our future leaders....” (Michael Lewis, Page Group).
- *Ageing workforce*. “With a smaller percentage of the population working, transportation and logistics companies in developed countries will have a harder time employing workers with the needed skills, in the right place, at the right time” (PwC).
- *Fragmentation*. “The transportation and logistics sector as a whole is deeply fragmented” (PwC).
- *Diversity*. Improving, but still approximately 75% male.

# Talent Attraction (Literature; Opportunities)

- *Scholarships.* “But as we’ve shown, many previously low-skilled jobs are increasingly requiring post-secondary training. Logistics and transportation companies that offer scholarship support for programmes in areas like truck driving or port logistics could help improve the pool of candidates.”
- *Recruiting and Development Alliances.* “SMEs in particular may have problems positioning themselves as desirable employers. Setting up recruiting and development alliances could help. Companies involved in such programme could work together on recruiting initiatives.”
- *Cross-Career Collaboration.* “...some companies now systematically pair up junior and senior project managers.”

# Talent Attraction (Interviews)

- Students in University of Alberta engineering/science have very little knowledge about transportation and logistics.
- Few can name a company (including head of EcoCar initiative). Employer branding is generally seen as weak.
- Generally not seen as knowledge jobs.
- More interested in consulting/finance careers. Nevertheless, many graduate uncertain as to what they will do.
- One perceived advantage to transportation and logistics is international dimension (“connects the world”).

Considerations for  
transportation and  
logistics next steps.

# Language

- *Social Impact*: “transportation systems’ contributions to issues of social inequality.”
- *Networks*: “work with academics and industry experts to conduct research...”; “t the intersection of.”
- *The Future of...*: “working to develop the future of transportation.”
- *Movements*: “Built the Lyft movement.”
- *Leadership*: Opportunities to enter executive roles, especially with ageing workforces.

# Bringing Prestige

- Dwight D. Eisenhower Transportation Fellowship (150-200 awarded across the United States per year).
- San Francisco Mayor's Office of Civic Innovation Fellows.
- Culture of fellowships currently lacking across Canada, through particularly an issue in Alberta. Canada's Public Policy Forum one of the few...
- Opportunities to research and develop knowledge, especially within and following university/college. Building core of highly talented leaders.
- Importance of building 'communities of practice': e.g. Sharing Economy Advisory Network in the United States.

# Leadership/Fast-Track Programs

- Companies that do not have leadership/fast-track programs will simply lose out on top talent. These are now expected.
- Must be present on university/college campuses. Marketing is critical.
- Invest in student clubs and develop talent pipelines several years out.
- Currently consulting/finance/high tech firms dominate.
- Have to be creative/innovative. But there is still a lot of opportunity (there is an appetite for this).



# Cross-Sectoral Partnerships

- Significant need for collaboration between public and private sectors, non-profits and academia.
- Civic Bridge: “recruits private sector professionals to volunteer 16 weeks of their time to work alongside government employees on critical city issues.”
- Chicago: Civic Consulting Alliance; San Jose: Silicon Valley Talent Partnership.
- Superpublique in France, which helped inspire Superpublic in California (Digital Services in Gov’t; Urban Mobility; Changing Models for Procurement).
- Marketing/Branding Investment.
- In Canada: Interchange Canada; PPF *Broadening Talent Pathways* report.

# Continuous Learning/Non-Linear Careers

- Employers helped build larger communities for their staff *outside* of the organization itself.
- Investments in learning through partnerships with educational institutions. In United States, key employees have cross-appointments with UCLA Institute for Transportation Studies, Georgetown Public Policy Institute, etc.
- Volunteer organizations: In Canada, Young Leaders in Infrastructure, YWE.
- Requires buy-in/vision at the senior management level. Helps reduce potential costs for individual employees.
- Must be seen as catapult into something greater (McKinsey, Bain, etc.)

# Profiles (1/3): Emily Castor



- Currently: Director of Transportation Policy, Lyft (4.5 years).
- “Work with planners, researchers and environmental organizations in order to evaluate Lyft’s impact on mobility and the environment.”
- Director of Community Relations, Lyft: “Built the Lyft movement. Managed grassroots mobilization and stakeholder engagement to advance Lyft’s public policy efforts.”
- Also: 40 Top Influencers on the Networked Economy; Public Financial Management (consulting); UPenn Assit. Director External Affairs; UCLA Institute for Transportation Studies; National League of Cities

# Profiles (2/3): Regina Clewlow



- Currently: Director, Business Development, moovel (mobility services arm at Daimler AG).
- Founding Executive Director: Engineers for a Sustainable World.
- Also: Research Analyst, Future Mobility Initiative; Research Consultant, Toyota Research Institute; Senior Scholar, Tsinghua University; Dwight D. Eisenhower Transportation Fellow.

# Profiles (3/3): Andrew Salzberg



- Currently: Head of Transportation Policy and Research, Uber.
- “In current role, working to develop the future of transportation at the intersection of on-demand mobility and traditional transportation providers.”
- Also: Research Analyst, Transport for London (“worked with TfL Network Development Team through the MIT Transit Research Program”); World Bank. Undergraduate at McGill University.

# Opportunities/Challenges in Alberta and Canada.

# Challenges

- Lack of culture/prestige for investing in top talent.
- Higher education system is quite linear.
- Few bodies that promote collaboration (apart from VHI).
- What is the impetus for change?
- Lack of investment in marketing.

# Opportunities

- Outstanding engineering talent.
- Rough economic times.
- Leadership with several key players: TEC Edmonton, Alberta Innovates.
- Strong K-12 and post-secondary system.
- Successful SME culture.



# Discussion