

**A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF PREFERRED
LEADERSHIP STYLE AND LEADERSHIP
COMMUNICATION FOR GENERATION Y EMPLOYEES**

By

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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis, which I hereby submit for the degree MCom Communication Management at the University of Pretoria, is my own work and has not been submitted by me for a degree at another university.

Zydèlia Kleinhans

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ABSTRACT

Every few decades, a new generation enters the workplace and organisational leaders are facing challenges with finding the best ways to lead and maximise their contributions within the multi-generational workforce. The generational cohort, Generation Y (millennials), born between 1979 to 1997, is the newest entrants in the workplace. Similar to previous generations who entered the workplace, Generation Y also brings unique characteristics and strengths to organisations, such as tech-savviness and willingness to make a meaningful contribution, which makes it impractical to have a one-size fits-all leadership approach in leading the multi-generational workforce. If the potential of Generation Y employees is unlocked through the right leadership styles and leadership communication approaches, they could turn out to be an organisation's biggest assets.

Approached from a post-modern world view, the aim of this study was to determine the preferred leadership style and leadership communication for Generation Y employees. This was done by conducting 20 face-to-face semi-structured interviews with Generation Y employees across a few industries. With the consent of interviewees, the researcher took voice recordings and manually transcribed the interviews. The researcher made use of both manually and automated coding using the software programme Leximancer. The purpose of this study was to propose guidelines and develop a conceptual framework to organisational leaders based on the preferences of Generation Y employees in terms of leadership styles and leadership communication.

From the findings, there is no one leadership style that would be ideal in managing Generation Y employees, instead a combination of leadership styles is preferred depending on the circumstances. The circumstances may require characteristics of the autocratic, participative, transformational, laissez-faire, servant and/or the communicative leadership style. With regards to leadership communication, important to Generation Y employees is that there is clear, open and frequent communication at all times. Organisational leaders should ensure that the preferred topics are included in the communication activities to

these employees, namely: growth opportunities; personal performance; financial performance; expectations, roles and responsibilities; and any updates that may impact them.

The preferred organisational leader would engage in face-to-face communication to speak to employees, and would share an email afterwards with the main points discussed to ensure that there is a paper trail. Although guidelines and a conceptual framework are proposed by this study, it remains the responsibility of organisational leaders to assess the various circumstances and determine what the ideal leadership style and leadership communication approaches would be for the different scenarios.

Key words: conceptual framework, generation, Generation Y (millennials), leadership, leadership communication, leadership styles, multi-generational workforce, post-modernism

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CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The workplace is not what it used to be a few decades ago as the post-truth era and decidedly digital world are rapidly shifting the way employers and employees understand themselves. Post-truth is a buzzword that emerged due to politicians not acting through rational discourse, but rather on a freedom of speech basis where the truth is hidden behind emotional and appealing discourse. With the rise in the digital landscape, platforms, such as social media, are feeding receivers content that interests them, while it filters out the information that people do not want to hear. This impacts the way people perceive relationships within the workplace (Laybats & Tredinnick, 2016:204-205).

Together with the post-truth and digital landscape impacting the employer-employee relationships, another key influencer is the well-known fact that the workforce is more diverse than ever before. For the first time ever, the modern workforce consists of employees across four different generations ranging from the Traditionalists, the Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y (Horeczy, Lalani, Mendes, Miller, Samsa & Scongack, 2012:1; Drynan, 2011:8; Shaw & Fairhurst, 2008:367; Dobson, 2006:42).

As defined by Kupperschmidt (in Westerman & Yamamura, 2007:366) a generation is a recognisable group of people between specific birth years that experienced the same life events at specific development periods. Each generation shares a unique set of values, traits and world views developed through experiencing the same historical life events (Horeczy *et al.*, 2012.1; Drynan, 2011:8; Salkowitz, 2008:16; Wong, Gardiner, Lang & Coulon, 2008:879). A good example is the generation called the Traditionalists, the oldest generation in the workplace. Employees from this generation were born before 1946 and experienced the beginning of World War II (Hobart, 2008:2). It could be argued that their experiences and the emotions they felt throughout World War II

have impacted their decision-making, how they experience conflict situations, how they apply leadership and how adaptable they are to change.

Translating it to the workplace, generational differences could have an impact on all aspects within the organisation, including on change management, leadership decisions, motivational factors, productivity elements, teamwork dynamics, communication matters and recruitment processes. The reason being that different generations have different work values, work ethics, preferences towards authority, ideas and views (Drynan, 2011:8). Based on literature reviews by a number of sources, Wong *et al.* (2008:878-879) summarised the importance for leaders to take into consideration the differences between generations. Firstly, conflicting generational work values or expectations can occur in a workforce consisting of multiple generations, and ignorance by leaders to these generational differences and the mismanagement thereof can cause great damage to the organisation. Secondly, conflict situations and communication barriers can arise that could lead to demotivated employees and a decrease in productivity, which ultimately impact the overall success of the organisation (Wong *et al.*, 2008:878-879). As a workforce grows older, many employees retire and are replaced with employees from the next generation, which makes it crucial to understand generational differences (Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman & Lance, 2010:1117).

According to Libson (2010:4), Generation Y (also known as Millennials), born between 1979 and 1997, is the newest generation within the workplace. A clear explanation of Generation Y is provided in section 1.3 and in Chapter 4. As with other generations, Generation Y brings unique work values and attributes to the workplace. This makes it crucial for business leaders to adapt their leadership styles and leadership communication according to Generation Y employees' preferences when engaging with them, to maximise their contribution to the workplace and to motivate them (Kultalahti & Viitala, 2015:101; Horeczy *et al.*, 2012:1; Salahuddin, 2010:2-3). For the purpose of this study, the researcher will refer to this generation by using the term Generation Y, as opposed to Millennials, as these employees were born after Generation X, which makes the flow in alphabet characters from X to Y, more natural.

This study aims to pinpoint the leadership style and leadership communication preferences of Generation Y employees, ultimately providing leaders with guidelines and a conceptual framework on how best to optimise Generation Y's performance in the workplace. The purpose of proposing guidelines and a conceptual framework of preferred leadership style and leadership communication for Generation Y employees is to serve as a guide to maximise their contributions and keep them motivated.

1.2 LEADERSHIP STYLES AND LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION

A core focus of this thesis is to determine the different leadership styles and leadership communication approaches that today's employers could consider applying in a post-modernistic business context. According to Bornman (2015:2), in order to understand the term leadership communication, the concept leadership should first be defined and understood in terms of leadership styles, characteristics, approaches and sub terms. Chapter 3 of this study focusses on literature pertaining to both leadership styles and leadership communication, which provided the groundwork used by the researcher to develop the semi-structured interview questions to identify Generation Y's preferences in this regard.

Leaders' styles and communication approaches play a vital role in an organisation's success (Saleem, 2015:564). According to Çetin, Karabay and Efe (2012:227), leadership style is an important aspect in influencing employees' feelings, attitudes and perceptions. Effective leaders can apply different styles, depending on the situation, to influence, guide and inspire employees toward reaching their full potential while reaching organisational goals (Zulch, 2014:173; Çetin *et al.*, 2012:229). Leadership styles are reviewed in Chapter 3, which include autocratic, transactional, participative, transformational, charismatic, servant and communicative leadership.

Another key focus area in Chapter 3 is leadership communication. It is a well-known fact and researched by Barrett (2006:2), that leaders can only lead through effective communication, and through effective communication, leaders gain the power to get things done within the organisation, with, and through people. The argument puts forward in the current research, that given the fact that employers for the first time in

history are confronted with employees from four generations in the workplace, leaders have the power to customise their leadership styles and leadership communication according to generational preferences, thereby having a customised approach when dealing with an employee from any of the four generations (Çetin *et al.*, 2012:229). It is the responsibility of organisational leaders to find effective ways to streamline employee communication according to all generations' preferences. This can be done by applying dynamic and adaptive communication approaches (Reynolds, Campbell & Geist, 2008:21). As stated before, the study aims to propose guidelines and provide a conceptual framework on how leaders could optimally lead Generation Y employees.

1.3 GENERATION Y IN THE WORKPLACE

Holt, Marques and Way (2012:81), summarise what this section is about: "As new entrants to the world of work, this team-oriented, technology-savvy, idealistic generation is awaiting the inspiration, leadership, and motivation we owe them."

In the light of this quote, Generation Y employees are establishing themselves in the workplace which brings new possibilities for organisations and, agreed by some scholars, these employees can be an organisation's biggest asset (Laird, Harvey, & Lancaster, 2015:95-96). Stated by Bannon, Ford and Meltzer (2011:61), Generation Y is set to transform the workplace with its unique characteristics and workplace preferences. What this means to business is that current organisational leaders should ideally familiarise themselves with Generation Y's characteristics in order to lead strategically, and ultimately maximising their workplace potential, and thereby also influencing the profitability of the business (Bannon *et al.*, 2011:61).

Many negative preconceived ideas about Generation Y have been reported, including that they are disloyal, unmotivated, disrespectful, overly self-confident and that they have a lack of work ethic (Kilber, Barclay & Ohmer, 2014:81; Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010:225). These preconceived ideas are not necessarily correct and it could be argued that it has emerged due to a lack of knowledge about this generation. It is important that leaders understand that Generation Y brings a lot of constructive and much-needed characteristics to the workplace, as they generally are a technologically

savvy generation, ambitious individuals, globally orientated, respectful of authority and have multi-tasking capabilities. Furthermore, they show optimism and inquisitiveness in the workplace (Laird *et al.*, 2015:95-96; Salkowitz, 2008:57;96;104).

In terms of workplace expectations, studies have shown that this generation values having a work-life balance, being able to be challenged and, in doing so, to be able to grow and do meaningful work. Teamwork, instant feedback and easy access to information are key motivators that can be utilised to keep these employees engaged (Tubey, Kurgat & Rotich, 2015:11-18). Consequently, this generation is always ready and willing to quit their jobs or to move to new and more preferred opportunities such as starting their own ventures, returning to tertiary educational institutions or to work for competitors if organisations do not meet their workplace expectations (Salkowitz, 2008:103). It is important for organisational leaders to understand the entire profile of Generation Y, including the preconceived ideas, characteristics and workplace preferences in order to know how to lead and communicate with them, ultimately retaining them.

Chapter 4 will discuss Generation Y's characteristics and preferences in the workplace and how they are unique to other generations. This will contribute towards achieving the overall goal of this study, which is to propose guidelines and develop a conceptual framework on the leadership styles and leadership communication approaches that would work best to optimise Generation Y employees' performance.

1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RESEARCH QUESTION

Every 20 years, a new generation enters the workplace and organisational leaders experience challenges on how to lead the new group of people (Heikkilä & Ingnäs, 2014:6). Each and every generation is unique and brings their own set of strengths to the workplace (Heikkilä & Ingnäs, 2014:6), which makes it impractical to have a one-size fits-all leadership approach (Tubey *et al.*, 2015:3-4).

Today, organisations are finding themselves in a position where they have to lead the newest generation in the workforce, Generation Y (Seth, 2015:424; Hobart, 2008:4).

As the number of Generation Y employees in the workplace increases yearly, the gap between them and employees from earlier generations become more prominent, which poses challenges to leaders as to find a mid-way to connect with and lead all employees (Anderson, Bauer, Griffith & Buckley, 2017:245). This generation grew up in a post-modern world given the characteristics and events that form part of their lives, including globalisation, instant access to technology and demographic diversity, which makes them different from other generations (Green & Roberts, 2012:85;87; Ng, Schweitzer & Lyons, 2010:282). As mentioned earlier, as with every generation, Generation Y, brings unique values, strengths, characteristics and potential that should be maximised by leaders in order to manage and retain them (Seth, 2015:423; Bannon *et al.*, 2011:61). This requires that leaders adapt their styles, techniques and approaches to get better results (Kilber *et al.*, 2014:80) to avoid ending up with unmotivated employees (Heikkilä & Ingnäs, 2014:6-7).

Accordingly, organisational leaders are being challenged to find the best ways to adapt their styles, techniques and communication approaches in order to maximise Generation Y's potential within the workplace, ultimately motivating and retaining them (Tubey *et al.*, 2015:3-4). Although research has been conducted on the general workplace preferences by Generation Y, little research has, however, been conducted on the preferred leadership style and leadership communication for Generation Y employees. Consequently, a need exists for guidelines and a conceptual framework on the leadership styles and leadership communication approaches that will maximise this generation's potential within the workplace, which the study addresses.

The problem statement outlined above translates into the overarching research question being investigated:

What are the preferred leadership style and leadership communication for Generation Y employees?

1.5 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to propose guidelines and develop a conceptual framework on how organisational leaders should lead and communicate with Generation Y employees according to this generation's leadership style and leadership communication preferences. As mentioned in the problem statement, little research has been conducted in this area, especially from a post-modern world view. Consequently, the literature review is structured to address post-modernism within this context, to investigate different leadership styles and communication approaches, and finally to identify characteristics and workplace values of Generation Y. The literature translates into questions for the semi-structured interview guideline, which aims to delve into leadership preferences of Generation Y, ultimately to assist with proposing guidelines and developing a conceptual framework.

1.6 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The problem statement, on what the preferred leadership style and leadership communication for Generation Y employees are, and the formulated overarching research question, resulted in the following research objectives:

- Ro1: To provide a literature review on the general leadership styles, leadership communication approaches and leadership challenges within the workplace;
- Ro2: To provide a literature review on Generation Y's unique characteristics and values that they bring to the workplace;
- Ro3: To identify leadership style and communication preferences that Generation Y employees expect of leaders; and
- Ro4: To provide guidelines and develop a conceptual framework on how business leaders should lead and communicate with Generation Y employees as to maximise their potential within the workplace.

1.7 CONCEPTUALISATION OF META-THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical and meta-theoretical conceptualisation of the research is presented in Table 1.1. This study is approached from a post-modern world view with the Systems Theory as the grand theory to guide the research. The research topic falls within two academic disciplines found within the Management Sciences field, namely Business Management and Strategic Communication Management. The purpose of the conceptualisation is to provide insight as to how the two disciplines fit into each other. The interdisciplinary field of interest, a multi-generational workforce, brings many challenges and thoughts to each of the above-mentioned academic disciplines. Each disciplines' academic field, theories, concepts and constructs are explained in relation to the interdisciplinary field. The next section explains each of the elements as illustrated in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1: Meta-theoretical framework

GRAND RESEARCH QUESTION	What are the preferred leadership style and leadership communication for Generation Y employees?	
GRAND THEORY	Systems Theory	
WORLD VIEW	Post-modernism	
PARADIGM	Integrative Leadership Theory	
ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE	Management Sciences	
INTERDISCIPLINARY FIELD	Multi-generational workforce	
ACADEMIC FIELDS	Business Management	Strategic Communication Management
THEORIES	Douglas McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y Contingency Theory	Goal Theory Expectancy Theory
CONCEPTS	Leadership	Leadership communication
CONSTRUCTS/DIMENSIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differences between leadership and management • Leading a multi-generational workforce • Different leadership styles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Transformational ○ Transactional ○ Charismatic ○ Laissez-faire ○ Participative ○ Servant ○ Communicative ○ Ethical ○ Authentic ○ Relational 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication styles • Synopsis FAME leadership communication model • Leadership communication challenges: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Technology ○ Personalities ○ Communicator's competence ○ Culture

1.7.1 Systems Theory as grand theory

The Systems Theory, developed by Ludwig von Bertalanffy, provides a way of understanding complex organisational systems (Adams & Galanes, 2009:30-31). The systems theory is based on the Aristotelian world view and the statement that follows: "The whole is more than the sum of its parts" (Von Bertalanffy, 1972:407). The theory includes that a system and its subsystems are interrelated (Adams & Galanes, 2009:30-31), which means that if one subsystem is changed, the whole system will change. As a consequence, to understand a whole system a holistic view should be taken of all its components (Adams & Galanes, 2009:30-31). A system could be

categorised as closed, open or isolated. In an open system, energy, people and information are exchanged, whereas, in a closed system, energy is the only element that is exchanged and in an isolated system, no exchange takes place (Mele, Pels & Polese, 2010:127).

When it comes to management, the Systems Theory provides a framework to understand relationships within an ever-changing, complex organisational system and how to resolve issues by adopting a systems-thinking approach (Johnson, Kast & Rosenzweig, 1964:397). The Systems Theory serves as the grand theory to assist with understanding the relationship and integration between Generation Y employees and organisational leaders. It will assist with giving a fresh perspective for approaching employee-leader relations, by considering the whole of the system, including its subsystems, to fully comprehend the relationship.

1.7.2 Post-modernism as world view

A post-modern world view is characterised by the inclination towards acknowledging and embracing multiple viewpoints (Hedlund-de Witt, 2014:8317) and this view also rejects the idea that there is only one truth (Tucker, 2014:3; Du Toit, 2011:108). Post-modernism questions and critiques preconceived ideas (Hedlund-de Witt, 2014:8317) and argues that life consists of smaller, localised explanatory narratives instead of overall generalised explanations, purely as life is unpredictable and prone to change (Du Toit, 2011:110). A post-modern world view supports diversity and it encourages expressing individuality by means of being creative, authentic, unique and by revealing ones' feelings and opinions (Hedlund-de Witt, 2014:8317). This study is led by a post-modernistic world view and the concept, post-modernism, in relation to this topic of interest is explained in more detail in Chapter 2.

1.7.3 Integrative Leadership Theory as paradigm

The Integrative Leadership Theory uses a combination of the trait, behavioural and contingency theories to explain the leadership-follower relationship (Achua & Lussier,

2013:20). This theory is aligned to the Systems Theory, the grand theory for the study, and it encapsulates that leaders use a combination of styles and behaviours depending on the environmental factors and unique circumstances, as well as the different generations that employees belong to. The Integrative Leadership Theory also supports the post-modern world view that there is no one truth, and it acknowledges that there are multiple leadership approaches that could be effective to lead and communicate with employees.

1.7.4 Management Sciences as academic discipline

This study falls within the Management Sciences academic discipline. It contributes toward two academic fields within the Management Sciences academic discipline, namely Business Management and Strategic Communication Management. The interdisciplinary field selected, a multi-generational workforce, are relevant to both the Business Management and Strategic Communication Management disciplines.

1.7.5 Multi-generational workforce as interdisciplinary field

A multi-generational workforce refers to the movement towards having employees from multiple generations within organisations. Leaders in the workplace are increasingly facing challenges in the workplace with regards to satisfying all the needs of the generations including the Traditionalists, the Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y (Millar & Lockett, 2014:278; Noorani, 2014:8). Multi-generational workforce has been selected as the interdisciplinary field as it could be argued that it impacts the previously explained academic fields within the discipline, Management Sciences, of this study.

1.7.6 Business Management as academic field

This study falls within the Business Management field, with a specific focus on the interrelation between leadership and management. The two theories relevant to Business Management as included in the meta-theoretical framework are discussed in the next section, namely Douglas McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y and the

Contingency Theory. Both these theories are important to Business Management as it will influence how leaders adapt their leadership styles thereby maximising the employees' efforts.

McGregor's Theory X is a management theory whereby employees are managed based on the assumptions that they dislike work, require control or close supervision and do not want responsibility. Viewed from McGregor's perspective, these employees require more rigid authoritarian leadership styles and should be motivated to perform their jobs by either punishing or threatening them or by rewarding them with extrinsic rewards such as promotions and salary increases. In contrast, Theory Y is a management theory whereby employees are managed based on the assumption that they like to work or view it as a way to rest or play, they do not require to be controlled and perceive work as a source of satisfaction. These employees require a leadership style that inspires, stimulates, supports and that encourages a participative working environment. They are motivated by receiving intrinsic rewards such as providing them with meaningful tasks (Ronald, 2014:56; Achua & Lussier, 2013:48; Cole & Kelly, 2011:51; Adler & Elmhurst, 2008:64).

Fiedler (in Achua & Lussier, 2013:109) was the first theorist to refer to contingency. According to his theory, a leader's effectiveness is dependent on whether leaders' styles fit the context. In other words, there is no one best way to lead employees, it all depends on whether the leadership style and the situation match each other. The contingency leadership model was developed to determine whether someone's leadership style is task orientated or leaning more towards relationships, and whether the situation, such as the leader-follower relationship, the actual task and the position of power, matches the style of the leader (Achua & Lussier, 2013:109; Cole & Kelly, 2011:76). Fiedler (Achua & Lussier, 2013:109) embraced the idea that leaders have a natural style as a reflection of their personalities and behaviours, which should be executed consistently, and he believed that the situation or context should rather be changed to match the leader's natural style and not *vice versa*.

A key concept in this study pertaining to Business Management is leadership. The research study investigates different leadership constructs and dimensions, such as

leadership styles, differences between the concepts leadership and management, aspects relevant to leading a multi-generational workforce. The following section explains the academic field, Strategic Communication Management, with its constructs and dimensions.

1.7.7 Strategic Communication Management as academic field

The research falls within the Strategic Communication Management field, with a specific focus on leadership communication, which is directly linked to the key concept, leadership, which is discussed in the Business Management academic field section. Relevant theories to Strategic Communication Management as included in the meta-theoretical framework are discussed below, namely The Goal Theory and the Expectancy theory. Both the Goal and Expectancy Theory are important to the strategic communication management as it provides leaders with an understanding on how to communicate effectively as to motivate employees.

The Goal Theory postulates that an individual's personal goals determine their decisions, behaviour and actions. Furthermore, it includes that performance will improve if employees set themselves specific goals and when feedback is continuously provided to them in relation to their goals. Other factors that also influence the individual's performance include their commitment towards reaching the goal and whether they believe they have the ability to reach the goal (Cole & Kelly, 2011:61-62).

According to the Expectancy Theory, an individual's behaviour is formed not based on objective realities but rather on the employees' subjective perception of what the reality is. This theory encompasses that individuals will be motivated based on three motivation drivers, namely valence, expectancy and instrumentality (Cole & Kelly, 2011:59; Turcan, 2010:9). This means that employees will be motivated depending on the expectation that specific efforts will lead to effective performance, the instrumentality that effective performance will lead to desired rewards and finally the attractiveness of the reward also drives motivation (Cole & Kelly, 2011:60).

A key concept in this study pertaining to Strategic Communication Management is leadership communication. Chapter 3 discusses different leadership communication constructs and dimensions, such as communication styles, the Synopsis FAME leadership communication model and leadership communication challenges.

To summarise, the meta-theoretical framework provides the view from which the study is approached. The following section discusses the key terms used in this study with its relevant definitions to this research.

1.8 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

The key terms utilised by this study are defined in the following table.

Table 1.2: Key terms and relevant definitions

TERM	DEFINITION
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK	The term, conceptual framework, refers to when a researcher consolidates a network of concepts or ideas pertaining to a subject to help with understanding the field of study rather than trying to predict outcomes (Jabareen, 2009:49).
GENERATION	Kupperschmidt (in Westerman & Yamamura, 2007:366) defines a generation as a recognisable group of people between specific birth years that experienced the same life events at specific development periods. Each generation shares a unique set of values, traits and world views developed through experiencing the same historical life events (Horeczy <i>et al.</i> , 2012:1; Salkowitz, 2008:16; Wong <i>et al.</i> , 2008:879).
GENERATION Y	Generation Y (also known as Millennials) refers to the generation born between 1979 and 1997. This is also the newest generation entering the workforce. As with other generations, Generation Y brings unique work values and attributes to the workplace (Kultalahti & Viitala, 2015:101; Horeczy <i>et al.</i> , 2012:1; Salahuddin, 2010:2-3).
LEADERSHIP	Leadership is the process where leaders direct, control, motivate and inspire employees to achieve organisational goals (Shockley-Zalabak, 2014:216; Clegg, Kornberger & Pitsis, 2011:664).
LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION	Leadership communication is a process whereby leaders motivate followers to reach specific organisational goals and outcomes (Shockley-Zalabak, 2014:216).
LEADERSHIP STYLES	Leadership styles refer to approaches that leaders utilise to influence employees in order to assist with achieving organisational goals (Shockley-Zalabak, 2014:220).
MULTI-GENERATIONAL WORKFORCE	A multi-generational workforce refers to a workplace where there are multiple generations (at least three generations), in one organisation (Millar & Lockett, 2014:278).
POST-MODERNISM	Post-modernism refers to the view that life comprises of smaller, localised, explanatory narratives rather than overall generalised explanations. The post-modernism theory rejects that there is one truth and one truth only and it embraces the idea that life is unpredictable and open to human influences. It also recognises that life is what society makes of it (Tucker, 2014:3; Du Toit, 2011:108).

1.9 RESEARCH DESIGN

A qualitative research design has been adopted for the study at hand on preferred leadership style and leadership communication for Generation Y employees. The literature review will inform the interview guide that will be used to conduct semi-structured face-to-face interviews with a non-probability sample of Generation Y employees. A total of 20 Generation Y employees will be selected to participate in this study by executing a snowballing sampling approach. The questionnaire will be semi-structured and will consist of various themes to be addressed; the questions, however, will vary for each participant based on the context of the interview. To assist with exploring the field of study, the researcher will ask probing questions and the questions will be open-ended to avoid limiting the answers and to gain as much insight as possible about the various themes.

A pilot test of the semi-structured questionnaires will be conducted to see whether respondents understood the questions and whether all the relevant themes have been incorporated. Changes to the questionnaire will be made based on the feedback from the pilot test. Participants will not be offered any incentives as to ensure the integrity of the data obtained. Participants will be requested to sign an informed consent form before commencing with the interviews indicating that they give their consent to take part in the research. The consent form will also indicate to participants that they may withdraw from the research at any stage without being negatively influenced by their choice. After the interviews were successfully conducted and transcribed into text, the qualitative research tool, Leximancer, will be used to analyse the text by identifying the themes that occur frequently in order to assist with developing the guidelines and conceptual framework. The following section explains the delimitations and assumptions of this research.

1.10 DELIMITATIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS

This section outlines the delimitations to this study and the assumptions that the researcher will make to complete the study.

1.10.1 Delimitations

As the study aims to propose guidelines and develop a conceptual framework for the best leadership styles and leadership communication approaches to lead and communicate with Generation Y. A delimitation of this study would be that it is only limited to Generation Y and that it excludes leadership style or communication preferences from other generations. The reasoning behind only selecting Generation Y employees to fall within the scope of the study is that they are the newest generation in the workplace. Another reason is that the leaders in the workplace are often from other generations, which means that they do not necessarily understand Generation Y and do not have the knowledge on how to lead and communicate with them. Accordingly, employees of Generation Y, therefore, have been selected as the unit of analysis and target population.

1.10.2 Assumptions

The first assumption is that the insights obtained from the respondents could be valuable and applicable to leaders who are tasked to lead and communicate with Generation Y employees. The second assumption is that the Generation Y employees that participated in this study, have a manager to whom they report to and therefore these participants have identified their preferred leadership style and communication preferences based on their current experiences, which they would be willing to share with the researcher.

1.11 ACADEMIC VALUE AND CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

With Generation Y being new in the workplace means that they are still finding their feet and are trying to establish themselves in their careers in terms of what they want to do and how they want to fit into the workplace (Salkowitz, 2008:46-47). As a consequence, many organisations are still struggling on how to keep this generation engaged and motivated (Heikkilä & Ingnäs, 2014:6-7). It could be argued that leaders do not necessarily understand them or know how to lead and communicate with them.

The results from The Millennial Leadership Study (WorkplaceTrends.com, 2015), have shown that when Generation Y individuals were asked about the leader that they aspire to be, a total of 63% indicated transformational. Although, not necessarily their preferred leadership style, this study investigates the preferred leadership style and communication styles simultaneously, which not many studies addressed.

Previous research studies on Generation Y, mostly investigated these individuals' traits, motivators and workplace preferences (Hobart & Sendek, 2014; Kilber *et al.*, 2014; Barnes, 2009:59). In spite of the fact that some research has been conducted on leadership preferences of Generation Y or different generational cohorts (Kultalahti, 2015; Horeczy, 2012; Spence, 2009), most studies were quantitative, which from a post-modern world view restricts the results to numeric values rather than providing qualitative insight into the phenomenon.

Consequently, little qualitative research has been done in this field in the combination of leadership styles and communication styles from a post-modernism world view. According to the researcher's knowledge this study will be the first to provide guidelines and a conceptual framework based on sound research conducted to guide leaders on how to lead and communicate with them to maximise their potential in the workplace.

1.12 RESEARCH ETHICS

Table 1.3 outlines the research ethics aspects that will be considered by the researcher to ensure that the research complies to ethical soundness.

Table 1.3: Ethical considerations

ASPECT	CONSIDERATION
INTEGRITY AND OBJECTIVITY	The researcher will demonstrate integrity and objectivity to conduct the semi-structured face-to-face interviews, to interpret the results and to consolidate the findings. Participants will also not be offered any incentives as to ensure the integrity of the data obtained.
ANONYMITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY	The researcher will keep all respondents anonymous throughout this study and will ensure that confidentiality of data is maintained.
VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION	The researcher will not force any employees to participate in this study. Respondents will have the opportunity to withdraw from participation at any point during data collection. All questions will not be compulsory to answer.
INFORMED CONSENT	The participants will complete an informed consent form consisting of an explanation of the process and implications of the study.
RESPONSIBLE ANALYSIS AND REPORTING	The researcher will ensure that all data is captured accurately and that confidentiality, privacy and anonymity will be upheld throughout this study. Finally, the researcher will also acknowledge secondary sources.

Source: Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012:231).

1.13 DEMARCATION OF CHAPTERS

Table 1.4 outlines the demarcation of the chapters. As discussed earlier in the meta-theoretical section, post-modernism serves as the world view to guide the research and Chapter 2, therefore, elaborates on the relevance of post-modernism to this study. Chapters 3 and 4 are structured in a way that it provides a literature review of the key focus areas of this study, to assist with achieving the research question, which is to identify the preferred leadership style and leadership communication for Generation Y employees. Consequently, Chapter 3 focusses on leadership style and leadership communication literature and Chapter 4 covers elements pertaining to Generation Y in the workplace. Chapter 5 explains the research methodology and the research design selected to assist with obtaining the research results and findings as discussed

in Chapter 6. The findings in chapter 6 translated in the development of the guidelines and conceptual framework as outlined in Chapter 7. The final chapter of the research summarises the research objectives in relation to the results, it includes concluding remarks and it explains limitations of this study for further research.

Table 1.4: Demarcation of chapters

CHAPTER	NAME	DESCRIPTION
CHAPTER 2	Post-modernism as world view	Chapter 2 explains the world view of this study in more detail.
CHAPTER 3	Leadership styles and leadership communication	Chapter 3 highlights the concept, leadership. It discusses the differences between leadership and management. It investigates the different leadership styles and elements pertaining to leadership communication such as the challenges and best practice.
CHAPTER 4	Generation Y and the workplace	Chapter 4 provides an overview of the generations in the workforce. It focusses specifically on the characteristics of Generation Y and the values that they bring to the workplace.
CHAPTER 5	Research methodology	Chapter 5 provides a detailed explanation of the research methodology that was followed. The research design, ethics, sampling size, target population, reliability, validity, data capturing and data analysis processes are also explained in detail.
CHAPTER 6	Research findings and discussion	Research findings and results are discussed in this chapter.
CHAPTER 7	Guidelines and conceptual framework	Based on the findings as discussed in Chapter 6, this chapter provides guidelines and a conceptual framework for leaders on how to lead and communicate with Generation Y employees.
CHAPTER 8	Conclusions, recommendations and concluding remarks on the ideal employer to lead Generation Y in the workplace	Chapter 8 provides conclusions of the findings related to the research objectives, including the contribution of the study and recommendations for future research. Limitations pertaining to this study are also discussed.

CHAPTER 2

POST-MODERNISM AS WORLD VIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In the mid-twentieth century, many academics agreed that modernism was not relevant to those times anymore and accordingly, modernism in literature came to an end (Holtzhausen, 2012:4). This resulted in the subsequent typological world view which includes specific philosophical viewpoints, called post-modernism (Green & Robert, 2012:80; Firat & Dholakia, 2006:126). Some authors agree that post-modernism is not a new phenomenon and instead an approach where one is very doubtful or questioning of current constructs, including that of modernism (Lin, 2011:206-207; Burbules, 1995). Similar to modernism, it is a way of thinking (Holtzhausen, 2012:4). However, it challenges how modernists interpret and think about the world and its life events (Holtzhausen, 2012:4). Consequently, post-modernism did not consistently evolve the same way as modernism (Lindas, 2013:4). Post-modernism, therefore, represents how changes in society are closely connected to the current day and age (Holtzhausen, 2012:4) and consequently, it is perceived as an 'umbrella term' to describe these changing circumstances (Lindas, 2013:4). A key element that led to post-modernism is the rapid appearance and growth in technology and science, which has resulted in blurred lines of what reality truly is (Hossain & Karim, 2013:177; Lindas, 2013:5). Generational cohorts have also experienced different developments in technology and science, and for that reason, newer generations have different world views to previous generations. For example, due to technology and science developments, Generation X has been the first ones to have been increasingly exposed to the world views of post-modernism (Tiplady, 2002:xi). It is acknowledged that from a post-modern world view, the current era is an era of post-truth and fake news. Generation Y, also referred to as the Millennials, is the generation who were most exposed to the post-modernism era and they are the latest generation who have entered the work place.

Although Chapter 3 does not assist with answering the overall research question, it serves as the lens through which this study and research question are approached. Therefore, this chapter's main purpose is to explain post-modernism in more detail and to explain what it entails to have a post-modern world view and its relevance to this study. The main sections in this chapter include: post-modernism defined, differences between modernism and post-modernism, characteristics of post-modernism and, a post-modern world view.

2.2 POST-MODERNISM DEFINED

Jean-Francois Lyotard (in Yilmaz, 2010:782) was a key role-player in setting the stage for the emergence of post-modernism in literature and it goes all the way back to his ground-breaking work, 'The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge,' published in 1979 in France, which was later translated into English. In Lyotard's (1984:xxiv;4) revolutionary publication, he defined post-modernism "... as incredulity toward metanarratives..." greatly given the fact that with increased advancements in technology and science comes new knowledge. He further explained that post-modernism is part of the modern ways whereby everything that is received should be approached with incredulity and that work should first be post-modern in order to become modern (Lyotard, 1984:79). He also argued that post-modern knowledge helps individuals to have an open mindset and to be more accepting of multiplicity and to understand that each situation is unique and that not all things can be compared (Lyotard, 1984:xxv).

Many scholars have agreed that post-modernism is a very broad concept, which makes it too difficult to define and consequently, there is no clear and agreed-upon definition for post-modernism (Goneos-Malka, 2011:6; Lin, 2011:204; Sharma & Chaudhary, 2011:189; Yilmaz, 2010:780; Matthewman & Hoey, 2006:529-530; Barrett, 1997:17). Some of the reasons for not having a clearly defined definition, include the following: it is a term used in various disciplines to explain different contexts (Goneos-Malka, 2011:6); it would go against its nature to allocate a one-size-fits-all definition to it (Yilmaz, 2010:780); it is not a systematic approach or a unified movement (Yilmaz, 2010:780); and lastly, leading role-players have not provided a

synoptic outline of the concept (Matthewman & Hoey, 2006:529). Each of these reasons is discussed below.

Firstly, and according to Goneos-Malka (2011:6) one of the main reasons why there exist no agreed-upon definition is that the post-modern concept is used in many disciplines to explain different views and, as a result, the meaning has evolved over time thereby making it difficult to allocate a specific definition to post-modernism. For example, by viewing post-modernism from a business lens, Ivanko (2013:180), explained post-modernism as a term that refers to a world where there is an increased change rate, a lot of competition, regular and easy flow of information amongst employees, all within a turbulent and unpredictable environment. However, by viewing post-modernism from a management lens, Cole and Kelly (2011:118) defined post-modernism as a term that rejects the presence of a universal, complete and coherent management approach. A second reason for not having a definition, as pointed out by Yilmaz (2010:780), is that given the nature of post-modernism being in support of multiplicity and contingency, it would go against its beliefs to have a one-size-fits-all definition to explain this concept as a definition would restrict its meaning. Instead of a universal approach to life, post-modernism suggests finding solutions/ideas based on the context of the construct. Yilmaz (2010:780) further explained, which is also the third reason, that post-modernism is not a systematic approach or a unified movement and that it is rather as he explains it "...an intellectual trend..." or "...a loose alliance of intellectual perspectives...", which makes it difficult to capture these trends/perspectives into a single definition. The last reason for not having an agreed-upon definition of post-modernism is that none of the leading role-players that contributed to literature in post-modernism has provided a synoptic outline of the concept (Burbules, 1995). Scholars often summarise what they believe post-modernism entails, however, Burbules (1995) argues that very few of these leading role-players will agree with the claims or statements made about post-modernism. To elaborate on this point, Matthewman and Hoey (2006:529) claim in chapter two of *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, Lyotard (1984) poses the question 'What is postmodernism?', however, they then fail to address the question in a comprehensive fashion. The next section explains the differences between

modernism and post-modernism as to assist with understanding the post-modern world view selected for this study.

2.3 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MODERNISM AND POST-MODERNISM

It is an obvious fact that there are many arguments as to why and how post-modernism made its appearance. Stated by Hossain and Karim (2013:173), it is not possible to understand post-modernism by overlooking modernism as both concepts are responses to the twentieth century. Sharma and Chaudhary (2011:191) explains that the 'post' in post-modernism does not necessarily imply that it is a new era, rather that it could refer to the significant events of the end of World War II or it could refer to the fact that post-modernism is a counterargument against modernism. Barrett (1997:17), therefore, claimed that post-modernism should have been called anti-modernism instead. Berger (2005:21) stated that it would be pointless for individuals to try and maintain a modernist mindset to life as the relevance of modernism already came to an end.

Ford (2007:112) argues that the differences between post-modernism and modernism are simple yet crucial. Modernism, on the one hand, evolved due to the rationalism of theories developed by individuals that suggested ordered or structured approaches such as Newton, Kant and Descartes (Barrett, 1997:18). Modernism, therefore, perceives the world to be consisting of objectivity (Ford, 2007:112; Berger, 2005:21), order and permanent structures that can be discovered over time (Ford, 2007:112). Furthermore, modernists view the truth to be universal or to be the absolute truth (Ford, 2007:112; Barrett, 1997:18). It places human beings at the centre of reality by using science to explain the reality or truth (Green & Roberts, 2012:80).

The emergence of post-modernism, on the other hand, was influenced by philosophers such as Friedrich Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger and Ludwig Wittgenstein who have been sceptical of the view of modernists that theory can represent reality (Barrett, 1997:18). Post-modernism, therefore, refers to a world where there is subjectivity (Ford, 2007:112; Berger, 2005:21), little order and it believes that structures were created because of influences by human beings (Ford, 2007:112) and

this explains why post-modernism encourages globalisation and multiplicity (Berger, 2005:21). It places no human being at the centre of reality and it also emphasises that there is no clear explanation or final truth to explain life (Green & Roberts, 2012:80) and that the truth is merely a construct developed by human interpretations influenced by linguistics, social interaction and the unconscious mind (Barrett, 1997:18). According to post-modernism, the truth is a lot more complicated than what is being claimed by modernists and it is highly dependent on the situation (Ford, 2007:112). Table 2.1 summarises the differences between modernism and post-modernism as explained above.

Table 2.1: Differences between modernism and post-modernism

DIFFERENTIATING FACTOR	MODERNISM	POST-MODERNISM
OBJECTIVITY VERSUS SUBJECTIVITY	The world consists of objectivity (Ford, 2007:112; Berger, 2005:21).	The world consists of subjectivity (Ford, 2007:112; Berger, 2005:21).
HIGHLY ORDERED VERSUS LITTLE ORDER	The world and its structures are highly ordered (Ford, 2007:112).	There is little order in the world (Ford, 2007:112).
PERMANENT VERSUS SUSCEPTIBLE STRUCTURES	Structures are permanently constructed and it can be revealed over time (Ford, 2007:112).	Structures are susceptible due to influences by human beings (Ford, 2007:112).
ONE TRUTH VERSUS NO ABSOLUTE TRUTH	The truth is universal and applicable to all situations (Ford, 2007:112; Berger, 2005:21; Barrett, 1997:18).	The truth is complicated and highly dependent on the situation (Ford, 2007:112). The truth is never final and truths are merely constructs developed by human interpretations (Barrett, 1997:18).
INDIVIDUALS BEING CENTRED OR DECENTRED	Human beings are the centre of reality (Green & Roberts, 2012:80; Barrett, 1997:18).	No-one is placed at the centre of reality (Green & Roberts, 2012:80; Barrett, 1997:18).

The next section explains the characteristics associated with post-modernism, which will assist with understanding the critiques of post-modernism in the subsequent section.

2.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF POST-MODERNISM

Earlier in this chapter, reasons have been given to explain why there is not a clear and agreed-upon definition for post-modernism. Although the definitions for post-modernism vary amongst various disciplines, there are, however, overlapping ideas or characteristics to assist with explaining the concept. Table 2.2 summarises the characteristics of post-modernism by different authors (Hossain & Karim, 2013; Green & Roberts, 2012; Lin, 2011; Firat & Dholakia, 2006).

Table 2.2: Characteristics of post-modernism

Hossain & Karim (2013:177)	Green & Roberts (2012:80-81)	Lin (2011:205)	Firat & Dholakia (2006:128)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rejection of the ultimate faith of science • Anti-verificationist stance • Individuality • Truth is a matter of perspective • Blurring the old distinctions • Globalisation and multi-culturalism • Information and media (hyper-realities) • New literary trends (fragmentation) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pluralism • Non-objectivity • Deconstruction • Cynicism • Community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncertainty • Irony • Hyperreality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hyperreality • Fragmentation • Decentring • Juxtapositions • Difference

For the research study at hand, the eight characteristics identified by Hossain and Karim (2013) have been selected to guide the discussion points as it suggests a more comprehensive list of characteristics. These eight characteristics identified, include rejection of the ultimate science; anti-verification stance; individuality; truth as a matter of perspective; blurring the old distinctions; globalisation and multi-culturalism; information and media; and new literature trends.

The first characteristic, rejection of the ultimate faith in science, refers to the great degree of scepticism in science by post-modernists (Tucker, 2014:3; Hossain & Karim,

2013:177; Green & Roberts, 2012:80-81; Du Toit, 2011:108; Berger, 2005:21), reason being that they have observed the negative consequences of science and technology on humanity, such as damages to the environment, unemployment and poverty caused by the industrialisation movement (Hossain & Karim, 2013:177). The second characteristic, the anti-verification stance, speaks to the fact that according to post-modernism there exist no valid verification model to explain movements or constructs (Hossain & Karim, 2013:177) and one can never reach a point where there is sufficient knowledge of any construct to be a valid explanation of concepts, constructs (Hossain & Karim, 2013:177; Green & Roberts, 2012:80-81; Berger, 2005:21) or people's behaviours (Lin, 2011:205). The third characteristic is individuality, and it refers to the fact that post-modernism encourages individuals to have subjective views on matters (Hossain & Karim, 2013:177) and to experiment with different structures in order to gain new knowledge and to identify new opportunities (Firat & Dholakia, 2006:128-132). The fourth characteristic is truth as a matter of perspective, and it means that truth depends on and will be determined by individuals' perspectives based on how they interpret life (Hossain & Karim, 2013:177). Post-modernism, therefore, embraces the view that life comprises of smaller localised and explanatory narratives (Tucker, 2014:3; Du Toit, 2011:108) and accordingly, the emphasis is placed on human interpretation (Barrett, 1997:18). The fifth characteristic is blurring the old distinctions and it boils down to post-modernism rejecting that there should be clear distinctions between opposition, such as barriers between different races or genders and it rather encourages the lines to be blurred and barriers to be open. This characteristic of blurred lines leads into the sixth one which is that post-modernism encourages and embraces globalisation and multi-culturalism, which also emphasises open and blurred lines. The second last characteristic is information and media, and because information and media are easily accessible, it resulted in hyper-realities in terms of what is the actual reality versus what is fantasy, once again resulting in blurred lines. Finally, the last characteristic described is that post-modernism brings about new literary trends where fragmentation takes place and where there can be played with different subjects (Hossain & Karim, 2013:177).

Characteristics of post-modernism have been explained, however, the concept, post-modernist, can also be further classified into two types, namely self-authoring post-

modernists and self-transformational post-modernists, which also have distinct characteristics. The characteristics of self-authoring post-modernists include that these individuals have clarity in terms of what they believe in, what they are good at and what they want to achieve. The disadvantage is that they have a very complex world view and they want others to follow their example, and accordingly, they get frustrated if their colleagues or peers have different perceptions. They prefer to have a specific goal and once they have accomplished the goal they move on to the next one. However, the characteristics of self-transformational post-modernists include that these individuals perceive processes as a journey rather than a once-off goal. Other than the self-authoring post-modernists, they have a sense of confusion and less certainty. Instead of getting frustrated with different perceptions or views, they are very much interested in the opinions and world views of their colleagues and peers (Berger, 2005:26). It is common knowledge that philosophies will always be criticised as different people have different perceptions. Hence, the critiques of post-modernism are discussed below.

2.5 CRITIQUES OF POST-MODERNISM

An important aspect of understanding post-modernism is to also understand its shortcomings. As discussed, post-modernism is very difficult to define and one of its critiques is summarised by Nicol (2009:1) who said that “[p]ostmodernism is a notoriously slippery and indefinable term”. He further explains that it is a word used in so multiple disciplines, including history, media studies, arts, social sciences and philosophy, that the concept has become overburdened with too many and different meanings, which according to him makes it a challenging term to grasp. As mentioned before, post-modernism is sceptical of current metanarratives (Lyotard, 1984:xxiv), however, claimed by Ozumba and Mendie (2017:381), one will never be able to exclude metanarratives as it plays a key role in making sense of life. These authors further gave an example that hard copies of books in libraries, who many have thought would have been discontinued by now with the rise of electronic books, are still being printed and placed in libraries. They argue that history always has a way of working itself into the modern day and age. They also claimed that cultures are dynamic and always evolving, which makes it difficult to completely die, as a culture will always

encompass characteristics and elements of the previous culture. Another area of criticism refers to the fact that post-modernism's freestyle approach rejects order and standards, and people, therefore, may become too relaxed without economic, social and religious standards to guide their lifestyles, which could result in chaotic circumstances. An additional point of criticism to post-modernism is since it supports the view that a reality is constructed by subjective human interpretation, it may result in a self-centred approach, which is not ideal in situations where philosophers need to make objective contributions (Ozumba & Mendie, 2017:383). Ozumba and Mendie (2017:383) also claim that for global peace to be promoted, there should be a cross-pollination of ideas and knowledge as well as exposure to different cultural views and perspectives, which may be lacking in a post-modern world view. These authors further explain that many scholars find it very challenging to understand and interpret the literature on the concept as high-level language and terms are being used to explain it. Consequently, meaning gets lost and the literature becomes irrelevant to them. Post-modernism rejects current structures or simplicity and therefore it is perceived to be complicating matters unnecessarily (Ozumba & Mendie, 2017:383). Post-modernism also rapidly points out counter-arguments without giving solutions (Nicol, 2009:179-180), which, could be argued, causes confusion. The following section explains the significance of a post-modern world view to this research study.

2.6 A POST-MODERN WORLD VIEW

According to Funk (2001), a world view is a framework of reference about various elements of life that impacts how an individual perceives constructs, think about aspects and behave towards different situations. Other words used interchangeably for a world view, include "...philosophy, philosophy of life, mindset, outlook on life, the formula for life..." (Funk, 2001). According to Johns (1995:77), a world view is a framework of windows or lenses through which situations are perceived, which ultimately impacts how people react. As per the definitions of post-modernism explained in the previous section, a post-modern world view rejects the idea that there is one absolute truth (Tucker, 2014:3; Du Toit, 2011:108) and consequently, the formula for life is that the world comprises of overlapping ideas created by different human beings for different situations experienced, which forms these individuals'

realities (Berger, 2005:21-22). As human interaction is key to forming these realities, this philosophy of life encourages self-expression and is open to and embraces the different perspectives by different human beings on what their opinion of reality is (Hedlund-de Witt, 2014:8317). Richardson and St. Pierre (in Creswell and Poth, 2017:258) compares a post-modern world view to the image of a crystal. What is seen by looking at a crystal, depends on the angle from which it is viewed. Crystals also come in various shapes and sizes. This succulently explains how a post-modern world view perceives reality. Similarly to a crystal, the outcomes or realities are not rigid and it may vary depending on the circumstances and how it is perceived.

When it comes to knowledge, as per the differences between modernism and post-modernism explained, a post-modern world view is generally very cautious when it comes to the claims made by science on what the absolute truth is as it is believed that subjectivity and contextuality are key to knowledge. A post-modern world view is also very sceptic of the modern ways of doing things, which include modern science, capitalism and elements of technology. Key motivators for employees with a post-modern world view are equality, diversity and freedom of the marginalised and oppressed groups, such as promoting democracy of multiple cultures, the rights of homo-sexuality and the values of ubuntu (Hedlund-de Witt, 2014:8317).

From a post-modern world view, Tierney (1996) suggests five areas for researchers to keep in mind when conducting qualitative research within the field of leadership. These areas are considered and forms part of the approach followed by the research study at hand to identify the preferred leadership style and leadership communication for Generation Y employees. These five areas include culture and difference; language and meaning; individual constraints and possibilities; power and politics; and subjectivity and objectivity.

Firstly, culture and difference refer to the fact that the concept, post-modernism, questions that cultures are passed on from one generation to the next one because realities differ for each generation, which also makes it unpredictable (Tierney, 1996). In the context of the study, this speaks to the point made in Chapter 1 that each generation brings a unique set of characteristics, strengths and values to the

workplace (Seth, 2015:423; Bannon *et al.*, 2011:61). From a leadership point of view, when the researcher will conduct the qualitative research, trends and inconsistencies will be identified to see what could be interpreted as a good leadership style(s) according to multiple representations. Secondly, language and meaning refer to a post-modern view that words can have more than one meaning, therefore the context, including history and social elements should be investigated to make sense of what is meant. Post-modernism also acknowledges that language can develop and different meanings can be developed over time. For example, a few years ago, the meaning given to the word 'leadership' is not what it is today. The researcher will analyse the data by considering the point that language and meaning can differ. Thirdly, post-modernism rejects the statement that a good leader can change things within an organisation and that change should rather be measured according to the limitations of the leaders' role within an organisation, instead of measuring it according to the individual's constraints and possibilities. The fourth point is power and politics, and it denotes that all organisations consist of different forms of power. In order to understand leadership, small and bigger actions should be investigated to understand the power relationships. The fifth point is subjectivity and objectivity, and it refers to the fact that post-modernism rejects grand narratives and encourages local narratives instead. For research purposes, different perspectives should be investigated as objectivity is rejected. Researchers should find the best way to incorporate their subjectivity into the research as not to skew the findings (Tierney, 1996). The characteristics of a post-modern world view as discussed in this section forms the lens through which the research methodology is approached.

The researcher selected a post-modern world view for the following reasons:

- The researcher agrees with the post-modern theory that there exist different perspectives to make sense of what reality is, depending on external factors such as the circumstances of each unique scenario. Therefore, a qualitative research design, such as the research design of the study at hand, is appropriate to take multiple factors into account in obtaining representative outcomes.
- The researcher is in agreement with the views of post-modernism in that there may not be an ideal way of interpreting the research. Instead, research should be

considered based on a case-by-case scenario taking into account the whole of the situation.

- The researcher acknowledges that research findings will not necessarily be applicable to all contexts, populations and scenarios. It remains the discretion of the interpreter to assign best practice to environments based on research findings.

2.7 CONCLUSION

Regardless of the critiques reported about post-modernism, there are many areas of the post-modern cultural phenomenon that are of relevance to leadership and communication, which is why post-modernism has been selected as the world view. In the context of this study, different generations have different preferences when it comes to leadership styles and leadership communication approaches in the workplace. From a post-modern point of view, what this means is that a universal approach would not work when leading different generations. It is also not to say that employees in one generation will have the exact same preferences, which is also aligned to the post-modern argument that there is no absolute or universal truth that will work in all circumstances. From a research methodology point of view, the following elements discussed in this chapter, will be considered for the research study at hand: words and meaning do not mean the same to everyone; larger and smaller acts need to be investigated to fully understand power relationships; limitations to the leaders' role should be considered and not only limitations/strengths of the leader; and there should be some sort of subjectivity without skewing the findings (Tierney, 1996). By adopting a post-modern world view, it opens a wide range of windows through which the research study will be approached, ultimately assisting with identifying the preferred leadership style and leadership communication for Generation Y employees. The next chapter discusses leadership styles and leadership communication elements that will be considered in this study.

CHAPTER 3

LEADERSHIP STYLES AND LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The sixth United States president, John Quincy Adams, once said: “If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.” Although these might be true words, it is easier said than done, especially within a diverse organisation. One of the greatest challenges for leaders is to be able to find ways to manage, lead and inspire a diverse group of employees consisting of different generations, cultures, religions, genders and backgrounds (Mor Barak, 2014:2). As a result of having a diverse workforce, leaders have to adjust their leadership styles and communication approaches according to different situations and different preferences of employees in order to be able to inspire and lead them towards achieving their personal goals as well as the organisational goals (Goleman, 2011:2). Many leaders may think that their individual leadership style is purely a reflection of their personality rather than perceiving it to be a strategic choice. However, instead of selecting a leadership style according to personality, it should be selected based on the style that would work to fit the specific scenario. It is therefore obvious that leaders can adopt different leadership styles to lead in different situations (Goleman, 2011:3). According to Goleman (2011:3), emotional intelligence plays a vital role in being able to select the right leadership style per scenario. Goleman (2011:3) argues that there are several leadership styles and each of them requires emotional intelligence to be able to perform it successfully.

Every generation has a preference when it comes to leadership styles, and if the leader leads the team according to the preferred leadership style it could improve employees' performance within the workplace (Duquesnoy, 2011:34-35). Hence, leaders should take note of the fact that their selection of their leadership style and communication approaches, could influence employees' motivation and satisfaction levels (Çetin *et*

al., 2012:227). Therefore, the focus of Chapter 3 is to explore the different leadership styles, thereby providing the researcher with insights with regards to leadership styles and communication approaches. The main sections in this chapter include: leadership versus management, leadership theories, leadership styles, leadership communication, the Synopsis Fame model, leadership communication styles and, leadership communication challenges. The insights obtained in this chapter will assist with developing the semi-structured interview guideline, ultimately to identify preferred leadership style and leadership communication for Generation Y employees.

3.2 LEADERSHIP VERSUS MANAGEMENT

Many people use the terms leadership and management interchangeable, however, there are differences between the two. Covey (in Westcott, 2014:9) summarises the difference between leadership and management succinctly as follows: “Leadership focusses on doing the right things; management focusses on doing things right”. These differences are discussed in more detail below.

On the one hand, managers are focussed on performing their organisational tasks through other people (Hobart & Sendek, 2014:51-52). Management is often described as ‘transactional management’ as it is more focussed towards performing revenue-related or physical day-to-day activities such as strategically allocating human, financial and operational capital (Răducan & Răducan, 2014a:810; Westcott, 2014:9). Key words associated with managers are: ‘to control’, ‘to interfere’, ‘to correct’ (Răducan & Răducan, 2014a:809). On the other hand, leaders inspire and guide other people to get the work done (Hobart & Sendek, 2014:51-52). Leadership encompasses building relationships with employees, inspiring change and encouraging innovative thinking (Westcott, 2014:9). It is a strategic process whereby employees’ perceptions and behaviour are positively influenced to achieve organisational goals (Lussier & Hendon, 2013:347). Leaders are, therefore, the people behind constructive changes within the organisation, they create the overall vision and mission of the organisation and select the implementation strategies to reach the desired goals (Răducan & Răducan, 2014a:809). Leaders identify a problem, understand what is needed to make it work and address the problem immediately.

They are also able to identify opportunities and they are quick to take on these opportunities. In terms of leadership qualities, a leader should be an inspiring coach, an effective communicator, a strategic co-coordinator and an excellent listener to be successful (Bhatti, Maitlo, Shaikh, Hashmi and Shaikh, 2012:193). Key words associated with leaders are: 'inspire' and 'change' (Răducan & Răducan, 2014a:809).

Having distinguished the difference between leadership and management, it is important to note that leaders do not have to be in a management position to perform leadership (Westcott, 2014:9; Achua & Lussier, 2013:7). However, the opposite is also true; not all managers possess the necessary skills to be an effective leader (Lussier & Hendon, 2013:347). Ideally, managers should always strive to be a leader when managing the organisation (Westcott, 2014:9). Leadership, therefore, plays a crucial role in management, and consequently, managerial tasks, such as organising, planning and decision-making, will remain inactive until a leader motivates, inspires and guides employees toward the goals. Based on the above discussion from the views of different authors, the following definition for leadership has been created for the purpose of the current research.

Leadership is a mutually beneficial process where the leader inspires the followers towards specific actions and change to ultimately reach the organisational goals.

After reviewing the literature, Table 3.1 was compiled to summarise the differences between leadership and management.

Table 3.1: Differences between leadership and management

Leadership	Management
A leader does the right things (Covey in Westcott, 2014:9).	A manager does things right (Covey in Westcott, 2014:9).
A leader does not have to be a manager with a formal title (Westcott, 2014:9; Achua & Lussier, 2013:7).	A manager can be a leader too (Westcott, 2014:9; Achua & Lussier, 2013:7).
Leaders inspire and implement change (Răducan & Răducan, 2014a:809).	Managers control, interfere and correct (Răducan & Răducan, 2014a:809).
A leader's role is to create a vision and implement strategies (Răducan & Răducan, 2014a:810; Northouse, 2013:12).	A manager is responsible for allocating the necessary capital (Răducan & Răducan, 2014a:810).

The next section discusses four leadership theories that will assist with identifying the preferred leadership styles for Generation Y employees.

3.3 LEADERSHIP THEORIES

There are many reasons as to why leadership theories have been developed over the years. One of it is that it helps to foster a better comprehension of the various aspects pertaining to leadership, ultimately providing knowledge to control and predict leadership behaviour (Achua & Lussier, 2013:7). According to Achua and Lussier (2013:19), there are four major leadership theories, namely The Trait Theory, The Behavioural Leadership Theory, The Contingency Leadership Theory and The Integrative Leadership Theory. The main purpose of exploring the different theories is to see how Generation Y will respond to them.

The Trait Theory is based on the early belief that leaders are born and not made and theories have, therefore, been developed to explain that leaders should possess certain leadership traits (Achua & Lussier, 2013:19; Brown, 2011:830; Adler & Elmhorst, 2008:260), which include: intelligence, self-confidence, determination, integrity and sociability (Northouse, 2013:23) in order to be successful. In the end, research showed that not all leaders that possess these traits would become leaders, and subsequently, another leadership theory was born namely, The Behavioural Theory (Adler & Elmhorst, 2008:260). The Behavioural Theory moved away from believing that leaders should possess certain traits, to rather believing that effective leaders require certain behaviours, such as a strong personality, that make them successful. Different from The Trait Theory, this theory is based on the belief that certain leadership skills can be learnt and two behaviours that are central to effective leadership, include: task orientated and people orientated behaviours (Wibbeke & McArthur, 2014:43; Achua & Lussier, 2013:20).

In contrast to both The Trait Theory and The Behaviour Theory, The Contingency Theory moved away from believing that leaders are successful if they possess either certain traits or act according to certain behaviours, to a more situational approach. The argument behind The Contingency Theory is that leadership styles should be

flexible and interchanged according to each unique scenario. It emphasises the fact that there are various situational aspects that can impact the effectiveness of leadership (Wibbeke & McArthur, 2014:43; Achua & Lussier, 2013:20; Adler & Elmhorst, 2008:262). Finally, The Integrative Leadership Theory arose, which as the word implies, uses a combination of The Trait, The Behavioural and The Contingency Theory to explain the leadership-follower relationship (Achua & Lussier, 2013:20). It could be argued that The Integrative Leadership Theory is aligned to the post-modern world view that there exist no absolute or universal truth and that the world is very subjective, and correspondingly, leaders should select the most appropriate leadership styles and communication approaches based on their interpretation of the various circumstances. The next section provides a discussion on the various leadership styles that leaders could adopt to lead Generation Y employees.

3.4 LEADERSHIP STYLES

As discussed previously, a leader's main purpose is to influence, guide and inspire employees towards reaching organisational goals (Hodgetts & Hegar, 2008:332). However, leaders have a choice over what leadership style they want to adopt to fulfil this main task (Zulch, 2014:173; Çetin *et al.*, 2012:229). As stated by Wright (2009:236) there is no perfect leadership model, however, Zulch (2014:173) argues that what differentiate effective leaders from others is their ability to continuously assess the unique circumstances and to strategically select their leadership style accordingly. A key aspect of this process is to understand the benefits and limitations of the different leadership styles in relation to the ever-changing business environment (Özera & Tınaztepe, 2014:779). As mentioned, emotional intelligence, a people's skill where one is aware of and understand and have control over your own and others' emotions, plays a vital role in being able to select the right leadership style (Hobart & Sendek, 2014:203-204; Goleman, 2011:3).

Before the styles are discussed, the question of 'what does the concept, leadership style, mean' should first be answered. Leadership style refers to the unique approach that leaders adopt in which they provide guidance, implement plans and inspire followers (Khan, Khan, Qureshi, Khan, Jan & Khan, 2015a:48). The following

leadership styles are explained in the next section: autocratic transactional, participative, transformational, charismatic, servant, laissez-faire, communicative, ethical, authentic and relational leadership. The purpose of investigating these styles is to see how Generation Y will respond to the styles in the work environment. For purposes of this study, the ethical, authentic and relational communication styles have been excluded in the research findings and discussion chapter.

3.4.1 Autocratic leadership

An autocratic leadership style, often referred to as the classical approach (Khan, Khan, Qureshi, Ismail, Rauf, Latif & Tahir, 2015b:87), is a style where the leader retains all the power and makes all the decisions without allowing employees to provide their input or ideas (De Hoogh, Greer, Den Hartog, 2015:687-689; Khan *et al.*, 2015b:87). Autocratic leaders are, therefore, task oriented and not relationship orientated (Adams & Galanes, 2009:283-284). Consequently, autocratic leaders force the use of titles and often remind the followers of the hierarchical differences to ensure that control is maintained (Kelly & MacDonald, 2016:2;4; Wright, 2009:237). These leaders rely on threats and punishments to remain being in control, which may result in employees feeling that they are not trusted (Khan *et al.*, 2015b:87). For obvious reasons, this leadership style has been critiqued over the years. Some of the reasons include it being a major contributor towards larger numbers of absenteeism; nonetheless, this leadership style can be beneficial in certain scenarios (Khan *et al.*, 2015b:87). An advantage of this style is that it often leads to a higher turnover (Khan *et al.*, 2015b:87), which could be due to the fact that autocratic leaders provide clear direction on what should be done, how it should be done and by when (Khan *et al.*, 2015b:87). Although it could boost turnover, as a result of the one-sided top down communication, these leaders are perceived to be bossy, dictatorial and controlling (Khan *et al.*, 2015b:87). Typical phrases that autocratic leaders would use include 'this is what we are going to do' (Adams & Galanes, 2009:283-284) or 'do it because I say so' (Wright, 2009:237), which are both phrases that are not welcoming input, but rather giving instructions. An autocratic leadership style, compared to other leadership styles, leads to the highest workers' burnouts, the most unmotivated employees and the least solidarity in the workplace (Kelly & MacDonald, 2016:1). Even though, autocratic leadership may

have disadvantages, it could also be highly effective in certain cases, such as where employees require strict supervision to be able to perform their tasks (Adams & Galanes, 2009:283-284) or to manage employees that are required to execute routine jobs (Zamorano, 2008:19). The reason for its effectiveness in these circumstances include that leaders remain in control by dictating what is required of employees, which causes a higher productivity (De Hoogh *et al.*, 2015:687-689). However, the rigid approach of an autocratic leadership style tends to oppress creativity and enthusiasm (Adams & Galanes, 2009.283-284), and it could be argued, that from a post-modern point of view, this style is not favourable for the reason that autocratic leadership does not support individuality and subjective inputs from employees.

3.4.2 Transactional leadership

The key focus of transactional leadership is more of a 'hard leadership approach', forcing or pressuring employees to perform tasks in order to reach the end result (Rao, 2013:144-145). Transactional leadership is often used as a responsive or short-term leadership approach as there are not many emotional bonds involved (Brown, Williams & Jolliffe, 2014:39). These leaders are more focussed on coordinating human capital and other resources to achieve clearly set goals, in other words, getting the work done and seeing results, rather than solving problems (Brown *et al.*, 2014:39; Özera & Tinaztepe, 2014:779; Westcott, 2014:9; Hodgetts & Hegar, 2008:355). Thus, transactional leaders have been characterised as police officers rather than leaders (Khan *et al.*, 2015b:87-88) as they create exchange relationships with employees where they reward or punish them based on their performance in relation to reaching specific goals (Brown *et al.*, 2014:39; Özera & Tinaztepe, 2014:779; Westcott, 2014:9; Odumeru & Ifeanyi, 2013:358; Hodgetts & Hegar, 2008:355). If employees have managed to meet goals, they could receive rewards such as bonuses, more benefits or higher salaries (Brown *et al.*, 2014:39; Özera & Tinaztepe, 2014:779; Westcott, 2014:9; Odumeru & Ifeanyi, 2013:358; Hodgetts & Hegar, 2008:355).

The main differences between transactional and autocratic leadership styles are that transactional leaders do everything according to the book and if a task or decision does not form part of the processes or policies, then these leaders will refer to a leader

higher in the hierarchy; whereas autocratic leaders make decisions based on their own ideas of what they think could be right decision, without any input from anyone else (Khan *et al.*, 2015b:87-88). As with autocratic leadership, transactional leaders are also authoritarian and results orientated, thereby leaving little or no room for flexibility (Brown *et al.*, 2014:39), which could be an effective approach in times of crises (Odumeru & Ifeanyi, 2013:358).

3.4.3 Participative leadership

The participative leadership style is often referred to as the democratic leadership style (Khan *et al.*, 2015b:88; Adams & Galanes, 2009:284). A participative leader welcomes the entire team's feedback, inputs and suggestions, thereby making organisational problems a shared issue (Kelly & MacDonald, 2016:4; Khan *et al.*, 2015b:88; Adam & Galanes, 2009:284; Rok, 2009:467; Wright, 2009:237). Due to this type of leadership being more of a horizontal approach, there is no formal distinction between the leader and the followers. Participative leaders, therefore, have been described as mentors that participate (Khan *et al.*, 2015b:88) or representatives of a group of like-minded employees (Nemaei, 2012:29) who make decisions based on collaborative inputs (Adams & Galanes, 2009:284). Participative leadership is often seen in organisations that moved away from one-way top-to-bottom communication to more two-way decentralised communication (Rok, 2009:470). Typical communication channels that participative leaders would use include team discussions, interactive meetings and group learning activities (Shilpika, 2012:46).

It could be argued that the major difference between participative leadership and both the autocratic and transactional leadership styles, is that as the name implies, participative leadership is a democratic approach where the followers' inputs are valued unlike with the other two styles. Employees of participative leaders often feel more engaged and motivated, than with autocratic and transactional leadership, as they are part of the decision-making processes unlike with the other two (Khan *et al.*, 2015b:89). Participative leaders would use phrases like 'What do you think we could do to address this problem?' (Adams & Galanes, 2009:284) and phrases like this would motivate followers to come up creative solutions (Khan *et al.*, 2015b:89). With

participative leadership being a very inclusive approach (Shilpika, 2012:46), it also has disadvantages such as being very time consuming for the leader to give the whole team a chance to give inputs, and because inputs are valued, it makes it difficult to conclude with agreed-upon solutions that all employees are satisfied with (Khan *et al.*, 2015b:89). Therefore, participative leadership would not be effective in situations where there is a need for prompt decision-making (Khan *et al.*, 2015b:89), however, according to Rok (2009:469), participative leadership could work well in organisations where job responsibilities are fairly allocated amongst employees.

3.4.4 Transformational leadership

As the name implies, transformational leadership is about leading towards transformation or change (Hodgetts & Hegar, 2008:354) by creating and communicating a well-defined vision that inspires employees toward achieving the bigger picture; way beyond their self-interest (Ayub, Manaf & Hamzah, 2014:505; Adams & Galanes, 2009:284-285; Hodgetts & Hegar, 2008:354). It all starts with creating excitement around the vision through good and effective communication, thereby selling the idea to followers (Hodgetts & Hegar, 2008:354). Transformational leadership is forward-thinking and focussed on continuously renewing, building and improving things, and instead of viewing a new situation or change as a problem, these leaders will persuade employees to see it as a challenge (Khadar, 2012:45). Hence, employee teams of transformational leaders are more likely to have higher morale and to be more productive (Odumeru & Ifeanyi, 2013:356). This could be argued is due to the fact that transformational leaders truly care about the welfare of employees by paying special attention to them in order to understand and address their specific needs; more so than with any other leadership styles (Men, 2014:4;15). By leading by example, these transformational leaders inspire employees (Odumeru & Ifeanyi, 2013:356) and by keeping employees challenged through creating opportunities for growth, these leaders keep employees motivated (Men, 2014:15; Özera & Tınaztepe, 2014:779).

Other than autocratic and transactional leadership, transformational leadership promotes building mutually stimulating and engaging relationships (Krishnan,

2012:551), which often results in creating an emotional bond between the leader and employees (Men, 2014:4). This is done by creating a culture of listening, openness, feedback, relationship-building and participation, which are characteristics of symmetrical (two-way) communication (Men, 2014:5), which is also an attribute of participative leadership. Communication channels that transformational leaders would use to create this culture of two-way interaction include one-on-ones, group meetings and telephonic conversations (Men, 2014:5;13). From the discussion, it is evident that there are many advantages associated with this leadership style, however, disadvantages have also been identified. One being that transformational leaders often only see the bigger picture and are ignorant about the smaller detail associated with reaching the vision. However, transformational leadership could be effective when there are strong employees who will take care of the smaller detail needed to reach the vision (Hodgetts & Hegar, 2008:354).

3.4.5 Charismatic leadership

Charismatic leadership is different to all the leadership styles already discussed. Weber (in Conrad & Poole, 2012:179) describes a charismatic leader as a leader that uses 'supernatural' powers to motivate the followers toward achieving organisational goals. The relationship between the charismatic leader and the employees can be explained as that of disciples to a master, where there is truly an emotional bond and followers show love, devotion and passion for these leaders without feeling obligated to do so (Achua & Lussier, 2013:306). Charismatic leadership is often used interchangeably for transformational leadership as both communicate a vision to the followers; however, they are different. The main difference between the two is that with charismatic leadership the extraordinary and unusual characteristics of the leader inspire team members to perform the desired tasks, whereas, with transformational leadership, followers are empowered to perform tasks (Adams & Galanes, 2009:285). Charismatic leaders are able to inspire employees because they have an attractive personality, and on top of that, they have knowledge and wisdom to share (Conrad & Poole, 2012:179).

Charismatic leaders are very passionate and dedicated about the group of employees that they lead (Zamorano, 2008:19) as well as the cause and the vision that they are leading (Trudeau Poskas, Messer, Horntvedt & Vitcenda, 2013:4). They have the ability to take followers' ideas and transform it into something useful that could further the mission without offending them or take ownership of the ideas (Conrad & Poole, 2012:179). Charismatic leadership is often seen in difficult times such as economic or political distressing situations as this type of leadership requires followers to voluntarily recognise the leader's special powers (Shilpika, 2012:7). However, a concern with this leadership is that employees or followers associate the success of the organisation to the leader, which means that should the charismatic leader leave the specific organisation, it could possibly lead to difficulty for employees to adjust and maintain productivity (Zamorano, 2008:19).

3.4.6 Laissez-faire leadership

Laissez-faire leadership, also known as the hands-off style (Adams & Galanes, 2009:284; Khan *et al.*, 2015b:90) is a style where the leaders perceive themselves as no different to their followers and consequently, they are easy-going and not much involved in decision-making processes (Adams & Galanes, 2009:284). Employees have freedom as no-one looks over their shoulder with regards to achieving organisational goals (Khan *et al.*, 2015b:89). According to Bhatti *et al.* (2012:193), with this type of leadership, it is almost like a non-interference policy, where the leader leaves everything up to the employees. Minimum guidance and support are provided by the leader (Khan *et al.*, 2015b:90). This often requires certain employees to step in and take leadership to ensure that the team succeed (Adams & Galanes, 2009:284-285). Laissez-faire leaders would typically use phrases like 'do what you feel is the right thing to do' (Adams & Galanes, 2009:285).

The laissez-faire leadership style could potentially be effective if used in highly experienced, skilled and educated teams that do not require a lot of supervision (Khan *et al.*, 2015b:89; Adams & Galanes, 2009:285; Zamorana, 2008:19). However, it could hinder production if this leadership style is used in a team that requires strong supervision. This could negatively affect operations and unnecessarily lead to

additional costs because of the lack of rules and guidance provided by the leader (Khan *et al.*, 2015b:89; Adams & Galanes, 2009:285; Zamorona, 2008:19). Due to the hands-off approach, some employees may take chances and push their limits as there are no roles and responsibilities allocated by the leader (Khan *et al.*, 2015b:90). With laissez-faire leadership, there often occurs a lack of feeling of camaraderie in the team as each employee has to solve their own problems without receiving any support or guidance from anyone (Khan *et al.*, 2015b:90).

3.4.7 Servant leadership

Servant leaders genuinely care for employees and are selflessly devoted to benefitting others and fulfilling specific needs of the employees, ultimately helping them to grow both on a professional and personal level (Grisaffea, VanMeterb & Chonkoa, 2016:43; Achua & Lussier, 2013:326; Spears, 2010:25; Zamorona, 2008:19). According to Zamorano (2008:19), similar to the participative leadership style, servant leaders also follow a democratic approach when leading employees. All employees are listened to, inputs are valued and everyone is involved in decision-making processes (Spears, 2010:25; Page & Wong, n.d.:^[5]). Servant leaders empathise with and try to understand employees, while they also have a strong need to heal them through mental and emotional support (Spears, 2010:27). The main aim of these leaders is to serve and not to be served (Achua & Lussier, 2013:327) and consequently, servant leaders have a solid moral compass that drives all their activities (Jaramillo, Bande & Varela, 2015:117); and self-interest is not an option (Page & Wong, n.d.:^[2]). As a result of these leaders truly caring about employees and wanting to serve them, they do not perceive an employee just as the 'office cleaning person' or just the 'admin person'. Employees are perceived to be equal and part of the team, even though they may be playing different roles in reaching the organisational goals (Page & Wong, n.d.:^[2;6]).

An advantage of the servant leadership is that these leaders have a strong general and personal awareness, which help them to easily identify issues pertaining to ethics, power and values, which are highly beneficial to organisations. By having a strong awareness, servant leaders use their awareness ability to look at the organisation

holistically when making decisions or performing tasks. Servant leaders incorporate lessons from the past, take into account current realities and consider each decision's impact on the future of the organisation. In addition to their holistic thinking, they strongly rely on persuading others rather than performing authority to ensure that followers are satisfied, and their needs are not compromised (Spears, 2010:27-28). Even though there are a lot of advantages to servant leadership, it can also be disadvantageous to organisations at times when there is too little focus on achieving organisational goals and too much focus on fulfilling employees' needs (Staats, 2015:16).

3.4.8 Communicative leadership

Unlike the communication styles already discussed, what sets the communicative leadership style apart is that communicative leaders are not just communicating, but they are truly good communicators. These leaders engage strongly in two-way communication by continuously sharing and seeking feedback from team members, by adopting participative decision-making processes and by being open and involved (Johansson, Miller & Hamrin, 2014:148;155). A key aspect on the to-do lists of communicative leaders is problem-solving activities. These leaders engage actively in problem-solving by following up, getting feedback and providing the necessary support (Johannsson *et al.*, 2014:154). Communicative leaders have the skills to persuade and to get a message across effectively and clearly. Communicative leaders can package the message using well-thought through words in order to have an impactful message that draws the attention of followers. They also consider the cultural background of the audience in creating the right message before they communicate (Dalati, 2013:3).

The main difference between transformational leadership and communicative leadership is that with transformational leadership, power is centralised, and the leader sets the objectives that should be achieved, whereas, with communicative leadership, the followers can also influence the formulated objectives as power is distributed (Johansson, 2015:90-91). Consequently, communicative leaders set clear expectations by collaborating with followers to help them set realistic goals as well as to determine ways to measure their performance (Johannsson *et al.*, 2014:154).

Aligned to servant leadership, communicative leaders are very approachable and always willing to listen to feedback, concerns, questions and complaints from followers. Furthermore, they really care about the well-being of followers and show it to them (Johannsson *et al.*, 2014:154) by adopting an approach where they focus on coaching employees, thereby enabling employees to be self-managing. Communicative leaders are very involved (Johannsson *et al.*, 2014:154-155) and they help employees to understand how their inputs contribute to the bigger scheme of things and where these employees could find the necessary resources to perform their tasks (Wright, 2009:237).

3.4.9 Ethical leadership

Ethical leadership is a style that encompasses more than traits such as integrity and honesty (Yukl, Mahsud, Hassan, Prussia, 2011:39). According to Yukl *et al.* (2011:39), it is also about keeping employees accountable for their actions as to behave ethically. Ethical leaders are models to employees with regards to ethical conduct. In order for leaders to adopt ethical leadership, they should be credible, open, fair, trustworthy and honest individuals. The ethical leader's communication explicitly states ethical expectations and uses reinforcement to make sure that the message comes across clearly. The ethical leader makes decisions, builds interrelationships and engages in interpersonal communication through what is perceived to be normative appropriate behaviour (Brown, Treviño & Harrison, 2005:120). Ethical leaders think about the consequences that their decisions may have in the long-term, they do what they think is the right thing to do and act according to what would benefit the greater good (Mihelič, Lipičnik & Tekavčič, 2010:31).

3.4.10 Authentic leadership

According to Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans and May (2004:806), with authentic leadership, leaders are truly genuine and act according to their personal values and beliefs to win the trust and respect of those whom they are leading. Authentic leaders have a great sense of self-knowledge and viewpoints which is directly related to their

values and beliefs (Avolio *et al.*, 2004:806). Authentic leaders are original and do not try to live up to the expectations of others, instead they are themselves and do what they believe reflects their true self (Shamir & Eilam, 2005:396-397). Authentic leadership is also very closely related to ethical leadership as authentic leaders understand that their ethical behaviour serves as an example to their followers and accordingly impact how the followers think, behave and make decisions (Avioli *et al.*, 2004:807).

3.4.11 Relational leadership

Relational leadership is process-orientated and is about leading in a purposeful way where the leader is committed towards positive causes. These leaders use an inclusive approach, welcomes the employees' diverse opinions and empowers the team. This leadership style favours ethical practices, similar to the ethical leadership style (Komives, Lucas, McMahan, n.d.:74).

The subsequent section discusses a key concept in the research question, leadership communication.

3.5 LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION

It is an undeniable fact that communication is an integral part of leadership (Fairhurst & Connaughton, 2014:8; Răducan & Răducan, 2014b:814; Zulch, 2014:173; De Vries, Bakker-Pieper & Oostenveld, 2010:367). Leaders do not have a choice but to communicate if they want to be successful and ensure that organisational tasks are executed effectively through clear understandable objectives (Ayub *et al.*, 2014:504; Răducan & Răducan, 2014b:814). As explained in the previous section, communicative leaders are not only communicating, but they are truly good communicators. This section explains what it entails for leaders to be good communicators and what the challenges are that hinder them from communicating effectively. Firstly, it is important to understand what leadership communication entails before best practices and challenges are investigated. Consequently, leadership

communication is an interactive process whereby leaders motivate followers to reach specific organisational goals and outcomes (Shockley-Zalabak, 2014:216). A key aspect to motivating employees toward reaching the goals is by succinctly communicating what should be achieved (Ayub *et al.*, 2014:502). When the leader communicates effectively, it often results in stronger and more purposeful working relationships (Ayub *et al.*, 2014:504). To elaborate on the point made in this section that communicative leaders are truly good communicators, the Synopsis FAME model explained in this section provides insight into what makes leaders effective communicators.

3.6 THE SYNOPSIS FAME MODEL

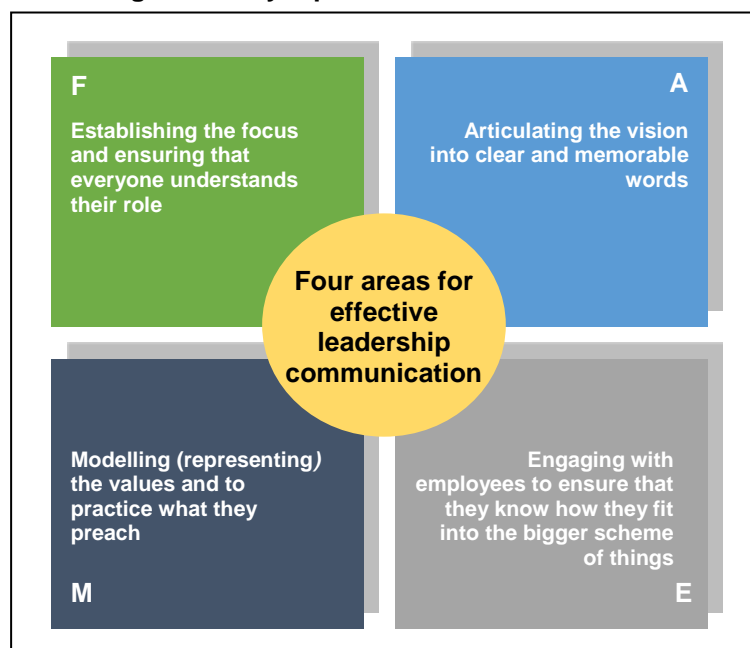
According to the Synopsis FAME model, when leaders are classified as effective leaders, they usually perform above average on four communication areas. These areas are called focus, articulate, model and engage (Wright, 2009:244-245; Walters & Norton, 2008:16). The relevance of the Synopsis Fame Model to this study is to see whether these four areas are also relevant in leading Generation Y employees. In other words, if leaders reflect these four areas, would they be perceived as effective in leading Generation Y employees?

The first area, focus, refers to leaders assessing the internal and external environment for issues and accordingly set areas that require priorities and how the employees could contribute towards achieving is (Wright, 2009:245). The second area, articulate, links to the previous area discussed and refers to conveying the focus into linguistics to ensure that the bigger picture is memorable and understandable to the employees (Wright, 2009:246; Walters & Norton, 2008:17). It is all about speaking the language of the followers and turning the focus into a workable elevator pitch that evokes excitement (Wright, 2009:246). The third area, model, refers to the aspect where leaders practise what they preach and portray the values that they communicate about. It is about always walking the talk and leading by example (Wright, 2009:246; Walters & Norton, 2008:17). It also encompasses what leaders portray in their informal communication (Wright, 2009:246). Effective leaders know their natural communication style and use it to their advantage (Walters & Norton, 2008:17). The

last area, engage, refers to leaders engaging with followers by listening to them, facilitating communication and asking questions. Engaging leaders are perceived to be approachable, understanding, passionate, thoughtful and to be truly caring about the employees (Wright, 2009:245).

The following figure illustrates the Synopsis FAME model based on theoretical discussions by Wright (2009:245-246), Walter and Norton (2008:16-17). It is evident that from the leadership styles discussed, not all of them cover the four areas of effective leadership communication, which could be argued explain why some styles are considered to be more effective than others. The next section investigates different leadership communication styles.

Figure 3.1: Synopsis FAME model illustrated



Source: Developed based on theory from Wright (2009:246-246), Walter and Norton (2008:16-17).

The following section explores the various leadership communication styles that leaders could consider in communicating to Generation Y employees.

3.7 LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION STYLES

The concept, communication styles, refers to the way in which a communicator sends verbal, paraverbal and nonverbal messages to portray how they want to be perceived,

how they want to resonate with others and ultimately, how the message should be interpreted (De Vries, Bakker-Pieper, Siberg, Van Gameren & Vlug, 2009:179). For the purpose of the current research study, the researcher agrees with the definition of a leadership communication style viewed by De Vries *et al.* (2010:368) being a unique set of interpersonal communication approaches that a leader adopts to maximise hierarchical relationships to reach specific goals. In a study conducted by De Vries *et al.* (2009:178), it was found that communication styles usually consist of one or more of seven dimensions, which they have defined according to the acronym PRESENT, referring to preciseness, reflectiveness, expressiveness, supportiveness, emotionality, niceness and threateningness. Preciseness, being the association with the first letter of the acronym, points to whether the style is clear, succinct, efficient and portraying business acumen. The second letter, referring to reflectiveness, denotes to the extent that a communication style is engaging, analytical, logical and reflecting poetic communication behaviours, whereas the third letter, symbolises expressiveness, pointing to whether the style is vocal, energised and articulate. The fourth letter of the acronym stands for supportiveness and alludes to the degree to what the style is accommodating, inspiring and caring. The fifth letter is associated with emotionality and refers to the emotions that the style evokes such as unhappiness, tension and annoyance. The sixth letter, referring to the niceness element, includes aspects such as cheerfulness, friendliness and approachability, whereas the last letter, threateningness, make references to whether the style is abusive and aggressive (De Vries *et al.* (2009:195).

Although communication styles could consist of one or more PRESENT element, as discussed above, Hartman and McCambridge (2011:29) have argued that there are general assumptions about communication styles. Firstly, all leaders automatically use a blend of styles when communicating. Secondly, the majority of leaders have a dominant communication style that they revert to. Thirdly, the communication styles being used can be observed from the way the communicator behaves. The fourth assumption is that employees respond quicker to communicators or leaders that share their dominant communication style. The fifth assumption is that communication styles are adaptable according to circumstances and lastly, there is not one communication style that is the best solution for all situations. For the purpose of the current study,

these assumptions and the following internal and interpersonal communication styles discussed, guide the research design as to determine what are the preferred leadership style and leadership communication for Generation Y employees.

The following section investigates the different communication styles that could include one or more of the PRESENT characteristics discussed above. Achua and Lussier (2013:316-317) describe four situational communication styles, namely autocratic, consultative, participative and empowerment communication styles. The main differences between these styles are based on the extent to what they are task or relationship orientated. These styles can be used interchangeably according to the various situations and what the immediate needs are (Achua & Lussier, 2013:316-317).

Firstly, and in agreement with the autocratic leadership style, the autocratic communication style refers to the leader being highly task orientated and not much relationship orientated, which means that the leader is controlling by telling employees what is expected of them without allowing them to give input or feedback. Secondly, and similar to transformational leadership, when a leader adopts a consultative communication style, the leader is both highly task and relationship orientated, which means that employees are told what is expected of them, however, their inputs are desired. Thirdly, and in line with the participative leadership communication style, with the participative communication style, the leader is little task orientated and highly orientated to build relationships, meaning that the leader helps the employees to solve their problems or employees are asked to help the leader solve the problem. Finally, in agreement to the laissez-faire leadership style, with the empowerment communication style, the leader possesses both low task and relationship behaviours, which means that the leader gives power to the employees without providing a lot of guidance and instead letting the employees take charge (Achua & Lussier, 2013:316-317).

As mentioned, the communication style can be used interchangeably by leaders during different scenarios as and when leaders see fit and based on different organisational needs. To take it one step further, a leader can also adopt different

interpersonal communication styles or approaches based on their need to either build stronger relationships or more distant relationships. Walker (2014:252) identified three interpersonal communication styles, called avoidance, aggressiveness and assertiveness. Firstly, the avoidance style is adopted when the leader consciously decides to have as little as possible to do with the employee. As a result of avoiding engaging with them, problems cannot be identified or resolved, which makes it a passive approach. Secondly, the aggressive style refers to when leaders verbally abuse followers and disrespect others' needs through their communication. Leaders adopting an aggressive communication style will include messages that are argumentative, controlling and hurting. Thirdly, the assertive style, also perceived as the most effective style, is the style that considers both the leader and the employee in the communication. Leaders are direct in their communication without blaming or attacking employees. When leaders use an assertive style to communicate, they simply express what is expected of the employee (Walker, 2014:252). The figure below summarises the communication styles discussed.

Table 3.2: Communication styles

Situational communication styles (Achua & Lussier, 2013:316-317)	Interpersonal communication styles (Walker, 2014:252)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autocratic communication style • Consultative communication style • Participative communication style • Empowerment communication style 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoidance communication style • Aggressiveness communication style • Assertiveness communication style

Based on the discussion on both the situational and interpersonal communication styles, it could be argued that some styles may be more effective than others and that if the most appropriate style is not used in a unique situation that it could hinder the effectiveness of the communication. From a post-modern world view, it is important to consider circumstances in order to make interpretations. Hence, the following section explains other challenges that may influence the effectiveness of leaders' communication with Generation Y employees.

3.8 LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES

Regardless of how good leaders may be in selecting the right situational or interpersonal communication styles, there could be other barriers that may challenge the effectiveness of their communication. These challenges could include technology, personality differences, the communicator's competence, and culture differences; these challenges are explained in this section. It is important for leaders to understand and consider the factors that may impact their communication as to ensure that they find ways to work around the barriers in order to effectively communicate to Generation Y employees.

3.8.1 Technology

One factor that may impact the effectiveness of communication is technology. Technology evolves at an exponential rate and each day one hears about another new technological development, which makes it increasingly difficult to keep up with the latest developments. Consequently, technology has changed the way in which organisations communicate; one of the changes being that less face-to-face communication is taking place because of technology proposing a more instant and universal solution to communication (Hodgetts & Hegar, 2008:431). Although technology could save an organisation a lot of valuable time and money needed to, for example, fly to different countries or regions to have meetings with remote teams, it could also impact leaders' abilities to effectively communicate with employees (Adams & Galanes, 2009:100). One reason is that many of these technological communication applications are lacking non-verbal cues. For example, when sending emails, there is no voice inflection, facial expressions or hand cues to assist the reader to interpret the message. This means that email communication or other non-verbal communication channels could lead to misinterpretation of messages which could result into to and fro messaging as to ensure a mutual understanding amongst the leader and the employee (Hodgetts & Hegar, 2008:233; Martin & Nakayama, 2007:7).

In order to communicate effectively with the different generations in the workplace, leaders should understand the strengths and weaknesses of technology and adapt their communication styles accordingly. For instance, with social media and the rise of the internet, employees now have instant and regular access to information, which also means that leaders should inform employees of new developments at organisations before they hear about or see it on online platforms (Hodgetts & Hegar, 2008:427-428). Even though technology could pose a barrier to communication, the advantage of it is that technology puts people in contact that are not necessarily the same or would not have been in contact with each other if it had not been for technology (Martin & Nakayama, 2007:6-7) and technology could either lead to an increase or decrease in intercultural conflict (Goettsch, 2014:40). Due to technology easing the process of receiving or sending communication, employees are often bombarded with high volume information. Thus, employees could spend a lot of time daily to try and work through their many emails, leading to unproductivity to conduct their other day-to-day activities (Hodgetts & Hegar, 2008:233). With technology being so intertwined with day to day lives, like being able to receive emails on smart phones late at night, it often leads to employees working extended work hours. The benefit is however that it could assist employees to be more flexible by sending or receiving information to each other throughout the day (Hodgetts & Hegar, 2008:429;433).

3.8.2 Personalities

A second point discussed in this section that could pose a barrier to communication is personality differences. No two employees have the same personality. A communication style that would work for certain personalities may not necessarily work for other personalities and expectations of leadership communication may, therefore, also vary for each employee (Skinner, Von Essen, Mersham, Motau, 2010:77; Labuschagne, 2006:275). Certain employees could be more serious, narrow-minded, light-hearted or calmer than others, which could impact the way in how the messages are sent and received (Skinner *et al.*, 2010:77; Labuschagne, 2006:275). For example, because of the different personality types, some employees may prefer short communication messages that do not include too much information (Labuschagne, 2006:276). Consequently, leaders should familiarise themselves with

the different personality styles in order to know how to communicate effectively with employees from different generations. Two well-known personality profile systems are discussed in this section, namely DiSC™ and the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® (MBTI). Leaders could use these personality approaches to identify their own personal styles and become aware of their strengths and weaknesses as well as the different personality styles of the employees that they are leading.

The first personality style system, DiSC, categorises personality styles into four areas, namely dominance, influence, steadiness and conscientiousness. A very important aspect for leaders to take note of is that most people's personalities consist of a blend of two or more personality styles (Hobart & Sendek, 2014:168). Each of the DiSC personality styles is discussed. Firstly, employees that score high in the dominance area, are often more goal/task orientated and fewer people orientated, which is also aligned to the characteristics of both the autocratic leadership style and the autocratic communication style discussed earlier in this chapter. Employees with a dominant personality style are very determined, demanding and they know what should be achieved, even though they may not know how to execute the tasks. These employees tell employees what to do; they do not pay attention to emotional expressions from others and they are often not good listeners. Secondly, employees that score high in the influence area, are often friendly, people orientated, and less task orientated, also similar characteristics to the participative communication style discussed. Employees with an Influence personality style are out-going people that makes other employees feel very comfortable. It is important for these employees to be socially recognised and to be part of social interactions. Due to their social nature, they are not always good with managing their time effectively and are less likely to achieve deliverables (Hobart & Sendek, 2014:169-170). Thirdly, employees that score high in the steadiness area, are often stable and structured people. They are people orientated, however less than the Influence personality type. These employees prefer to have a group of close friends and they are generally very accommodating, supportive towards others and enjoy teamwork. Employees with a steady personality style are patient employees who possess good listening skills. They do not like change and would much rather work on a step-by-step basis to complete tasks (Hobart & Sendek, 2014:170). Fourthly, and lastly, employees that score high in the conscientiousness area, are the ones that are

very cautious, analytical and prefer to follow the rules. These employees prefer having facts and data at their disposal as they are detail orientated and less emotional people. Employees with a conscientious personality type do, however, not take criticism that well (Hobart & Sendek, 2014:170-171).

The MBTI personality type approach also categorises personality styles into four dimensions, namely, the extraversion/introversion dimension, the sensing/intuiting dimension, the thinking/feeling dimension and the perceiving/judging dimension (Adams & Galanes, 2009:147-149). The first dimension, the extraversion/introversion dimension refers to the degree to which employees direct their energy toward others, or toward themselves. Extraverts enjoy working in groups and they are outgoing employees. They can, however, not be very serious employees. These employees would make good group discussion moderators. In contrast, introverts do not enjoy working in teams and prefer to work independently and bring their work to the team. If extraverts and introverts do not understand one another, it may lead to ineffective communication. The second dimension, sensing/intuiting, refers to whether employees prefer facts, or whether they are more likely to dream of possibilities. Sensing employees are very detail orientated and factual. They would be good in providing facts or examples to be included in a report. In contrast, intuitive employees are very creative, and less detail orientated. They are better with brainstorming ideas and coming up with innovative solutions (Adams & Galanes, 2009:147-149). The third dimension, thinking/feeling refers to whether employees make decisions based on being objective or subjective. Thinkers are those employees that evaluate information thoroughly and come up with logical plans based on an in-depth analysis. The feelers, in contrast, are those employees that make decisions based on empathy and strives to make decisions that the majority of employees will accept. The fourth dimension, perceiving/judging refers to whether employees are more likely to be flexible and impulsive versus more systematic and planned. Perceivers take longer to make decisions, they are more open to change and multiple viewpoints, whereas judgers come up with a plan and implement it without deviating from it (Adams & Galanes, 2009:149).

3.8.3 Communicator's competence

Many leaders think that they can read, write and speak, however, communication competence consists of more than this. It entails the skills needed to inspire the attitudes and behaviour of others (Doorley & Garcia, 2011:95). Being able to read, write and speak will not necessarily help communicators to achieve these goals. Just like any other skill, communication competence can become weak if it is not used often or if nothing is done to improve competence (Doorley & Garcia, 2011:95). It is important to point out that leaders will not be able to communicate effectively, regardless of whether they have the right skills, when they are not motivated to communicate to others especially employees from other cultures (Martin & Nakayama, 2007:435). The reverse is also true. Some leaders do not have the basic communication skills to be able to transmit a message effectively regardless of whether they are motivated or not (Martin & Nakayama, 2007:435). Often these communicators find it difficult to express themselves which means that the message is not communicated effectively to the receiver, and this can result in miscommunication or confusion (Skinner, *et al.*, 2010:275; Labuschagne, 2006:275).

There are many elements that may impact the leader's ability to communicate effectively with employees. Competency elements, discussed in this section, that may impact the communicator's effectiveness, include self-knowledge, linguistic knowledge, listening skills and alignment of verbal and non-verbal communication. The first competency element is self-knowledge. According to Martin and Nakayama (2007:438), leaders should have knowledge about themselves, their strengths and their weaknesses in order to be able to communicate effectively with others. If leaders are not aware of their strengths and weaknesses, it may impact their abilities to communicate effectively. The first step in obtaining self-knowledge is to be open to information that comes from all different sides. Receiving information on communication competency will enable leaders to grow and improve their communications skills (Martin & Nakayama, 2007:438-439).

The second competency element is linguistic knowledge. Linguistic knowledge refers to communicators' abilities to speak, write and read another language other than their

home language (Martin & Nakayama, 2007:439). There may be instances where communication should take place in the communicator's second or even third language (Skinner, *et al.*, 2010:77; Labuschagne, 2006:276). Depending on the organisation or the industry, it could result in ineffective communication when leaders do not understand the dominant languages spoken in the organisation (Martin & Nakayama, 2007:439). Linguistic knowledge is important to effective leadership communication for the reason being that each language has its own unique characteristics such as formal or informal ways of communicating (Martin & Nakayama, 2007:218). For example, in some languages, informal words are used when speaking, whereas in other languages when speaking less formally it could be interpreted as insulting and disrespectful, even though it was not the intention (Martin & Nakayama, 2007:218). The term used for when two employees that are communicating think that they understand a word in the same way, however, the meaning allocated to the word differs, is called bypassing (Adams & Galanes, 2009:80-81). Bypassing could lead to misperceptions as the message is not interpreted in the way that the sender intended for it to be interpreted. When business jargon, like sandbox in the computer industry, or abstract words, like the word 'liberal', is used, one can also not assume that all listeners understand the meaning of the message (Adams & Galanes, 2009:80-81). When communicators use abstract language, it may also cause confusion because of the vagueness of the words being used (Tubbs & Moss, 2008:83). Misunderstandings could also occur when the communicator assume that a word or phrase has only one meaning or when they use emotive words or trigger words that may be interpreted incorrectly by different cultures or employees. For instance, using the word 'chick' rather 'woman' may create negative feelings (Adams & Galanes, 2009:82).

The third competency element is listening. Effective listening enables leaders to interpret messages accurately and to respond accordingly. Effective listening may sometimes require that the leader listens in between the lines to understand the message. Sometimes poor listeners do something called, silent arguing, which is when they decide what the communicators are saying without listening to the rest of the message. This may also lead to ineffective communication as the leader will not be

able to respond according to the question, concern or suggestion raised by the employee (Adams & Galanes, 2009:63;65).

The fourth and final competency element is the alignment/misalignment of verbal and non-verbal communication. Both verbal and non-verbal communication convey meaning (Martin & Nakayama, 2007:542). This means that the verbal message together with the non-verbal aspects will determine whether the message has been effectively communicated. For example, the words could say one thing, however, the emotions and gestures conveyed may implicate another message (Skinner, *et al.*, 2010:77; Labuschagne, 2006:276). Should there be discrepancies between the verbal and non-verbal message, this could lead to confusion and distrust as well as ineffective communication (Labuschagne, 2006:276). When there is alignment between the verbal message and the non-verbal cues such as body language, the tone of voice and pauses in between sentences, it is much easier and quicker to get the message across effectively. The non-verbal meaning is often the true meaning of your emotional state and true intentions when communicating a message (Tubbs & Moss, 2008:106) and according to Tubbs and Moss (2008:105), non-verbal communication also plays a key role when it comes to forming first impressions, regardless of what has been said. Employees hardly ever think about how they stand or what the different gestures that they use communicate. Interestingly, in times when miscommunication arises, everyone is more likely to analyse the verbal message rather than the non-verbal cues to determine what has caused the misperceptions (Martin & Nakayama, 2007:255).

3.8.4 Culture

Culture refers to a group of employees that are from the same generation, race or gender (Labuschagne, 2006:276). Often employees in the workplace find themselves in an uncomfortable situation when working in diverse teams consisting of colleagues from different races or ethnicities (Labuschagne, 2006:276). Especially in a highly diverse country such as South Africa, it could be challenging to communicate effectively with employees from different cultures and communicators should consider employees' cultures when communicating as to ensure that messages are effectively

conveyed to the listener (Labuschagne, 2006:276). For example, the leader should know when to use direct versus indirect messages; when to perform strong authority versus treating everyone as equals; and when to make or avoid eye contact (Adams & Galanes, 2009:155-158). Empathy can also play a key role. The leaders should put themselves in the shoes of the employees to be able to know how to communicate effectively (Martin & Nakayama, 2007:439-440). In general, employees prefer their own cultures and naturally, they would judge others based on their own cultures. It is important for leaders to be objective and open without judging when communicating (Martin & Nakayama, 2007:441).

According to Adams and Galanes (2009:151), different cultures consist of various dimensions that could influence whether communication takes place effectively within an organisation. These dimensions include individualism/collectivism, power distance, context, masculinity/femininity, avoidance of uncertainty and finally long/short term orientation; and these dimensions are discussed in this section. Important to note is that, within the context of this study, many of these dimensions may not be relevant to Generation Y employees as this generation has been casually exposed to multiculturalism when they grew up, more than any other earlier generation (Murphy, 2010:13), which is also discussed in Chapter 4. As a result of Generation Y being exposed to multiple cultures and by growing up during post-modern times, it could be argued that they may not have a dominant culture orientation. However, it is important for leaders that may be from an older generation to be aware that their own culture may differ from Generation Y and consequently, their leadership styles and leadership communication should be adjusted to be favourably received by Generation Y employees.

The first cultural dimension discussed is individualism/collectivism. Individualistic cultures are orientated towards achieving employees' goals and needs. They value their privacy, enjoys being independent and to work in isolation. In contrast, collectivist cultures are more focussed toward the collective group's goals and needs and they are very loyal towards the group. They value harmony and avoids disagreement (Mor Barak, 2014:179-180; Adams & Galanes, 2009:151). The second cultural dimension discussed is power distance. Power distance refers to the degree that cultures adopt

high or low power distances between them, in other words, whether power is equally or unequally distributed among employees. In a low-power culture, power and status are not as important to them. They believe that regardless of income bracket, education or designation, all employees should be treated equally. In contrast, in high-power cultures, there are strong rigid hierarchy or ranks, which determine how employees should act (Mor Barak, 2014:179; Adams & Galanes, 2009:153; Martin, Nakayama, 2007:101). The third cultural dimension discussed is context. With low-context cultures, employees mean what they have stated and there are no hidden messages behind their words. They are straightforward, not ambiguous and do not mean anything else than what was said. In contrast, high-context cultures rely on the situation or context more than the actual words that were communicated. High-context cultures are focussed toward maintaining harmony, which could be why they use indirect or kinder words to portray a specific message (Adams & Galanes, 2009:153).

The fourth cultural dimension is masculinity/femininity. Masculinity refers to the degree that employees in a culture act according to masculine characteristics such as being competitive, assertive, achievement orientated and authoritative. Feminine cultures traditionally used to show characteristics such as affection, modesty, caring for others and helping the less-fortunate (Mor Barak, 2014:180-181; Adams & Galanes, 2009:159; Tubbs & Moss, 2008:321; Martin & Nakayama, 2007:102). The fifth cultural dimension is avoidance of uncertainty. This dimension refers to the degree that a specific culture avoids or embraces uncertainty or ambiguity. Cultures with high avoidance for uncertainty, prefer having rules and structures in place in order to avoid unpredictability. However, cultures that embrace low avoidance for uncertainty, are more willing to accept change and diversity and do not believe in having more rules and structures in place than what is necessary. These employees do not mind taking risks (Mor Barak, 2014:181; Tubbs & Moss, 2008:322; Martin & Nakayama, 2007:103). The sixth cultural dimension is the long-term/short-term orientation. Long-term orientated cultures are more focussed on the future, whereas short-term orientated cultures are more focussed on the present and even the past. Long-term orientated cultures have a high regard for perseverance and determination. Short term orientated cultures are more about getting the truth and results instantly (Mor Barak, 2014:182; Martin & Nakayama, 2007:102;104).

3.9 CONCLUSION

Chapter 3 focussed on various leadership aspects that may impact communication to Generation Y employees. This chapter distinguished between the terms leadership and management; it investigated the various leadership styles, leadership communication styles and potential challenges that may hinder the effectiveness of leaders' communication. In line with the introduction to Generation Y's characteristics provided in Chapter 1, similarities are to be seen with some of the leadership styles and communication styles. With the consultative communication style, employees are guided in terms of what is expected of them, while their inputs are desired, similarly to the transformational leadership style (Achua & Lussier, 2013:316-317). With the participative communication style, the leader helps the employees to solve their problems or they are asked to help the leader solve a problem (Achua & Lussier, 2013:316-317). The challenges that may impact the effectiveness of communication with Generation Y employees, regardless of the styles used, could include technology, personality and the communicator's competence. As discussed in Chapter 1, Generation Y is known to be tech-savvy and used to instant information (Tubey *et al.*, 2015:11-18). The challenge for leaders would be to use the right technological application to communicate to them, while also keeping communication instant as to avoid that they obtain information from other instant sources, such as social media and the World Wide Web. If the leader and the Generation Y employees have different personalities, it could also impact the effectiveness of the leaders' communication. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the culture will not necessarily have a great impact on the effectiveness of communication to them as this generation have been exposed to multi-culturalism all their lives and may not have a specific preference when it comes to culture. The following chapter provides more insight into the target population of this particular study, namely Generation Y employees; what makes them different to other generations; and their unique characteristics.

CHAPTER 4

GENERATION Y AND THE WORKPLACE

4.1 INTRODUCTION

“Each generation imagines itself to be more intelligent than the one that went before it, and wiser than the one that comes after it” - George Orwell. Even though it may be the case, it could be argued that the emphasis should be on understanding each generation to see how best to maximise them within the workplace. Although generation cohorts serve as a guide in terms of unique characteristics pertaining to each generation, it is important to understand that it is not necessarily reasonable to assume that based on an individual’s membership to a generational cohort, that they fit that generational profile. It should be acknowledged that not all individuals are the same and that there may be distinct characteristics within individuals that fall within a generational cohort. Some even argue that instead of distinguishing generations based on chronological dates, it should be considered that generations are shaped based on history (Reeves & Oh, 2007:397). The researcher will be taking the criticism into account when analysing the results.

Whilst Generation Z, the youngest generation, who are making their way towards the workplace are finishing their school curriculums or completing tertiary education (Holbech 2010:96; Montana & Petit, 2008:140), Generation Y is currently finding themselves in the workplace as ‘newbies’ who are aiming to launch their careers (Holbech, 2010:96). As indicated before, today, the workforce consists of multiple generations. Each generation has their own set of beliefs, values and characteristics that they bring to the workplace (Holbech, 2010:95). It is important for leaders to understand each generation’s unique characteristics in order to leverage their strong points, help them improve on weaknesses and ultimately maximise these employees’ contributions in the workplace (Horeczy *et al.*, 2012:1). According to Alsop (2008:7), organisations will only thrive if a midway is found between employees from all generations. This can only happen when generations can adapt to or find ways to work

with each other. The arduous task of facilitating the collaboration between different generations falls on the shoulders of organisational leaders, as was discovered in the previous chapter. The focus of this chapter, therefore, falls on providing literature on Generation Y by investigating their unique characteristics, misperceptions about them and how they are different to other generations. According to Hobart and Sendek (2014:37), there are no characteristics possessed by Generation Y employees that cannot be managed and leveraged in a beneficial way by a good leader. At the end of the day, a leader's main purpose is to bring out the best from the people that work for him or her (Hobart & Sendek, 2014:37).

This purpose of this chapter is to obtain an understanding of the target population, which is Generation Y employees. This chapter will assist the researcher with understanding their characteristics and differences between them and other generations, ultimately to assist with the developing the interview guide and proposing a conceptual framework on how to lead and motivate Generation Y employees. This chapter comprises the following main sections: the multi-generational workforce, which include an introduction on the Traditionalists, the Baby Boomers, Generation X, Generation Y and Generation Z. It also includes a section on Generation Y's profile ranging from their technological savviness to their need to receive instant feedback on their performance and achievements. By obtaining a background on Generation Y will provide context on the target population before the interviews will be conducted with them.

4.2 THE MULTI-GENERATIONAL WORKFORCE

The term multi-generational workforce has been coined to refer to the movement towards having employees from multiple generations within organisations (Millar & Lockett, 2014:278). As mentioned in Chapter 1, the four generations who currently form the multi-generational workforce in the workplace include: The Traditionalists, the Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y (Libson, 2010:4); each of these generations are discussed in this section. Within the context of a multi-generational workforce, and as already mentioned in Chapter 1, each generation shares their own

habits, views, characteristics and attitudes as a result of experiencing the same historical or social life events (Wong *et al.*, 2008:879). It could be deduced that each generation brings their unique traits to the workplace as it forms part of their personalities. It is therefore evident that leaders should be aware of the composition of the workforce that they lead in order to customise their leadership and communication approaches accordingly, ultimately to keep employees motivated, regardless of the generational cohort that they fall within (Mitchell & Gamlem, 2012:194).

Different authors have categorised the different generation cohorts differently. According to Murray (2011:55), the reason for this is as each generation is not defined by the year range, but rather by the specific events experienced in the different societies. The following figure summarises the generational cohorts by different authors.

Table 4.1: Generation timelines by different authors

Generation	Timeline
The Traditionalists	Born before 1946 (Libson, 2010:4) Born before World War II (Murray, 2011:55) Born before 1945 (Tolbize, 2008:2) Born before 1946 (Reynolds <i>et al.</i> , 2008:20)
Baby Boomers	Born between 1946 and 1964 (Libson, 2010:4) Born following World War II (Murray, 2011:55) Born from 1950 to 1969 (Jonck, Van der Walt, Sobayeni, 2017:7) Born between 1946 to 1964 (Reynolds <i>et al.</i> , 2008:20)
Generation X	Born between 1965 to 1978 (Libson, 2010:4) Born between the mid-1960s and the late 1970s (Murray, 2011:55) Born from 1970 to 1989 (Jonck <i>et al.</i> , 2017:7) Born between 1965 to 1981 (Reynolds <i>et al.</i> , 2008:20)
Generation Y	Born between 1979 to 1997 (Libson, 2010:4) Born in the early 1980s to the early 2000s (Murray, 2011:55) Born from 1990 to 2000 (Jonck <i>et al.</i> , 2017:7) Born between 1982 to 2000 (Reynolds <i>et al.</i> , 2008:20)
Generation Z	Born from 2001 to present (Reeves and Oh, 2007:297) Born between 1995 to 2012 (Singh, 2014:59)

For the purposes of this study, the researcher uses the following generation timelines:

Table 4.2: Generation timelines for this study

Generation	Timeline
The Traditionalists	Born before 1946
Baby Boomers	Born from 1946 to 1964
Generation X	Born from 1965 to 1978
Generation Y	Born from 1979 to 1997
Generation Z	Born from 1998

The section below provides an explanation of each generation's characteristics and background. It is important to note that there is no one-size-fits-all approach when studying the different generational cohorts, however, it provides an understanding of the general observations pertaining to each generation (Kilber *et al.*, 2014:81-82).

4.2.1 Introduction to the Traditionalists

The Traditionalists, also known as the Veterans or the Silent Generation (Tolbize, 2008:2), are the oldest and most-experienced employees in the workplace (Martin, Ottemann & Hall, 2016:98). They have either retired or are re-entering the workplace due to financial constraints. This generation makes good mentors for younger generations as they have a wealth of wisdom and solid working experience to teach Generation X and Y employees (Hobart, 2008:2). Traditionalists have experienced multiple hardships, including the Great Depression, Pearl Harbor and the beginning of World War II. Thus, they have adopted a 'duty before pleasure' and a 'playing by the rules' life approach (Hobart, 2008:2). On a professional level, many of the Traditionalists have been in the military and therefore, have respect for authority and feel comfortable with 'top down' decision making (Murray, 2011:59; Hobart, 2008:2). Consistency, conformity and loyalty are also highly valued by them (Hobart, 2008:2). They have been through the development of technological innovations such as the radio, silver screen (Hobart, 2008:2) and calculators (Mooney, Wright & Higgins, 2010:64). It is also important to point out that they have experienced the cultural shift when women entered the workplace for the first time (Hobart, 2008:2).

4.2.2 Introduction to the Baby Boomers

The name of this generation, Baby Boomers, have arisen due to the fertility spike that took place after World War II and when birth control marketing has shown its face (Libson, 2010:6). Due to the high numbers of Baby Boomers, these employees are more competitive than the Traditionalists (Knouse, 2011:255; Murray, 2011:59) as they had to compete against each other to get a spot in tertiary education institutions or in the workplace (Walker, 2014:87; Knouse, 2011:255). Today, the Baby Boomers find themselves in a life stage where they are preparing to retire, which could possibly lead to a talent shortage in the workplace (Hobart, 2008:3). These employees are generally well-educated and hard-working, which explains why they are often referred to as the 'workaholic generation' (Hobart, 2008:3). They have a strong work ethic (Hobart, 2008:3) and they believe that hard work is the key to success (Reeves & Oh, 2007:3), which explains why they are often found to be working longer hours (Hobart, 2008:3).

Baby Boomers were born after World War II (Murray, 2011:59) and have witnessed the cold war and the civil rights struggle (Holbech, 2010:95). In general, these employees accept the 'rules' made by the Traditionalists (Reynolds *et al.*, 2008:20) and they are idealistic and involved (Murray, 2011:59). They are also very optimistic and have a wealth of knowledge and intellectual capital that they can contribute to an organisation (Mitchell & Gamlem, 2012:194). Many of the Baby Boomers have worked themselves up in the workplace over decades, and therefore hold leadership positions in organisations or in government (Hobart, 2008:3). According to Khadar (2012:33), Baby Boomers have a sense of entitlement. Their satisfaction drivers include being in leadership positions, having power to make decisions and being able to determine strategic goals and objectives (Holbech, 2010:95). Even though they often hold leadership positions, they are very patient, committed and loyal employees (Hatun, 2010:6). Other characteristics of this generation are that they are relationship orientated, results orientated and diplomatic. They have a strong belief towards growing into a well-developed person and therefore are involved in many activities both inside and outside of the workplace (Hobart, 2008:3).

4.2.3 Introduction to Generation X

Generation X is known as one of the smallest generational cohorts. The older employees that fall within this generation find themselves in management positions, while others are steadily moving their way to management positions as the Baby Boomers are starting to retire (Hobart, 2008:4). They have witnessed various developments including the diagnoses of HIV/Aids. This generation is highly influenced by their parents, the Baby Boomers, who have experienced corporate restructuring and have been laid off or lost their pension even after a lifetime's dedication to an organisation (Hobart, 2008:3). As a result, this generation is not as loyal towards their jobs as the Traditionalists (Murray, 2011:3; Hobart, 2008:3). They also have a sense of mistrust towards authority (Holbech, 2010:95; Khadar, 2006:34). Due to their life experiences, Generation X employees have learnt to be resilient, creative, pragmatic and adaptable to circumstances (Khadar, 2012:33; Mitchell & Gamlem, 2012:194). From a young age, this generation learnt to be independent and has adopted a 'live for today' approach (Martin *et al.*, 2016:97). In the workplace, they have a need for freedom, autonomy (Khadar, 2012:33) and being able to have a work-life balance with the option of flexi-time (Mitchell & Gamlem, 2012:194; Hobart, 2008:3). This generation is also highly committed to their careers, however less committed to the organisation and is known to be having an entrepreneurial spirit (Khadar, 2012:33). A good way to motivate them is to reward them for their hard work by giving them time off in order for them to do their own things (Mitchell & Gamlem, 2012:194).

On the technology side, when these employees were still younger, they were introduced to personal computers. This contributes to their tech-savviness compared to earlier generations (Hobart, 2008:3). In terms of personal growth, this generation values opportunities to learn and grow (Hobart, 2008:3). They are fast-learners who appreciate coaching and mentoring opportunities (Mitchell & Gamlem, 2012:194). They often look for multiple activities that they can get involved with to help stimulate them (Hobart, 2008:3). Other characteristics include that they are very result-driven and will often bypass rules to achieve the results that they want. They have confidence

in dealing with authority and find it easy to work in a diverse workplace (Mitchell & Gamlem, 2012:194).

4.2.4 Introduction to Generation Y

Since Generation Y is the newest generation in the workforce (Moorthy, 2014:398; Hobart, 2008:4) as mentioned earlier, many of them hold entry-level positions (Hobart, 2008:4). As their name, Generation Y implies, they are the generation that asks the 'why' question behind the tasks that they must perform, and they instantly lose interest if they are required to complete menial errands. They often look for better, newer and more efficient ways of completing tasks (Hobart, 2008:4). Generation Y is also often referred to as the 'Dot-Coms', 'The Next Generation', the 'Echo-Boomers', the 'Me-Generation', 'Generation -D' (digital), the 'iGeneration' (information), and the 'Nexters' (Seth, 2015:423). There are many reasons why this generation is so different from earlier generations. Some of the reasons include that they have been, more than any other older generation, exposed to instant access to everything through multiple technological devices. They have also received more travelling opportunities and increased nurturing and protecting from their parents (Holt *et al.*, 2012:81).

As a result of their experiences, they are well-educated, entitled and believe that anything is possible. They have also developed into sociable and positive employees, with a high self-esteem (Hobart, 2008:4) who believes that education is key to their success (Kilber *et al.*, 2014:82). The same as Generation X, they also value a work-life balance, flexi-time and a relaxed working environment (Hobart, 2008:4). In general, this generation is comfortable to work amongst employees from different ethnicities and cultures. They work well in diverse teams and do not mind networking with people of different ethnicities (Hewlett, Sherbin, & Sumberg, 2009:4). Interestingly, they are used to structure in their families and they, therefore, expect the same in the workplace (Walker, 2014:88).

4.2.5 Introduction to Generation Z

For the sake of completeness, a brief discussion of Generation Z, also known as the 'Digital Natives', who have not yet entered the workplace will be given. Generation Z was born after Generation Y and they are being raised by Generation X. They have been exposed to several challenges such as terrorism and environmental issues and their exposure to the latest development in technology have made them the most tech-savvy generation (Singh, 2014:59). For the reason that they have been exposed to many technological developments, they are a globally connected generation, very smart, flexible and accepting of diverse cultures. With a click of a button, these individuals can teach themselves new skills or read about a new subject online (Singh, 2014:59-61).

Generation Z is experiencing the same challenges than what other generations experienced when they were younger. With Generation Z's tech-savviness and with the technology opportunities available to them, they can resolve issues easily. This is often incomprehensible for other generations as they did not necessarily have the same opportunities available to them (Singh, 2014:59-61). As mentioned, Generation Z is still preparing for the workplace by completing school curriculums or tertiary education (Holbech 2010:96; Montana & Petit, 2008:140), and therefore, organisations currently are not too concerned about them (Singh, 2014:59). Career planning is not on the priority lists for most of these individuals. Currently, it is more important for them to build relationships, to find the right group of friends and to establish their own identities (Töröcsik, Szűcs & Kehl, 2014:31). Next, the unique profile of Generation Y is discussed to understand the characteristics of the target population of this study.

4.3 GENERATION Y'S PROFILE

An article named 'Guess who's coming to work: Generation Y. Are you ready for them?' by Barnes (2009) implies that Generation Y, who has recently entered the workforce, is largely different from all other generations. This section aims to provide clarity about the misperceptions of Generation Y while providing more insights about their characteristics that make them an invaluable generation to organisations. The many inaccurate and negative perceptions about Generation Y is believed to stem from urban legends and misplaced media headlines (Hobart & Sendek, 2014:37). The following table includes some of the misperceptions about Generation Y (Hobart & Sendek, 2014:37-69).

Table 4.3: Misperceptions about Generation Y

Misperceptions about Generation Y
Misperception #1: Generation Y employees are lazy,
Misperception #2: Generation Y employees are needy,
Misperception #3: Generation Y employees are spoiled,
Misperception #4: Generation Y employees are selfish,
Misperception #5: Generation Y employees are disloyal,
Misperception #6: Generation Y employees do not respect authority, and
Misperception #7: Generation Y employees are entitled.

Source: Hobart and Sendek (2014:37-69).

While some of the misconceptions regarding Generation Y might be true, the focus of the current research falls on the discussion of the characteristics of this generation that makes them a valuable attribute to an organisation. The following characteristics are discussed: their technological savviness; the importance of a work-life balance; the influence of their relationships and their parents; their ability to work in diverse teams; their social consciousness; their desire to have a meaningful work and growth opportunities; and their need for instant feedback on performance and achievements.

4.3.1 Technological savviness

Generation Y employees are globally connected through the internet (Hobart, 2008:4) and they were raised with cell phones, computers and recently social media platforms

(Hartman & McCambridge, 2011:22; Gibson, Greenwood, Murphy & 2009:1) and are now untethered to it (Kilber *et al.*, 2014:80). According to Alexander and Sysko (2012:64), Generation Y regards technology to be their 'sixth sense'. A misperception of Generation Y is that they are needy and that they want everything right now without having to work for anything (Hobart, 2008:05). Some people even go so far as to call this generation the 'hero-generation' or the 'me-generation' implying that they are self-centred (Barnes, 2009:59). One should, however, keep in mind that this generation has grown up with immediate access to high-speed internet. They are used to making purchases online, to access e-mails, to visit a website instantly and just being 'connected' to the rest of the world. In other words, access to technology has made this generation used to getting things easily and quickly. However, it is important to understand that this generation is willing to work hard but would like to be rewarded and/or acknowledged for their efforts (Hobart, 2008:05).

Generation Y employees are dependent on technology and adjust their lifestyles according to technological changes. They incorporate technology to help them improve their personal and professional lifestyles (Khadar, 2012:36). It, therefore, follows logically that when it comes to the workplace, they expect nothing less than to be connected to technology to help them perform their duties (Kilber *et al.*, 2014:82). These employees are far-ahead in the technology sphere than most of the employees from other generations and organisations can use this to their advantage (Hobart, 2008:8). Generation Y workers have become the family experts in technology and they often teach their parents and older people how to be socially connected. What makes them a valuable asset in the workplace is that they will also show older generations in the workplace how to leverage the power of technology into corporate strategies (Mooney *et al.*, 2010:69). According to Mitchell and Gamlem (2012:194), some of the Generation Y employees may lack interpersonal skills due to their reliance on technology from a young age. It has also been said that Generation Y uses social media platforms to show off. Even though this might be true, it has been found that other generations also do the same to draw attention to their children or grandchildren (Hobart & Sendek, 2014:56).

4.3.2 Importance of a work-life balance

It is often said that Generation Y-ers are lazy or slackers. This is, however, only a misperception. Generation Y employees understand the link between hard work and success. This means that many people incorrectly perceive Generation Y to be lazy without having the correct facts (Hobart & Sendek, 2014:38). The main reason for this misperception is because they value a work-life balance. As mentioned earlier, work-life balance is important to Generation Y (Hobart, 2008:4) and long work-hours are not attractive to them (Seth, 2015:424) as work is just one element to their lives (Kultalahti & Viitala, 2015:109). Generation Y employees want to spend quality time with friends and family to maintain their relationships without having their career impacting it (Uba, Dark, Duquette, Yendt, Gnatek & Gallant, 2012:[7]). Flexi-time is preferred in order for them to maintain a work-life balance (Uba *et al.*, 2012:[7]; Hobart, 2008:4). In organisations where flexi-time does not apply, Generation Y has been called the 'clock-watchers' as they are perceived to run out of the office promptly at 5 pm in the afternoon. The truth is, these employees have many other interests outside of work. One of them is their family. Generation Y enjoys spending time with their family, while they still have the opportunity to do so (Hobart & Sendek, 2014:39). They will work hard, even harder than employees from other generations, but not on the traditional work time schedule (Hobart & Sendek, 2014:39). According to Kultalahti and Viitala (2015:110), in general, Generation Y employees are attracted to organisations that offer opportunities for them to be flexible such as working from virtual offices and working flexible hours. A flexible working environment also helps to keep them motivated once they are employed (Kultalahti & Viitala, 2015:110).

4.3.3 Influence of relationships and parents

The reason why this generation comes across as selfish could be as a result of them being told by their parents, families, friends and schools that they are very important. Even though it may come across as if they are self-centred, they are in fact very family and friend orientated (Seth, 2015:423; Hobart & Sendek, 2014:54; Hobart, 2008:06). According to Holt *et al.* (2012:82), they were involved in 'mommy and me' groups when

they were little, where they started to socialise with friends and play sports. Generation Y employees are very attached to their parents and keep in contact with them, even after they have left the home to complete their tertiary education. They have been protected by their parents, and since they were little, their parents arranged their lives. In general, Generation Y also had fewer siblings, which meant that they received more parental attention (Holt *et al.*, 2012:82).

4.3.4 Ability to work in diverse teams

Generation Y's social circles are very diverse and most of them have a group of friends consisting of persons from different ethnicities, races and religions (Knouse, 2011:257; Hobart, 2008:8-9). They are, therefore, very open-minded and accepting of people that are different to them and this is a valuable characteristic to bring to the workplace as working with diverse teams are mostly required (Knouse, 2011:257; Hobart, 2008:8-9). Generation Y individuals have worked in teams while growing up and have learnt skills to work effectively in a team (Wilson & Gerber, 2008:31). In the workplace, they still prefer working in teams (Hershatter & Epstein, 2010:217; Hobart, 2008:6) and, therefore, build good relationships with their colleagues (Hobart, 2008:6). Generation Y perceives work to be part of their daily life and not a separate activity or a job. This explains why they want to be part of a team so they can make friends, get self-fulfilment through their work and be able to learn more and grow in the workplace (Mitchell & Gamlem, 2012:194). As a consequence, when Generation Y employees can work in teams, connect with peers, share ideas and build relationships, they are more likely to be motivated employees (Hewlett *et al.*, 2009:4).

4.3.5 Social consciousness

In general, Generation Y is more socially conscious than any earlier generation (Murphy, 2010:13). They are community orientated (Murphy, 2010:17) and are used to volunteering their time (Mitchell & Gamlem, 2012:13). They, therefore, value organisations that show the same passion for society, the planet and its people (Talbot, 2012:30; Hewlett *et al.*, 2009:4). They want their employers to show they

care, that they 'walk their talk' and that they are making a sustainable difference. It is, therefore, logical that this generation engages more often in volunteering activities than any other previous generations (Hobart & Sendek, 2014:54).

4.3.6 Desire to have meaningful work and growth opportunities

On the one hand, Generation Y employees will often take longer to accept employment opportunities until they find the right opportunities (Hobart, 2008:4) that will make them feel fulfilled (Meister & Willyerd, 2010:69). On the other hand, they are always on the lookout for new growth opportunities (Salkowitz, 2008:103). Generation Y employees prefer performing meaningful tasks that are aligned to their values more than receiving rewards or benefits (Fernandez, 2009:9). As mentioned earlier, this generation is known to always ask the 'why' question, which helps them to grow. They prefer to complete diverse and meaningful duties and do not mind moving sideways within the organisation as long as they are able to gain new experiences, learn and grow (Hobart, 2008:4).

They are often perceived as being arrogant, lazy and disrespecting authority. However, the truth is that they ask the 'why' question as to gain a better understanding rather than being defiant. Asking questions helps them to gain better insight and help them understand their role and how they can contribute. This is how they improve their productivity; they do not want to waste time, resources and energy on something that is already in place or a known fact. It is more about being curious to know more and being strategic to find the best ways to perform tasks (Hobart & Sendek, 2014:64-65). They want to know why they are doing it and how they are contributing to the bigger picture (Hobart & Sendek, 2014:41; Hobart, 2008:5).

Managers and leaders should keep in mind that this generation will be dedicated to their work should they perceive the work to be meaningful and interesting; ultimately keeping them challenged. If all of these elements are in place, Generation Y employees will be productive and will turn out to be the most loyal employees (Hobart, 2008:5). Even though Generation Y could be very loyal employees, they are known to

be disloyal or job-jumpers. One should keep in mind that they are in a phase of their lives where they do not necessarily have a responsibility towards children or a marriage. If they perceive a job not to be meaningful, they have the freedom to move between different opportunities whilst receiving financial support from their parents (Hobart, 2008:6). This generation is also known for quitting their jobs and moving back with their parents to resume with tertiary education, starting their own business ventures or grabbing an employment opportunity from a competitor (Salkowitz, 2008:103). Their goal is not necessarily to make money (Hobart & Sendek, 2014:55; Jerome, Scales, Whithem & Quain, 2014:7). They want to contribute and make a difference wherever they find themselves, be it when they are at university, in the workplace or in the community. This emphasises the fact that they are not self-centred and that they want to do meaningful things instead (Hobart & Sendek, 2014:55).

4.3.7 The need for instant feedback on performance and achievements

Generation Y employees are go-getters and achievers (Seth, 2015:423; Hewlett *et al.*, 2009:4) and they classify themselves as ambitious and are often likely to do the extra mile in the workplace (Hewlett *et al.*, 2009:4). Research has proven that Generation Y employees understand the relationship between hard work and success. They recognise the fact that they should work hard on developing themselves in order to be successful and consequently, they work hard on improving their weaknesses and building on their strengths (Hobart & Sendek, 2014:69). Once they are successful or have made an important contribution, Generation Y employees place a lot of importance on receiving instant feedback on their achievements (Hobart, 2014:45; Holt, 2012:82) and to be financially rewarded for their good work in the workplace (Hobart & Sendek, 2014:45-46). This often means that they may require more attention and coaching than other generations (Khadar, 2012:54) as they continuously want to know how they are progressing professionally. Leaders should be conscious of the fact and consider adapting performance appraisal systems to accommodate these employees with more regular feedback (Hobart & Sendek, 2014:45-46). For example, this generation will not wait for their annual performance review to receive feedback about their performance. They will approach their leaders and ask them

when they feel that they are not receiving sufficient feedback (Mitchell & Gamlem, 2012:13).

4.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter focussed on Generation Y's unique profile compared to other generations such as the Traditionalists, the Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Z. Misperceptions about Generation Y employees have also been discussed, however, regardless whether those ideas may be true, these employees can make valuable contributions to organisations. From the literature provided on Generation Y, it is clear that if a leader or manager invests in these employees that they could turn out to be the most loyal and productive employees. Motivating aspects could include incorporating technology into their jobs, allowing them to have a work-life balance, creating social settings where they could interact with other team members, walking the talk by encouraging social consciousness, by creating meaningful opportunities and providing instant feedback to help them to grow professionally. It could be argued that these motivating aspects, together with the preferred leaders' styles and leadership communication abilities, may assist with maximising Generation Y employees in the workplace. The literature review, together with the research design, will provide insight needed to develop guidelines and a conceptual framework on the preferred leadership style and leadership communication for Generation Y employees.

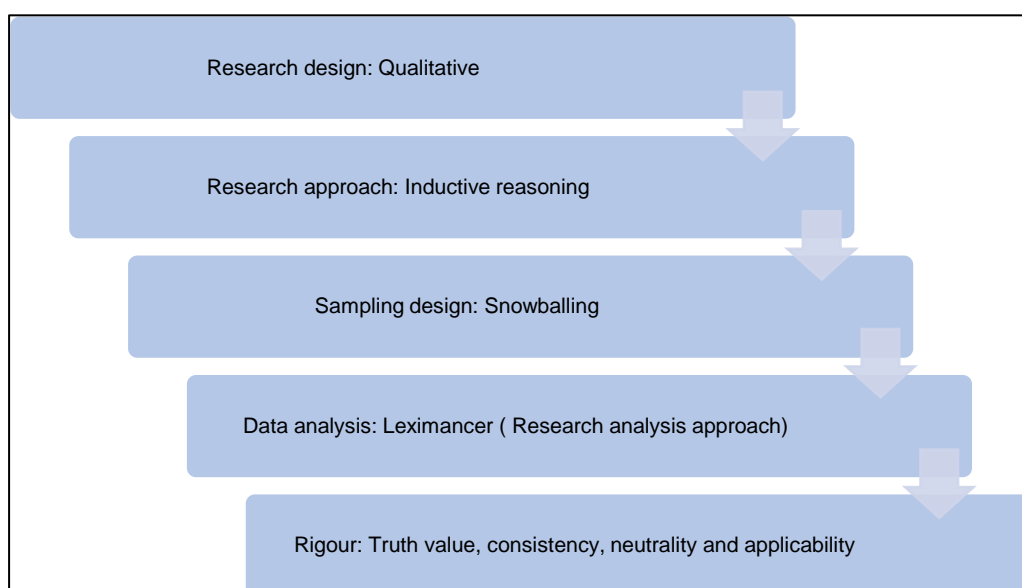
CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides insight into the research methodology and design that have been selected to assist the researcher to address the overall research question of the study at hand, which is to determine the preferred leadership styles and leadership communication for Generation Y employees. It is important to differentiate between the terms research methodology and research design as to provide context to the chapter. The research methodology provides the strategy (Du Plooy, 2009:51) or theory (Saunders *et al.*, 2012:171) of how the research question will be addressed, whilst the research design serves as the roadmap that will be followed to achieving the strategy (Du Plooy, 2009:51). The research design includes the reasoning behind the method, techniques and the tools that will be utilised to analyse the raw data and identify the themes (Saunders *et al.*, 2012:680; Du Plooy, 2009:51). Figure 5.1 summarises the research strategy of this study. These elements are discussed in more detail in this chapter. The next section discusses the research design and approach of this study.

Figure 5.1: Research strategy



5.2 RESEARCH DESIGN AND APPROACH

To find the most appropriate design to address the research question, the researcher evaluated both qualitative and quantitative research methods to determine the best approach for the study at hand. Based on a comparison of the advantages and disadvantages of quantitative and qualitative research methods, a qualitative research design has been selected. Two main reasons for selecting a qualitative research study are discussed. Firstly, since this study is exploratory, a non-numeric data collection approach, such as semi-structured face-to-face interviews selected for this research study, is ideal. This will enable the researcher to identify the themes and characteristics within the specific phenomenon in order to provide guidelines and develop a conceptual framework (Leedy & Ormrod, 2014:97). Secondly, with a qualitative research design, the researcher interprets the data from subjective and socially constructed responses (Saunders *et al.*, 2012:163), which could be argued is also aligned to the post-modern world view adopted for this study which refers to meaning being constructed based on human interpretation. Consequently, by applying inductive reasoning to explore the phenomenon (Du Plooy, 2012:33), the researcher is confident that the data obtained from the qualitative research design will assist with providing the insight needed to develop guidelines and a conceptual framework of the preferred leadership style and leadership communication for Generation Y employees.

According to Creswell and Poth (2017:26), the basic concept of post-modernism is that knowledge should be obtained and interpreted based on the circumstances of today's world. Based on this statement, the following points explain how the researcher's post-modern world view is manifested in the research design of the study (Tierney, 1996):

- As a result of the fact that realities of cultures differ, the researcher will aim to identify both trends and inconsistencies in the qualitative research design.
- External elements, such as the context, environment, tone of voice, will be considered when conducting the semi-structured interviews with Generation Y employees in order to make sense of the raw data holistically and accurately.

- In order to consolidate the guidelines and conceptual framework of preferred leadership style and leadership communication for Generation Y employees, the challenges of the leadership environment will also be considered as to take into account the relationship of both the follower and the leader.
- Different industries and sizes of organisations will be investigated to understand the power elements of the leadership structures in order to obtain a better understanding of the various preferences.
- The researcher will carefully interpret the raw data based on the social elements during the interviews and the literature review discussed in Chapter 3 and 4 to find the most representative results without skewing the results.

The researcher's ontology (what is deemed to be the reality) to this study is that of interpretivism. Similar to the discussion above, the researcher's view of reality is that meaning could only be created by making use of multiple factors and that there is no single truth. The epistemology (what is acceptable knowledge) of the researcher to this study is also that of interpretivism. The social settings, together with that of the subjective meanings, will determine the reality or outcomes of the research findings (Saunders *et al.*, 2012:140).

The sampling design, which include the sampling plan and how participants will be selected, is discussed in the subsequent section.

5.3 SAMPLING DESIGN

The sample design selected for this study is a non-probability sampling design. This indicates that participants were not selected randomly (Saunders *et al.*, 2012:281; Keyton, 2010:125). The reason for selecting a non-probability sampling method for this research, include that the participants had to form part of Generation Y in line with the demographic profile as defined in Chapter 4, and had to be currently employed and therefore, random selection techniques would not have guaranteed the researcher to find the right respondents (Keyton, 2010:125). This section of the chapter explains

the sampling plan and method used to identify participants as well as the reasoning behind selecting the sample size.

5.3.1 Sampling plan

The following table summarises the initial plan that the researcher developed in selecting the sample size. The subsequent section explains the execution of the plan.

Table 5.1: Sampling plan

TARGET POPULATION	Generation Y (individuals born between 1979 to 1997) employees.
UNIT OF ANALYSIS	Generation Y (individuals born between 1979 to 1997) employees.
SAMPLING METHOD	A non-probability sampling approach using the snowballing method to form part of the sampling plan.
SAMPLE SIZE	The ideal sample size to be selected based on the saturation levels or a minimum of five to 25 participants as suggested by Saunders <i>et al.</i> (2012:283).

5.3.2 Selection of participants and sample size

The unit of analysis and the target population selected that formed part of the plan were Generation Y employees. Stated differently, employees born between 1979 to 1997, as outlined in Chapter 4. A need, therefore, arose to select a sample of Generation Y employees who would represent this group as it would be impracticable to conduct research on the entire target population (Saunders *et al.*, 2012:260). For this reason, the non-probability sampling selection method, snowballing sampling, was used. In practical terms, the researcher invited respondents to put forward potential participants who are employed and forms part of the generational cohort, Generation Y (Keyton, 2010:128). The advantages of the snowballing sampling technique are that compared to other sampling techniques, it is easier and more cost-effective to identify participants. The disadvantage of snowballing sampling is that as a result of individuals referring individuals that they know, they may have the same traits and characteristics (Zikmund & Babin, 2009:314). How the researcher aimed to address this in order to ensure that there are no major differences between the sample and the rest of the population, is by requesting that participants refer potential candidates from different industries to participate, as it could be argued that different industries may have

different preferences when it comes to leadership styles and leadership communication, thereby obtaining a more representative view of the preferences.

As outlined in the previous table, since there are no exact rules with regards to selecting a sample size in qualitative research, the aim was to reach saturation levels, in other words, until there are no new themes or information obtained from the participants through semi-structured interviews (Saunders *et al.*, 2012:283). However, the parameter of a minimum of five to 25 participants for semi-structured interviews, as suggested by Saunders *et al.* (2012:283), was considered. As a result, saturation levels were reached after a total of 20 semi-structured face-to-face interviews, which excludes the two participants that took part in the pilot test. Due to the nature of the snowballing sampling approach three regions formed part of the interviews, as some participants put forward individuals that were based in other regions. In total, one participant based in Mpumalanga, six based in the Western Cape and the majority, a total of 13, based in Gauteng took part in this study. The pilot testing process is discussed next.

5.4 PILOT TESTING

A pilot test is the process where the researcher conducts a dry run of the questionnaire, in this case a dry run of the interview guide, to identify potential issues pertaining to the sequence or type of questions asked prior to conducting the interviews with the whole sample size (Saunders *et al.*, 2012:451). The benefit of conducting a pilot test is that it may save the researcher time over the long run if the questions are fine-tuned before commencing with the data collection (Leedy & Ormrod, 2014:201). The researcher initially earmarked on conducting one pilot test, however, as a result of the first participant being reserved and not forthcoming, a second pilot test was done to establish whether the logic and the type of questions asked had an impact on the fact that the first participant was not as open to sharing information or experiences. The following sections provide an overview of the pilot interview process that was followed and the consequences of the pilot interviews.

5.4.1 Pilot interview process

The snowballing method assisted the researcher with identifying potential candidates to participate in the study. The first interviewee for the pilot test was selected based on availability. The criteria were that the individual had to form part of the Generation Y cohort and had to be employed. Since the first interviewee was reserved, a second interviewee was selected based on availability. After each pilot test interview, the researcher requested that interviewees provide feedback in terms of the questions asked, the logic and general experiences. The first interviewee, once again, was reserved and did not share any experiences. The interviewee came across as being shy, which explains why she had been reserved. This experience made it very difficult for the researcher to obtain relevant data to the questions and it required the researcher to probe continuously. The second interviewee was outgoing and eager to share details about her leadership experiences and preferences. When feedback was requested afterwards regarding her interview experience, she indicated that it felt like a psychology session and wanted to know whether there were more questions that she could answer. The interviewee did not raise any issues or suggestions on improving the interviews. This indicated that the researcher made the interviewee feel comfortable and that the questions and logic were sufficient. The following section explains the consequences of the pilot study.

5.4.2 Consequences of the pilot study

Even though the interviewees did not raise any issues or provided suggestions, the interviewee made minor changes to the interview guide based on a self-assessment after listening to the voice recordings. The researcher found that because the first interviewee was very reserved, the interviewer provided too much leading to answers, which is why the researcher excluded the data of the pilot tests from the findings. This indicated to the interviewer to be careful as not to lead the participants in the following interviews that were conducted. When one of the questions requested that the participant describe the dominant leadership style of their leader/manager/boss, the interviewee indicated that she cannot remember the names of the styles. Even though the interviewer requested that the person describes the style, the participant

immediately assumed that they had to provide a name of the style. Following this experience, the researcher changed the question referring to the leaders' behaviours and characteristics, instead of style as to avoid misunderstandings.

Based on the self-assessment of the voice recordings, the researcher found that there was a need to ask general questions to create the context of the interviews prior to commencing with the themes from the interview guide. Accordingly, the researcher added questions that requested that the participants take the interviewer through their work day, which include their motivations and greatest challenges. The same question was also asked about their leader/manager/boss day-to-day activities. These general questions also provided the researcher with an understanding of the individuals' circumstances, which assisted with the phrasing and contextualising of the questions in the interview guide. A discussion on the interview guide follows next.

5.5 INTERVIEW GUIDE

To ensure that the themes identified by the literature review are addressed in relation to the research questions and objectives, the researcher developed an interview guide to steer the in-depth interviews. The initial interview guide was adjusted based on the findings of the pilot tests discussed in the previous section. Keyton (2010:G6) defines an interview guide as a list of questions or themes that will be used in conducting interviews. Accordingly, a semi-structured interview guide, that included themes and open questions, was developed to enable interviewees to describe their perceptions and preferences in relation to the themes without limiting them with closed questions. In addition to the open questions, potential probing questions were also developed to be used in times when there was a need to further explore the responses to the open questions in respect to the themes. For the introductory section of the interviews, closed questions were also developed to assist with screening whether participants did fall within the unit of analysis and target population as well as to obtain demographic information to assist the researcher with identifying whether there were similar or different trends for specific regions or industries (Saunders *et al.*, 2012:39). The researcher also requested interviewees to explain their day-to-day activities as well as their perception of their leader/manager/boss' day-to-day activities to firstly,

provide the interviewees with an introductory overview before delving into the themes and secondly, for the researcher to understand their motivations and challenges which were used for further discussion in relation to the different themes.

The research objective and literature review informed the interview guide developed for the semi-structured face-to-face interviews. Chapter 2 explains the world view for the study, whereas Chapter 3 and 4 provided insight to the researcher in terms of the themes and the subthemes that formed part of the interview guide. The themes and subthemes are summarised in the following table.

Table 5.2: Interview guide

THEMES	SUBTHEMES	POTENTIAL QUESTIONS
Generation Y's day in the workplace (Introductory questions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsibilities of Generation Y employees • Motivations of Generation Y employees • Challenges of Generation Y employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take me through your work day, what are your responsibilities? • What motivates you to get through the work day? • What are your main challenges in the workplace?
Leader/manager/ boss (Introductory questions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsibilities of leader/manager/boss • Motivations of leader/manager/boss • Challenges of leader/manager/boss 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take me through your leader/manager/boss's work day, what are his/her main responsibilities? • What do you think motivates your leader/manager/boss to get through the work day? • What do you think are your leader/manager/boss's main challenges in the workplace (3.8 & Ro3)?
Leadership style (Chapter 3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characteristics of previous/current leader versus the ideal leader • Differences between a leader and manager and which of the two concepts describe the person who they are reporting to the best 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In your opinion, what would you say are the differences between a leader and a manager (3.2 & Ro3)? [Probing: Would you classify the person that you report to as a leader or a manager? Why do you say so? Could you please give examples?]. • How would you describe your leader/manager/boss in terms of his/her leadership competence (3.4 & Ro3)? [Why do you say so? Do you have any examples that you could share? How would you describe him/her in terms of characteristics, behaviour or leadership style? If you had to step into your leader/manager/boss's shoes tomorrow, what would be the first thing that you would change about his/her leadership style (3.4 & Ro3)? • [If applicable] You mentioned that this is not your first job since entering the job market.

		<p>How would you describe your previous direct manager compared to your current direct manager (3.4 & Ro3)? [Probing: What are the main differences between the two? Why do you say so? Could you please give examples?].</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe your ideal/perfect leader to work for (3.4 & Ro3)? [Probing: For example, what values would be important to you? What attributes of a leader in the workplace do you appreciate? Could you please give examples?]. If you could choose anyone to be your leader/manager/boss in the workplace, who would it be (3.4 & Ro3)? [Probing: Why do you say so?].
<p>Leadership communication (Chapter 3)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An explanation of satisfaction levels with current communication from the leader Preferred communication topics from the leader The preferred frequency of communication of the topics important to participants Preferred channels of communication of the topics important to participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe and explain your level of satisfaction with the communication you are currently receiving from your leader/manager/boss at the organisation where you are employed (3.5 & Ro3). [Probing: Why do you say so? Could you please give examples?]. As an employee, what topics of communication are important to you that you would like your leader/manager/boss to communicate to you about (3.5 & Ro3)? [Probing: What aspects are important for you to hear about from your leader that impact you directly?]. How often would you like to hear about these topics from your leader/manager/boss (3.5)? What channels should your leader/manager/boss use to communicate about these topics to you (3.5 & Ro3)?

5.6 DATA COLLECTION THROUGH SEMI-STRUCTURED FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEWS

The previous section explained the interview guide developed for this research study. This section provides an overview of the data collection process that was followed through conducting semi-structured face-to-face interviews. As per the explanation in the previous section, an interview guide was developed comprising of the themes and potential questions for the interviews. Interviewees were introduced to the process and purpose of the interview. Interviewees were asked whether they have any questions and were requested to indicate whether they are content with the process and with being recorded. As mentioned before, questions pertaining to the themes as well as

introductory and other questions were asked to create the right context for the interviews. As per the nature of semi-structured interviews, the order of the themes and questions varied based on the context of the interviews and the flow of the discussions. The interviews were also recorded, and field notes were taken for transcribing purposes to assist the researcher with the analysis afterwards (Saunders *et al.*, 2012:374).

An advantage of conducting interviews is that the researcher is able to probe deeply into the themes and discover and pursue topics that were not necessarily part of the initial themes or questions (Keyton, 2010:275-276). Another advantage of conducting face-to-face interviews, instead of for example telephonic interviews, is that it enables the researcher to build rapport and obtain interviewees' full cooperation. Individuals are also more willing to participate (Leedy & Ormrod, 2014:196). A disadvantage of interviews, however, is that it is easy for both the interviewer and the interviewee to stray off the topics; it is the responsibility of the interviewer to ensure that the discussion stays aligned to the themes by carefully, without cutting off the respondent, refocussing the interview. Another disadvantage is that even though participants may be giving consent to participate, some may be hesitant to talk (Keyton, 2010:275-276). The following section discusses the process that was followed to analyse the transcribed recordings of the interviews.

5.7 DATA ANALYSIS

According to Zikmund and Babin (2009:59), data analysis refers to the process that is followed in order to interpret the data and extract key ideas and other relevant information. This section explains the data analysis process that was followed as well as how field notes and the qualitative data analysis software programme was utilised.

5.7.1 Data analysis process followed

As mentioned earlier, 20 interviews (which excludes the interviews from the pilot test) were conducted using an interview guide. With the consent of interviewees, voice

recordings were taken of the interviews. The researcher also took field notes during the interviews to ensure that there is a continuous record of the key ideas and observations. After each interview was conducted, the researcher updated the field notes with more detail (Keyton, 2010:262). The researcher also made use of self-memos throughout the data collection and data analysis process to capture any ideas that may be of value to the study before it is forgotten. The voice recordings were manually transcribed. Transcribing refers to the process whereby the voice recording is converted to a written format that includes what was said and how it was said. Each of the interviews was saved electronically for record purposes (Saunders *et al.*, 2012:550-554). In order to assist with the data analysis process in relation to addressing the research objectives, the raw data of comparable questions were grouped together and then coded and analysed as to determine the subthemes/ideas for each main theme. The process, coding, refers to the steps taken to allocate meaning to a response. In qualitative research, the codes usually consist out of phrases or words that represent a theme (Zikmund & Babin, 2009:353). An inductive reasoning approach guided the data analysis process. Keyton (2010:63) explains inductive analysis as the reasoning process where the researcher explores and identifies codes as it appears in the qualitative data.

After the interviews were conducted, the researcher took one week to process the data internally before the coding process commenced. This provided the researcher with some time to ponder about the raw data holistically as to ensure that the coding process is based on recurring themes rather than themes that stood out whilst the researcher conducted the interviews. The researcher coded the raw data manually for two reasons. Firstly, because the researcher conducted the interviews the meaning of the statements/phrases are best understood by the interviewer. Secondly, according to Nyika (n.d.), qualitative data analysis software programmes still require the researcher to be immersed in the data. Leedy and Ormrod (2014:314) also supports this statement that the researcher should work with the data analysis software programmes with caution as the "...computer cannot and should not do it all for you".

The researcher conducted open coding which refers to the process whereby the statements/ideas with specific conceptual meaning have been provided with a label

(Saunders *et al.*, 2012:569). While the researcher read through all the raw data, codes or ideas that emerged through the data were marked and comparable codes were grouped into themes afterwards. It could be argued that the themes comprising of the most codes are the main themes that emerged from the data. To ensure that the themes from the manual coding process were reliable, the researcher utilised a qualitative data analysis software programme, called Leximancer, to conduct an independent analysis of the themes, concepts or ideas that presented themselves frequently throughout the data. This process of cross-checking the data analysis process for credibility purposes is called triangulation (Keyton, 2010:65). The following section explains how the researcher utilised the research tool, Leximancer.

5.7.2 Leximancer

As mentioned before, Leximancer is a qualitative data analysis software programme, which is used to identify concepts seeds from data presented in word-format. Similar concepts are grouped into themes to assist the researcher with making sense of the masses of data. The relationships between the concepts and themes are visually presented to the researcher through means of concepts maps. Leximancer presents the themes in different colours, where the most relevant themes are illustrated in warmer colours such as red and orange. The themes in relation to their hits are also presented in a figure called the analyst synopsis. In order for the user to see the concepts for the themes, another figure is available that includes the related words, their count and likelihood.

By using Leximancer to analyse the qualitative raw data, the researcher had to remove frequently used words that were automatically identified as concepts by the software tool that did not necessarily add meaning to the study, which could be classified as irrelevant concepts in relation to the research objectives. Some of the words were 'ja', 'uhm', 'obviously', 'cool', 'respondent' and 'interviewer'. This exercise explains why, according to Nyika (n.d.) and Leedy and Ormrod (2014:315), the researcher should be immersed in the data before the qualitative data analysis software programmes can be utilised as the researcher understands the type of concepts that may be relevant in addressing the research objectives and research question. As stated earlier, the

researcher grouped similar data together as specific areas had to be measured with various questions. Consequently, various concept maps had to be developed as well. A discussion on the rigour of the research design follows next.

5.8 RIGOUR OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN

The rigour of the research design refers to the researcher using accurate and detailed methods to collect, analyse and interpret data. To ensure rigour, the researcher should take the necessary steps to remain objective throughout the research project (Leedy & Ormrod, 2014:164). Two components to ensure rigour are reliability and validity. Reliability refers to that if the study will be repeated, the results will remain consistent and validity means that the measuring instruments actually measured what was intended to be measured (Clark, Riley, Szivas, Wilkie & Wood, 2000:126). Noble and Smith (2015:34) claims that the methods used to measure reliability and validity in quantitative research, cannot be used in qualitative research, which is the case for this study. These authors also claim that there are no universally accepted criteria used to test for the credibility of qualitative research. A list of methods to ensure rigour, however, provided by these authors, has been considered by the researcher throughout the study. These methods include truth value, consistency, neutrality (confirmability) and applicability. The truth value of the research refers to the point that the research should be a true reflection. For this study, voice recordings and field notes were taken to ensure that the researcher captured the true meanings of the raw data. Triangulation of the data analysis process by coding the data manually and by cross-checking the findings with a qualitative research analysis software programme also assisted with ensuring that the themes are a true reflection of the data. If there was a need, the researcher could revert to the voice recording and field notes to double check meanings of the transcribed documents. Consistency refers to the researcher being clear and transparent in all decisions made, which the researcher strived to be throughout the research design. To assist with neutrality, the researcher continuously consulted with the responsible study leader in order to ensure that biasness in terms of the data analysis and interpretation is reduced. Keeping in mind that the disadvantage of snowballing sampling is that there may be similar perspectives as

discussed earlier, individuals from different industries participated which assisted with obtaining multiple perspectives to ensure with the applicability aspect. The following section explains the research ethics considerations of this study.

5.9 RESEARCH ETHICS

According to Saunders *et al.* (2012:226) research ethics refers to the standards of behaviour that will be followed throughout this study to ensure that the rights of those who take part in the study are protected. For methodology purposes, the ethical considerations mentioned in Chapter 1 is re-stated in the table below.

Table 5.3: Ethical considerations

ASPECT	CONSIDERATION
INTEGRITY AND OBJECTIVITY	The researcher will demonstrate integrity and objectivity to conduct the semi-structured face-to-face interviews, to interpret the results and to consolidate the findings. Participants will also not be offered any incentives as to ensure the integrity of the data obtained.
ANONYMITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY	The researcher will keep all respondents anonymous throughout this study and will ensure that confidentiality of data is maintained.
VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION	The researcher will not force any employees to participate in this study. Participants will have the opportunity to withdraw from participation at any point during data collection. All questions will not be compulsory to answer.
INFORMED CONSENT	The participants will complete an informed consent form consisting of an explanation of the process and implications of the study.
RESPONSIBLE ANALYSIS AND REPORTING	The researcher will ensure that all data is captured accurately, and that confidentiality, privacy and anonymity will be upheld throughout this study. Finally, the researcher will also acknowledge secondary sources.

Source: Saunders *et al.* (2012:231).

5.10 CONCLUSION

Chapter 5 of this study provided an overview of the methodological considerations of this study in order to address the research question which is to identify the preferred leadership style and leadership communication for Generation Y employees. The methodology process consisted of conducting two pilot tests and 20 semi-structured

face-to-face interviews using an interview guide. The researcher made use of manual coding and automated coding using Leximancer. To ensure the rigour of the research design, the following elements have been considered: truth value, consistency, neutrality and applicability (Noble & Smith, 2015:34). The researcher has also been following the necessary research ethics considerations to ensure that both the researcher and participants are protected in terms of rights, namely: integrity and objectivity, anonymity and confidentiality, voluntary participation, informed consent, responsible analysis and reporting (Saunders *et al.*, 2012:226). The following chapter provides a discussion of the research findings.

CHAPTER 6

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to rigorously discuss the research findings obtained through conducting the 20 semi-structured face-to-face interviews with Generation Y employees. As mentioned in the research methodology chapter, for analysis purposes, similar questions that formed part of one theme has been grouped. The themes from the interview guide inform the structure of the discussion points in this chapter, namely: Generation Y's day in the workplace; the leader's day in the workplace; differences between a leader and a manager; leaders described; communication satisfaction levels; the profile of the preferred leader; and preferred communication topics. Table 6.1 summarises the questions that were grouped into one theme and also indicates which section of this chapter will address which theme. Important is to note that with semi-structured interviews, the researcher is able to probe, and phrase questions differently based on the context of the interviews. Although this was the case, the generic questions are listed below.

Table 6.1: Themes, questions and sections

THEME	QUESTIONS	SECTION
Generation Y's day in the workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take me through your work day, what are your responsibilities? • What motivates you to get through the work day? • What are your main challenges in the workplace? 	6.2.1
The leader's day in the workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take me through your leader/manager/boss's work day, what are his/her main responsibilities? • What do you think motivates your leader/manager/boss to get through the work day? • What do you think are your leader/manager/boss's main challenges in the workplace? 	6.2.2
Differences between a leader and a manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In your opinion, what would you say are the differences between a leader and a manager? • Would you classify the person that you report to as a leader or as a manager? 	6.2.3
Leaders described	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How would you describe your leader/manager/boss in terms of his/her leadership competence? • How would you describe him/her in terms of characteristics, behaviour or leadership style? 	6.2.4

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you had to step into your leader/manager/boss's shoes tomorrow, what would be the first thing that you would change about his/her leadership style? • [If applicable] You mentioned that this is not your first job since entering the job market. How would you describe your previous direct manager compared to your current direct manager? 	
Communication satisfaction levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe and explain your level of satisfaction with the communication you are currently receiving from your leader/manager/boss at the organisation where you are employed. 	6.2.5
The profile of the preferred leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe your ideal/perfect leader to work for in terms of characteristics, behaviours and leadership style? • If you could choose anyone to be your leader/manager/boss in the workplace, who would it be? 	6.2.6
Preferred communication topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As an employee, what topics of communication are important to you that you would like your leader/manager/boss to communicate to you about? • How often would you like to hear about these topics from your leader/manager/boss? • What channels should your leader/manager/boss use to communicate about these topics to you? 	6.2.7

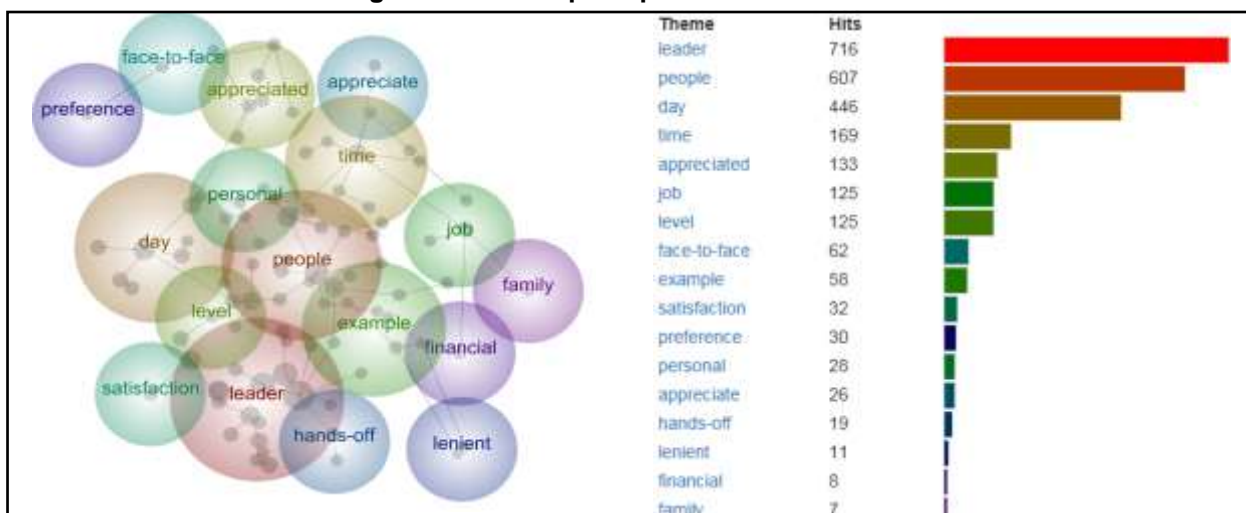
Coincidentally, and as a result of the snowballing sampling method, various industries formed part of the study which includes: architecture, banking, communication, cosmetics, education, engineering, finance, information communication technology (ICT), marketing, and mergers and acquisitions (M&A). These industries fell within three regions, namely Gauteng, Mpumalanga and the Western Cape. Although participants from various industries and regions took part, the purpose was not to stratify findings according to industries or regions, and instead to obtain a holistic view of the preferred leadership styles and leadership communication.

Participants used different terminology to refer to those individuals whom they are reporting to within the workplace, such as referring to them as a boss, director, leader, line manager, manager, Head of Department (HOD), supervisor and team leader. For ease of explanation, the researcher selected the word, leader, to be used throughout this chapter as it is aligned to the overall research question which is to determine preferred leadership style and leadership communication for Generation Y employees. The subsequent section provides an explanation of the Leximancer software programme, followed by a discussion on the findings of each of the themes.

6.2 FINDINGS IN RELATION TO THE THEMES

As stated earlier in the previous chapter, the researcher made use of both manual and automated coding using the software analysis programme, Leximancer. The researcher inserted all the raw data (including the questions) into Leximancer for an overview of the findings as well as to explain the Leximancer process. Figure 6.1 visually illustrates the themes that were discussed during the semi-structured face-to-face interviews. The circled-structure on the left-hand side, called a concept map, shows the themes that were discussed. The circles that are presented in larger and warmer-coloured circles (red and orange), such as the themes leader, people and day, represent the most relevant themes according to the Leximancer. Important to note is that the sizes of the circles do not show the ratio of the hits or its relevance (Leximancer, n.d.). For example, although family had the least hits (7), the theme circle is not presented in a smaller circle compared to all the themes with more hits. The colourful bars on the right-hand side of the figure encapsulates the themes presented in the theme identified according to the number of times it was mentioned. For ease of reference, it is called hits. Similarly, the bars, also presented in warmer-colours, refer to the most relevant themes.

Figure 6.1: Concept map of overall themes



Source: Extracted from Leximancer

It could be derived that the reason why the theme, leader, scored the highest, is since the main purpose of the semi-structured face-to-face interviews was to identify

leadership preferences of Generation Y employees. Also seen from the links between the themes (circles) as illustrated in the concept map, various characteristics and behaviours of leaders were discussed, such as preferences in terms of being hands-off versus hands-on or satisfaction levels of communication from participants' leaders. The themes, people and day, which were also identified as stronger themes, which refer to other aspects discussed during the interviews such as Generation Y's work day, and other people management aspects. The first theme, Generation Y's day in the workplace, is discussed in the succeeding section.

6.2.1 Generation Y's day in the workplace

As mentioned in Chapter 5, introductory questions were asked to provide the context of the interviews to the participants. The relevant questions that requested that Generation Y explain their day in the workplace are listed below:

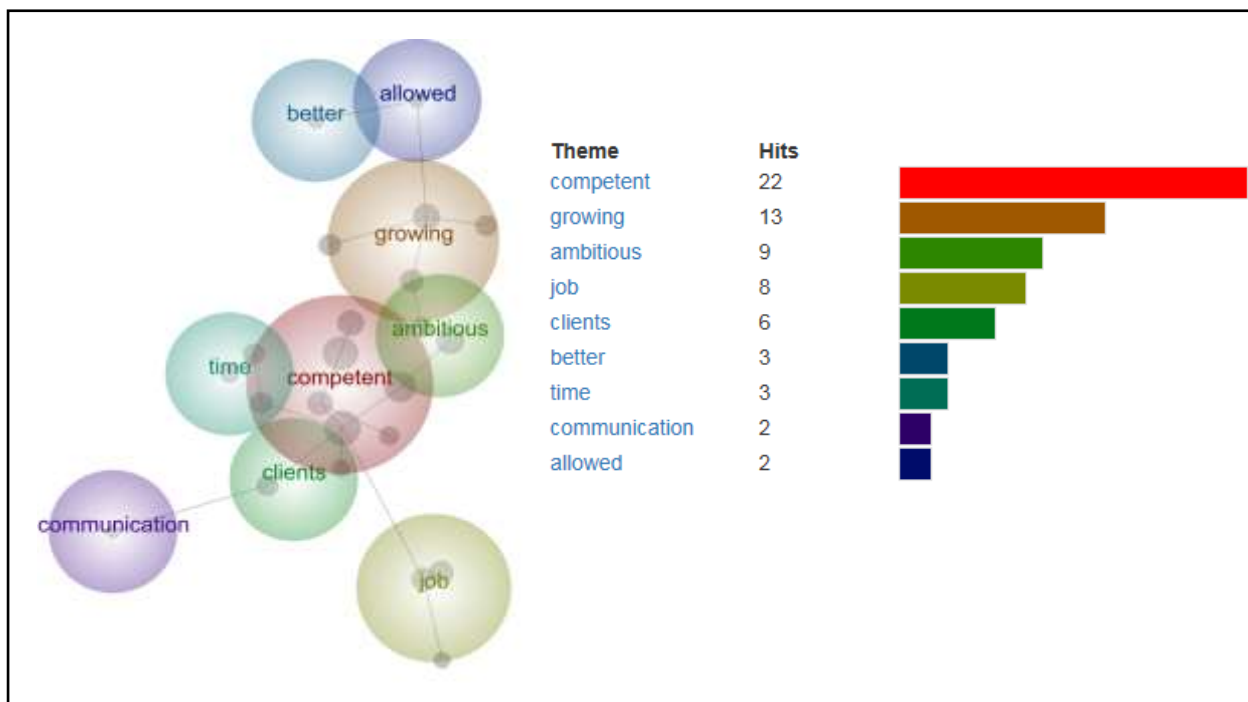
- **Take me through your work day, what are your responsibilities?**
- **What motivates you to get through the work day?**
- **What are your main challenges in the workplace?**

When the 20 participants were requested to take the interviewer through their work day, the interviewees explained their respective tasks and responsibilities ranging from planning to administrative tasks, to attending meetings, and to managing people. Regardless if these questions served as introductory questions, interesting findings were obtained when the researcher probed in terms of what motivates or poses challenges to the participants within the work day. These findings, in conjunction with the literature review, provide valuable information to organisational leaders to understand what should be done as to motivate these employees and to know how best to support Generation Y employees to tackle the challenges that they are facing. The following sections discuss the findings pertaining to the motivators and challenges of the participants.

- **What motivates Generation Y employees to get through the day?**

Figure 6.2 comprises of a concept map of the themes that appeared when interviewees described what motivates them to get through the day. From the figure, the two main themes, classified as the main and most relevant motivators, also presented in warmer-coloured circles, are the themes, competent with 22 hits, and growing with 13 hits. The themes identified in the manual coding process also coincided with the themes identified by Leximancer. The main and most relevant themes, competent and growing, are discussed in this section.

Figure 6.2: Areas that motivate Generation Y employees in the workplace



Source: Extracted from Leximancer

Firstly, what motivates participants to get them through the day is the fact that they are working with hardworking and competent colleagues that are always there to support and to lend a hand to them. One of the participants relayed to the situation where it was said: “What gets me through the day normally is the fact that we do have a very competent team with which I work...” Many of the participants indicated that they work with ‘nice’, intellectual or goal-driven people. Accordingly, many participants have become friends with or get along well with most of their colleagues, which makes their working days so much more pleasant and helps them to get through the day. Another

element relevant to the competent theme is that even though many of the participants indicated that they work with competent people, they, as individuals, strive to be competent too because they are ambitious and want to make a success of what they are doing. Those who already have families of their own indicated that they want to make a success of their jobs to be able to look after their families.

Secondly, another key motivator indicated by Generation Y employees is being able to grow and become better in what they are tasked to do. An example is: “My biggest motivation obviously is to get better as a person and also to be a better sort of technician in my field.” Generation Y’s need for growth was also discussed in the literature review in Chapter 4. Ambition is key to their need for growth. Another example provided by a participant is: “then there is also the personal drive uhm... so I’m a little bit ambitious. I’m heading towards you know either running my own business or becoming a Corporate Director...” Some individuals indicated that their leaders allow them to explore, grow and become better, which motivates them to get through their work day. A participant emphasised this point: “I think I have grown a lot in my career because I’m... you know I have got hands-on experience, and I am allowed to... and I have been thrown in the deep end and I think that is the only way that you actually learn.” Furthermore, these employees also indicated that they enjoy it when their tasks are interesting and exciting as it gives them the opportunity to grow, whilst they are also getting fulfilment out of it.

- **What poses challenges to Generation Y employees in the workplace?**

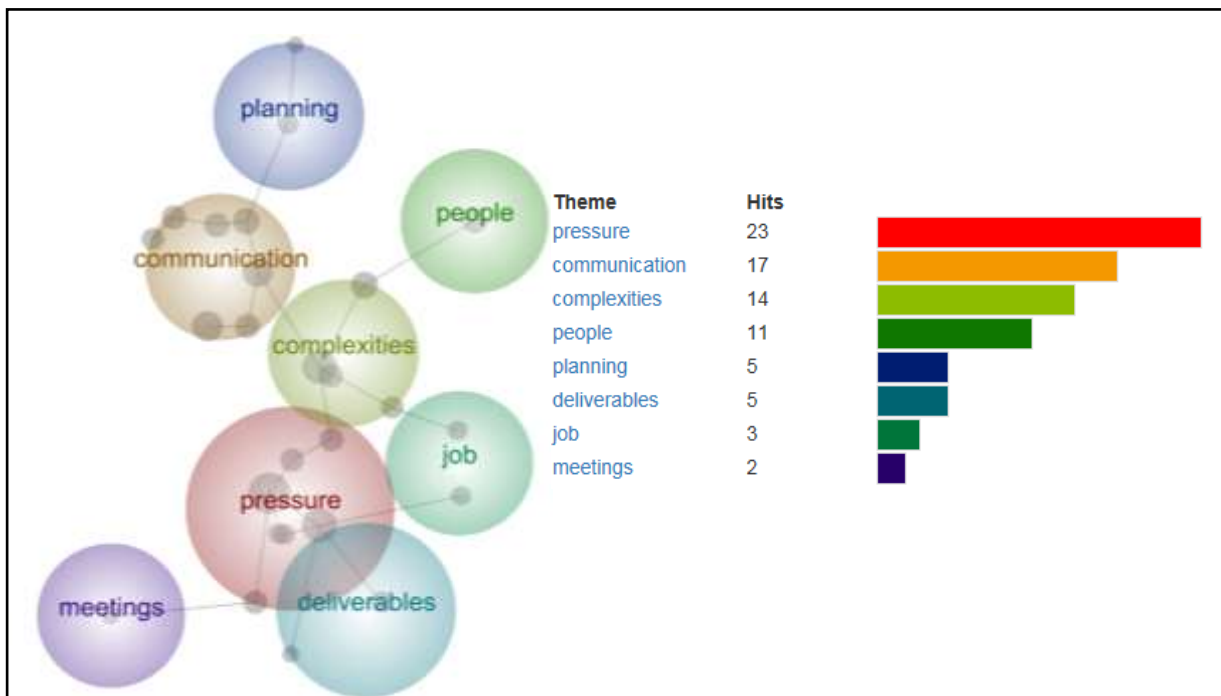
Figure 6.3 provides a concept map comprising of the themes relevant to the challenges of Generation Y employees. According to the concept map, the three main themes, also classified as the main and most relevant themes, presented in warmer-coloured circles, are the themes, pressure with 23 hits, communication with 17 hits, and complexities with 14 hits. The themes from the manual coding process also coincided with that of Leximancer. These three themes are discussed in this section.

The first challenge is pressure. When participants raised that they are experiencing challenges related to pressure, they explained elements concerning workload, time

management and capacity. A participant relayed to the time management challenge: “Because there's so many projects going on at once and because we're an agency there's multiple deadlines a week so in terms of that just to manage my time accordingly to make sure that deadlines are met.” Other reasons were provided, including unreasonable expectations of clients or being on the road to attend meetings which make it difficult for them to manage their emails. Reasons were also raised such as being responsible for managing multiple clients, or the nature of smaller companies requiring employees to do more than what is required by their roles, which also poses challenges to Generation Y employees.

The second challenge is related to communication. Generation Y employees shared various communication frustrations such as not having clear expectations in terms of what should be done, which makes it difficult to execute tasks. An example is: “...having clear expectations of what needs to be produced because often uhm... problems come up towards the end of a project when finer details that weren't ironed out earlier come out.” Furthermore, participants indicated that it is difficult to stay up to date with the latest information or developments at the organisation as change happens continuously. Another communication frustration raised is that employees interpret processes differently, which leads to misperceptions when communicating to each other. Participants also mentioned that demographic differences pose communication challenges to them. For the reason that some participants work with colleagues/clients/students from different backgrounds, different education levels and with individuals who speak other home languages to the participants, it makes it challenging to communicate effectively.

Figure 6.3: Areas that pose challenges to Generation Y employees in the workplace



Source: Extracted from Leximancer

Thirdly, complexities also appeared to be posing challenges to Generation Y employees. These complexities include tight deadlines and sales targets. Another challenging area identified was the complexities associated with managing different people as explained by those participants who are already in positions to lead junior level employees. The reason provided for the difficulties with regards to managing people was summed up by a participant: “People... mainly... since you find that... uh... a computer like the a... computer is predictable, it is always about the fool that is sitting behind the computer... it's not the computer that is a fool but with people... I find that people are unpredictable so... uh... at... at... at... sometimes it can be difficult to manage uhm... and you don't always get uh... what you expect from the people that is working for you.” The succeeding section explains the findings obtained on how Generation Y employees describe their leaders’ day in the workplace.

6.2.2 The leader’s day in the workplace

Although the findings to this section also formed part of introductory questions, the researcher has decided to include them as it provides valuable inputs with regards to

the perceptions of leaders by participants. The questions requesting that Generation Y employees describe their leaders' day in the workplace are listed below:

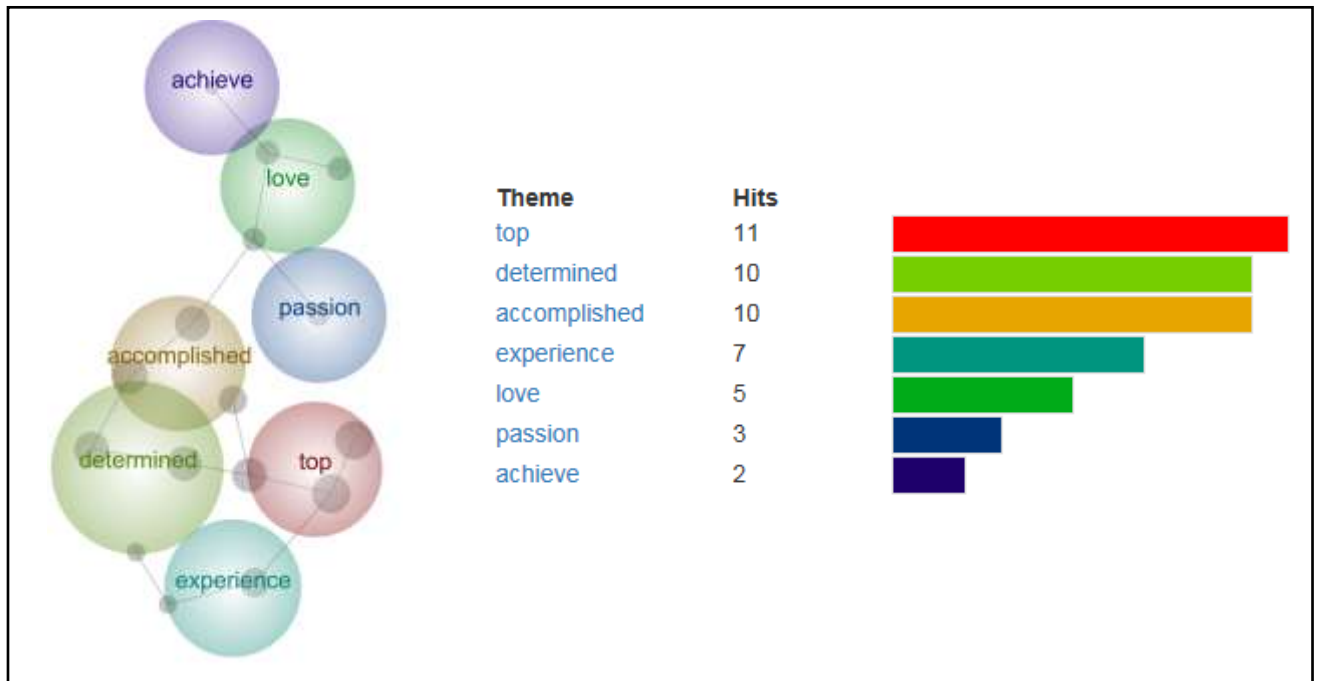
- **Take me through your leader/manager/boss's work day, what are his/her main responsibilities?**
- **What do you think motivates your leader/manager/boss to get through the work day?**
- **What do you think are your leader/manager/boss's main challenges in the workplace?**

When interviewees were requested to explain their leaders' roles at work, the majority described various general tasks such as overseeing staff, business development, administrative tasks as well as managing people and clients' expectations. Some participants indicated that they are not aware of what their leaders are doing every day as they do not see them that often and they are assuming that they are attending meetings quite often. When the interviewer probed to find out whether it is something that bothers them, some of the participants indicated that it does bother them as they often require permission, approvals or inputs from their leaders, resulting in bottlenecks in executing tasks. Another participant indicated that it does not bother their team because it does not influence their day-to-day activities. From this discussion, it could be derived that it is important for Generation Y employees to know where their leaders are or how to get hold of them when they require inputs to complete their day-to-day tasks. The following sections discuss the findings obtained about the leaders' motivators and challenges.

- **What motivates leaders to get through the day?**

According to the concept map in Figure 6.4, the three main themes, classified as the main and most relevant motivators, also presented as warmer-coloured circles, are the themes, top with 11 hits, and determined and accomplished both with 10 hits. The theme top had only one point higher than the themes, determined and accomplished. The manually coded themes also coincided with the themes identified by Leximancer.

Figure 6.4: Areas that motivate leaders in the workplace



Source: Extracted from Leximancer

The first theme, top, denotes the perceptions by participants that their leaders are aiming to get to the top of their current organisations by working tirelessly, thereby exposing themselves to potential promotions and for some, their aim is to gain as much experience as possible in order to start their own companies. A participant relayed to this point made that leaders are working themselves to the top: "...they are almost getting to the top, I guess, they are only one rank above becoming partners of top management in the firm..." Also, in line with the first theme, the second theme, determined, refer to the leaders being ambitious to make a success of their careers. A participant explained: "I think he (the leader) is a very determined uhm... and also a goal-driven person so it is a lot about completing something what you start..."

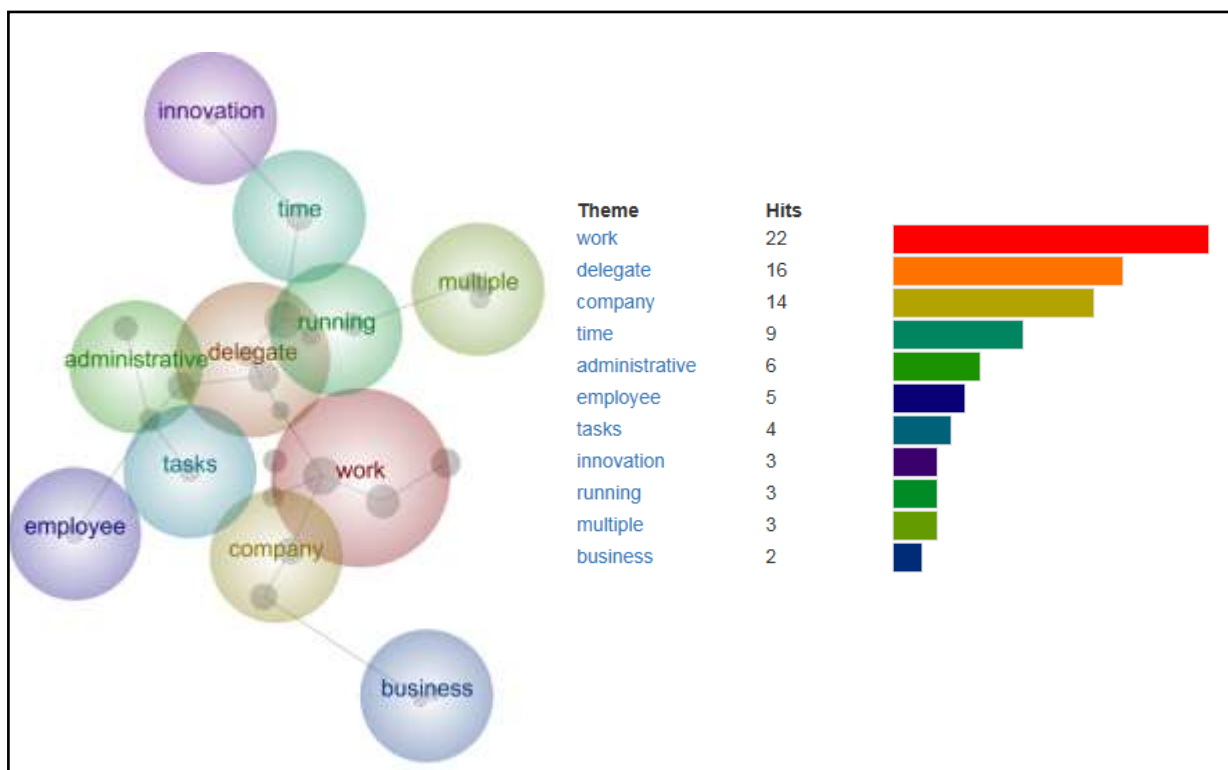
The third theme, accomplished, which also scored 10 hits, points to leaders feeling a sense of accomplishment when they have managed to reach their goals for the day. These leaders truly have a passion for their jobs and a deep-seeded love for their organisations, which also emphasises why they are determined to achieve their goals and to be successful in their positions and careers. A participant explained: "They love what they do and their big advocates for it, for loving what you do." From the concept

map, can be derived that there is overlap between the themes determined and accomplished, which explains why the discussion links to each other.

- **What poses challenges to leaders in the workplace?**

This section discusses the themes identified when the researcher probed to pinpoint perceptions by participants about what they think their leaders' main challenges are within the workplace. Figure 6.5 illustrates the themes in a concept map. From the concept map, the three main themes, classified as the main and most relevant challenges, also presented in warmer-coloured circles, are the themes, work with 22 hits, delegate with 16 hits, and company with 14 hits. The manually coded themes also coincided with that of Leximancer. A discussion on the themes, work, delegate and company, follows.

Figure 6.5: Areas that pose challenges to leaders in the workplace



Source: Extracted from Leximancer

Firstly, aspects relevant to the theme, work, encapsulates various operational challenges associated with the actual work. Some of the challenges mentioned include

challenges pertaining to administrative tasks, obtaining accreditation, legal issues and budget constraints. A participant shared: “Budgets constraints might also be one of the hurdles and legal issues are also just a... you know when it comes to innovation... it's also something that constantly changes. The legal system isn't set out to cater for every option.” Another participant shared: “Uhm...his main challenges would be uhm...mainly administrative ensuring that all the processes involved get done accordingly on time uhm... everybody needs to get paid...” Other work-related challenges were also mentioned such as difficulties with recruiting the right service providers, managing time, running multiple projects, and staying on top of matters. One of the respondents relayed to these challenges: “In my opinion, I think her main challenge is definitely uhm... staying on top of things, knowing what is going on with each account, because there is so many and I don't think any person would know a 100% what is going on...”. Interestingly, some of the challenges experienced by organisational leaders, are similar to the challenges of Generation Y employees discussed in section 6.2.1, which include difficulties with time management, running multiple projects and communication aspects related to staying on top of the newest developments.

Secondly, challenges pertaining to the theme, delegate, are referring to all people management related aspects such as difficulties with allocating the right people resources to tasks, managing teams and ensuring that employees are meeting deadlines or executing tasks correctly. Furthermore, Generation Y employees also explained that organisational leaders may face challenges with regards to delegating the right tasks to employees as to keep them motivated and interested. Part of this theme is that organisational leaders are challenged to ensure they recruit the right talent to join the team. A participant summed up this point: “...I think her challenge is that there is not a lot of talent out there and it is difficult to get people uhm... into the company who has the necessary experience and skills without us having to uhm... to mentor and shape them...”.

Thirdly, the theme, company refers to company-related challenges. An example provided is: “I think one of the biggest challenges for him is to ensure that there is a steady flow of work coming into the company, so that he meets his budget, his yearly

budget according to what is set aside for him.” From the concept map can be seen that there is a strong link between the themes, work and company, which means that the company and work-related challenges overlap. Findings on the differences between a leader and a manager as explained by Generation Y employees are discussed next.

6.2.3 Differences between a leader and a manager

Prior to determining the preferences of Generation Y employees in terms of leadership, an important aspect was to determine what the participants’ perceptions of leadership and management are in general, such as whether their preferences would either be more favourable towards managerial attributes or more favourable towards leadership attributes. The generic questions asked to participants with regards to this theme, are listed below.

- **In your opinion, what are the differences between a leader and a manager?**
- **Would you classify the person that you report to as a leader, a manager, or both a leader and a manager?**

All participants, except one, explained the differences between a leader and a manager in line with the literature review on leadership and management in Chapter 3. The exception mentioned is a participant in the IT industry who indicated that there are no differences between a leader and a manager. Table 6.2 provides a summary of the differences between leadership and management as outlined in the literature review. The majority of participants described leadership as a task where employees are inspired to achieve the bigger picture, whereas management is more focussed on operational tasks.

Table 6.2: Differences between leadership and management

Leadership	Management
Leaders inspire and implement change (Răducan & Răducan, 2014a:809).	Managers control, interfere and correct (Răducan & Răducan, 2014a:809).
A leader’s role is to create a vision and implement strategies (Răducan & Răducan, 2014a:810; Northouse, 2013:12).	A manager is responsible for allocating the necessary capital (Răducan & Răducan, 2014a:810).

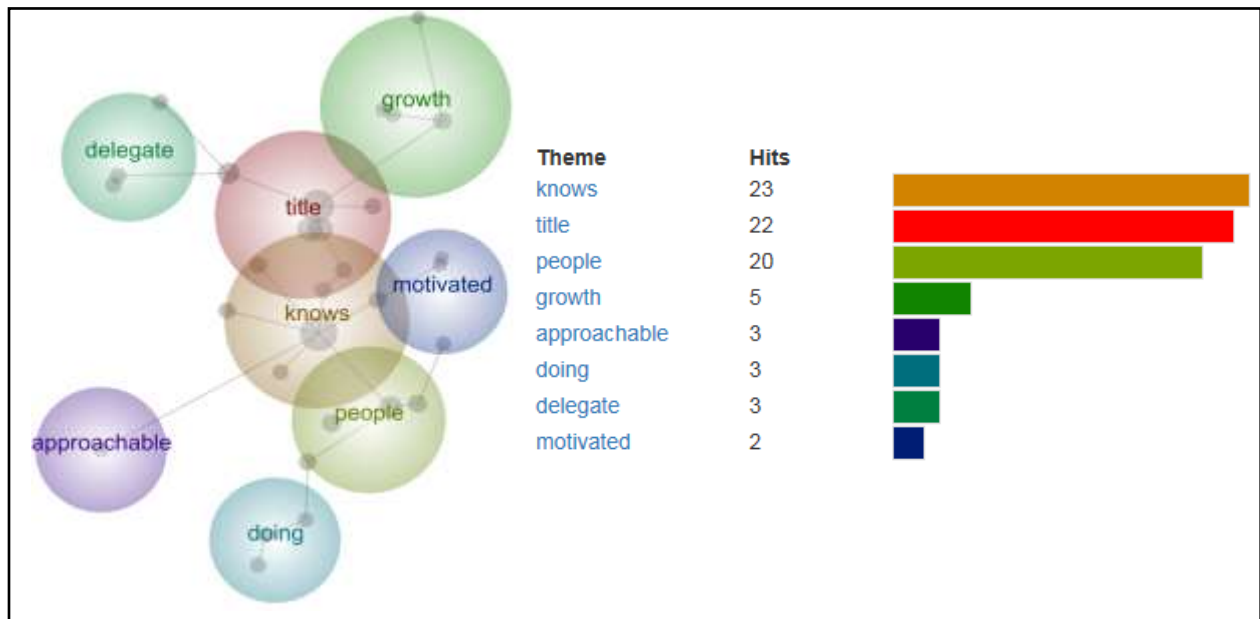
The differences between a leader and a manager as explained by Generation Y employees are discussed in the following sections. Once the interviewees explained the differences, they were requested to indicate whether they perceive those individuals who they report to as either a leader, a manager or both - a leader and a manager. Twelve out of nineteen participants classified and described those individuals who they should report to as leaders, whereas four classified those who they should report to as managers. Three out of nineteen indicated that they are reporting to individuals that possess both leadership and managerial skills or that they are reporting to two individuals - one being more of a leader and the other one being more of a manager. Interestingly, one interviewee who referred to the individual who they report to as a manager indicated that it is the type of role that the person within the organisation holds that requires that individual to be a more of a manager. The explanation by the participant is as follows: "...the problem in our industry is, you are aiming for the top, top and a lot of people are very competent in what we are doing and it is very introvert... Excel, analysing, researching and uhm... it is quite technical and in our industry, it works that if you spend a lot of years, that is the natural step until you get to the absolute top. Whereon the leaders rarely gets to the top. But you can get quite far in our industry, in my eyes, without being a leader, a good leader." However, when the individual explained the preferred leader later on, the characteristics were aligned to that of a leader and not that of a manager.

- **A leader described by Generation Y employees**

This section of the chapter summarises the perceptions of participants about a leader in relation to a manager. Figure 6.6 includes a concept map of the themes that were discussed when participants described a leader. The areas illustrated in warmer-coloured circles, represent the main and most relevant themes according to Leximancer, which include the themes, knows with 23 hits, title with 22 hits, and people with 20 hits. Based on a number of hits, these three themes scored very close to each other and the remaining themes scored much lower. The themes from the manual coding also coincided with the themes identified by Leximancer. However, instead of the theme, title, the researcher named the theme, example, as it is more descriptive of what was meant by participants according to the manual coding. The following two

anecdotes summarise what was meant by participants: “Well I would say a leader is something that is far less a title than it is a way of being.”; “A leader is more of a person that leads by... that sets the example, that motivates people and... and direct people in the right direction instead of just putting ... goals for them they are trying to achieve.” The themes knows, title and people, are discussed next.

Figure 6.6: Leaders described



Source: Extracted from Leximancer

Based on the manual coding, the theme, knows, refers to two aspects: firstly, leaders knowing their people (people knowledge), and secondly, knowing what should be done or workplace goals (industry knowledge). The two-sided view can also be explained by the strong overlap between the circles in the concept map. The people aspect of the theme is discussed under the theme, people. With regards to industry knowledge, leaders have a good understanding of the industry and the working environment and accordingly, knows what should be done to ensure that the organisation is successful. The second theme, title, refers to leaders being more than just a title, it is more of lifestyle by setting the example for employees. Interviewees described leaders as shepherds, people who they want to follow, individuals that walk their talk and who they aspire to be like. An example provided is: “...a leader is more of a shepherd, just guiding people.” Leaders have also been described as open to listening to ideas and concerns of employees, also discussed earlier. As seen in the concept map, there is

a strong link between the themes, title on the one hand, and delegating and growing on the other hand. This indicates that although leaders have certain responsibilities, they delegate and trust their teams to do their work to help achieve the greater outcome, which also helps employees to grow and gain experience, also indicated as key motivators to Generation Y as discussed in section 6.2.1.

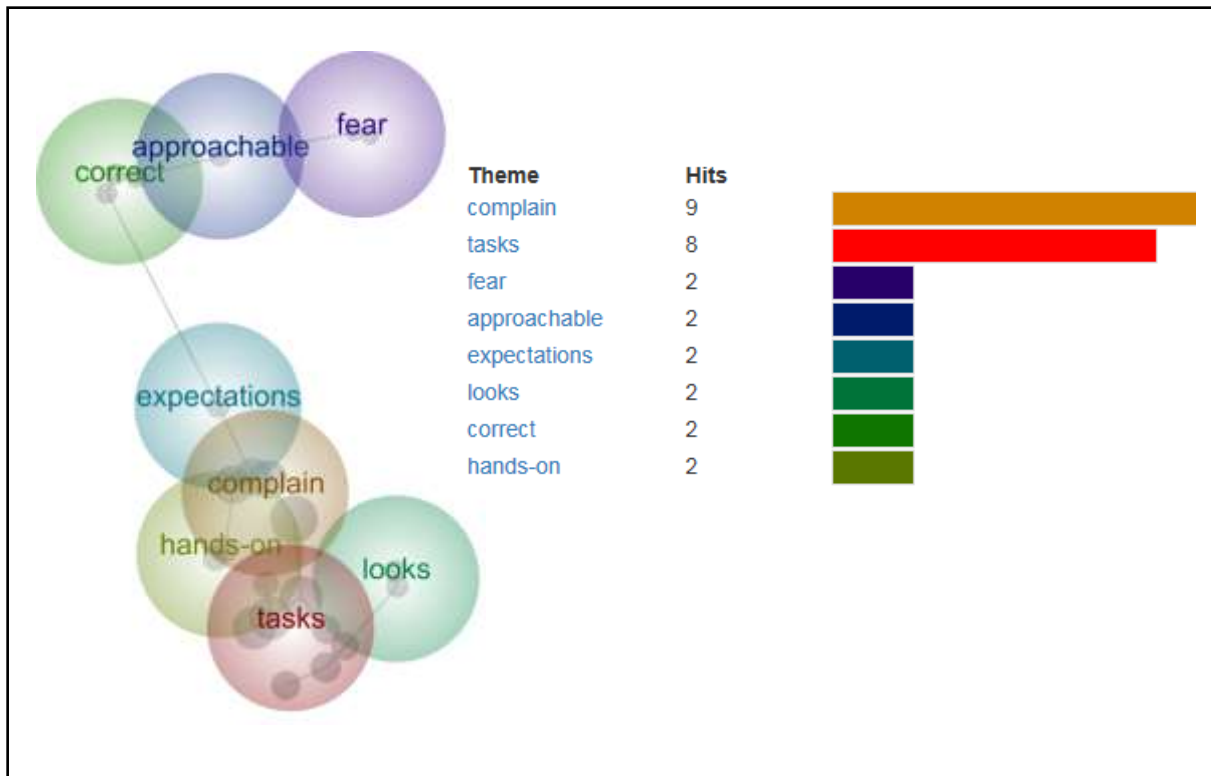
The third theme, people, is aligned to the people aspect of the first theme. The theme, people, refers to the point that leaders know their employees and what their needs are. Leaders are people orientated and they know when there is a need for them to be more hands-on by providing support, guidance and advice. A leader brings out the best in people and helps them to grow and become better in their jobs. A participant described a leader as "...someone who imparts knowledge who helps their people to grow, to become better, to move on to something greater...." Part of this is keeping employees motivated by knowing what motivates them, which is a theme that also appeared in the interviews, and is strongly linked to the theme, people, according to the concept map in Figure 6.6. An explanation of the characteristics of a manager according to participants follows in the next section.

- **A manager described by Generation Y employees**

Figure 6.7 includes a concept map with the themes that were discussed, when a manager was described in relation to a leader, by participants. The themes that are the most relevant with regards to hits include the themes, complain with 9 hits, and tasks with 8 hits. These two themes are very close to each other and differ only with one point. The themes from the manual coding also coincided with the themes identified by Leximancer, however, instead of the theme, complain, the researcher named the theme, micro-managing, as it is more descriptive of what was meant by participants. The following anecdotes summarise why naming the theme micro-managing would be more relevant: "...and I feel like a manager is always trying to like micro-manage, and look what you are doing, and just someone that you have to report to everything that you do."; "A manager kind of will keep track of things and want to uhm... touch base all the time, kind of like micro-managing..." From the concept map, the themes that are linked to the theme, complain, include fear, approachable,

expectations, looks, correct, and hands-on. These themes are equal in size with two hits each.

Figure 6.7: Managers described



Source: Extracted from Leximancer

The theme, complain, is discussed first. Participants described managers as hands-on in terms of looking over the shoulders of individuals, and for this reason, they micro-manage and oversee everything to ensure that tasks are being met according to their standards. Furthermore, if managers do decide to delegate, they would sit back and oversee and track everything, and if tasks are not met in line with the plan, they would complain. Managers are not flexible and if these individuals make decisions, it is final and non-negotiable. As a result of these individuals being rigid and more operationally focussed, they are perceived to be unapproachable, and as explained, to be instilling a sense of fear.

The second theme, tasks, with one point lower in the score, refer to managers being highly involved in the day-to-day activities by ensuring that everything runs smoothly. As seen from the concept map, there is a strong link between the themes, complain

and tasks, and accordingly, overlap occurs in explanations. As mentioned earlier, these individuals oversee all activities and are focussed on the details of projects as to ensure that tasks are executed effectively according to the standards of the manager. Explained by participants, managers are focussed on their titles, KPIs and role descriptions and will not stray away from it. An example provided by a participant is: “A leader is someone I think that is uhm someone that embraces the word 'leader' as you know it's a title for him and he is not as easy approachable, he does not have the correct people skills.” The subsequent section encapsulates how Generation Y employees described their previous/current leaders.

6.2.4 Leaders described

To delve into the leadership preferences of Generation Y employees, the interviewer requested that participants explain the persons who they are reporting to in terms of characteristics, behaviours and how they lead/manage the team. The generic questions that were asked for this theme, are listed below:

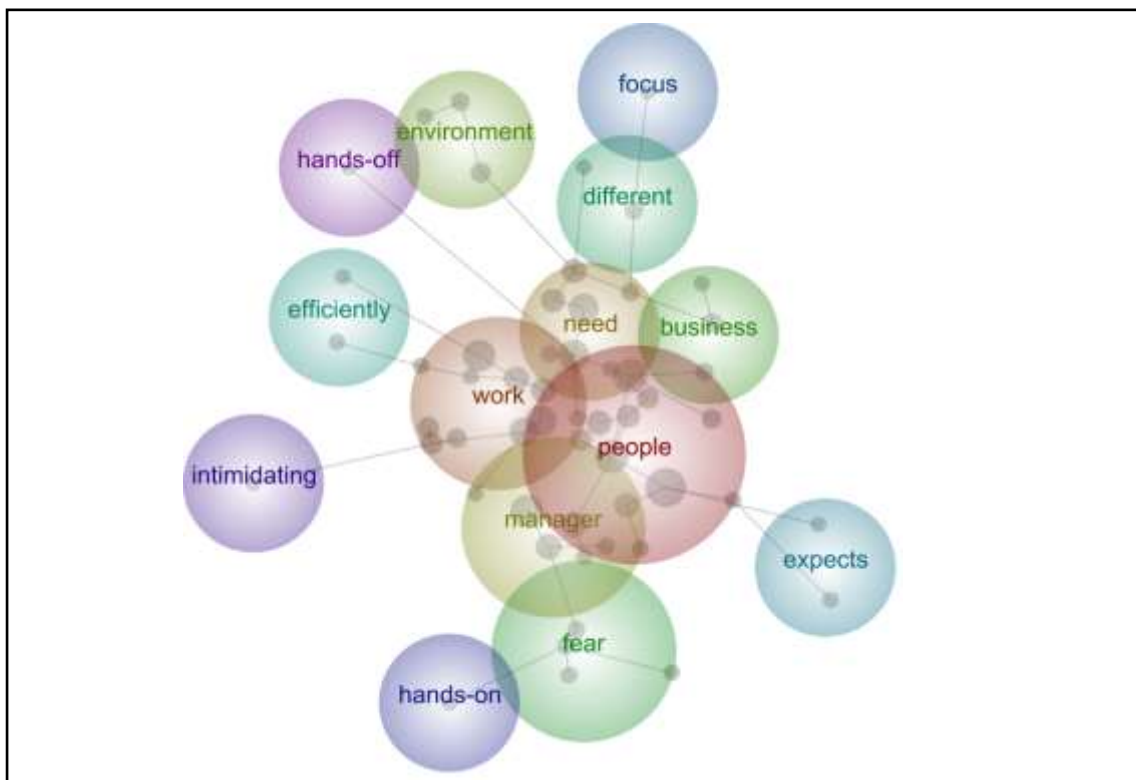
- **How would you describe your leader/manager/boss in terms of his/her leadership competence?**
- **How would you describe him/her in terms of characteristics, behaviours or leadership style?**
- **If you had to step into your leader/manager/boss's shoes tomorrow, what would be the first thing that you would change about his/her leadership style?**
- **[If applicable] You mentioned that this is not your first job since entering the job market. How would you describe your previous direct manager compared to your current direct manager?**

Naturally, the 20 participants described their leaders differently. There were, however, similarities in terms of favourable attributes and less favourable attributes of leaders as the questions were phrased in a way to identify both strengths and weaknesses of leaders. The concept map in Figure 6.8, captures the themes that were discussed.

The top four themes, highlighted in warmer-coloured circles, include the themes, people with 91 hits, need with 66 hits, work with 64 hits and manager with 45 hits. The theme, people, refers to all the aspects pertaining to leaders' abilities to interact effectively with the employees. The theme, need, include aspects pertaining to whether the leaders are focussed on satisfying employee needs. The theme, work, encompasses matters discussed regarding the degree to what leaders are task-orientated and finally, the theme, manager, refers to managerial aspects that were discussed.

From the figure, it is clear that there are strong links and overlaps between the four themes. For this reason and because the themes identified by Leximancer are very broad, the researcher has used the leadership styles discussed in Chapter 3 to guide the discussion as characteristics relevant to all styles appeared when previous/current leaders were described. These leadership styles include the autocratic, transactional, participative, transformational, charismatic, laissez-faire, servant and the communicative leadership style.

Figure 6.8: Previous and/or current leader/manager described



Source: Extracted from Leximancer

- **Findings relevant to the autocratic leadership style**

When participants were required to describe their leaders, some of the characteristics explained are aligned to that of an autocratic leader. A summary of the main characteristics of autocratic leadership discussed in Chapter 3 is provided below to assist with creating the context to the discussion:

- Autocratic leadership is a style where the leader retains all the power and makes all the decisions without allowing employees to provide their inputs or ideas (De Hoogh *et al.*, 2015:687-689; Khan *et al.*, 2015b:87).
- Autocratic leadership could be highly effective in certain cases, such as where employees require strict supervision to be able to perform their tasks (Adams & Galanes, 2009:238-284).
- Autocratic leaders are perceived to be bossy, dictatorial and controlling (Khan *et al.*, 2015b:87).

In agreement to the summary above, a participant in the engineering industry indicated that their leader has a militaristic style to leading employees, and the leader, therefore, stamps of his authority without inviting or allowing inputs by employees. When asked if this is a positive or negative attribute, the answer followed: "...I think in a... the job that we are doing, we are... we are in a very risky business of mining it can be very dangerous at times so it is important that you ensure that people don't take shortcuts, people don't uhm... break... break the rules especially if there is rules set and the ways...the ways of doing it. So, some aspects yes it very good uhm... enforcing discipline to... to ensure that people are safe but then in the other... other hand he does not give people... to work well as a team 'cause you find that there might be ideas from other team members that will be ...suppressed because he does not give them the opportunity to explain and add value on...on on their thinking of ways of doing things." Another participant in the education industry also described their leader as rigid in terms of standards. According to the interviewee, rigid structures are unrealistic given the context of working with children who have unique needs. Some participants also described their leaders to be micro-managing and to be checking up on employees all the time, which are attributes of autocratic leadership that were not

explained as preferred attributes of a leader. The following section describes the findings that are relevant to the transactional leadership style.

- **Findings relevant to the transactional leadership style**

A few participants described characteristics of their leaders in relation to the attributes of the transactional leadership style. A summary of the main characteristics of transactional leadership discussed in Chapter 3 is provided below to assist with creating the context to the discussion:

- Transactional leadership is more of a ‘hard leadership approach’ forcing or pressuring employees to perform tasks in order to reach the end result (Roa, 2013:144-145).
- Transactional leaders create exchange relationships with the employees where they reward or punish them based on their performance in reaching specific goals (Brown et al., 2014:39; Özera & Tinaztepe, 2014:779; Westcott, 2014:9; Odumeru & Ifeanyi, 2013:358; Hodgetts & Hegar, 2008:355).

It was found that participants who work or previously worked in environments where they are/were responsible to meet targets described their leaders to be stern, hard and fast, which are features of the transactional leader. These leaders are described to be leading by fear by reminding employees of the consequences if they do not meet goals, instead of taking action to help them. A participant who previously worked in a sales environment explained: “I was very taken advantage off.” and “...they would regularly pressurise me to do things that I was morally not comfortable with.” It is interesting to note that none of the findings in relation to the transactional leadership style was preferred by Generation Y employees. The subsequent section describes the findings that are relevant to the participative leadership style.

- **Findings relevant to the participative leadership style**

Some participants explained characteristics of their leaders similar to the attributes of the participative leadership style. A summary of the main characteristics of participative leadership discussed in Chapter 3 is provided below to assist with creating the context to the discussion:

- A participative leader welcomes the entire team's feedback, inputs and suggestions, thereby making organisational problems a shared issue (Kelly & MacDonald, 2016:4; Khan *et al.*, 2015b:88; Adam & Galanes, 2009:284; Rok, 2009:467; Wright, 2009:237).
- Participative leaders have been described as mentors that participate (Khan *et al.*, 2015b:88).

In line with the traits of participative leadership, some participants indicated that they value the fact that their leaders include them in strategic decisions as it makes them feel valued and that they are not only a number in the organisation. The importance of participation was emphasised by a participant: "So ja the level of small detail you're not just a number anymore you actually part of the team." Another leader was described as someone who would much rather sit together with employees to complete tasks than leaving you to figure it out. An example was provided by the participant: "So I think her approach is more rather let's do something together and learn and then next time you can do it yourself". Although the coaching aspect was described as a strength, it was indicated that the leader may be struggling to delegate. The succeeding section explains the findings in comparison to the transformational leadership style.

- **Findings relevant to the transformational leadership style**

When participants were required to describe their leaders, some explained certain aspects of their leaders that are aligned to the transformational leadership style. Below is a summary of the transformational leadership style provided in Chapter 3 in order to provide context for the discussion:

- Transformational leadership is about leading towards transformation or change (Hodgetts & Hegar, 2008:354) by creating and communicating a well-defined vision that inspires employees toward achieving the bigger picture; way beyond their self-interest (Ayub *et al.*, 2014:505; Adams & Galanes, 2009:284-285; Hodgetts & Hegar, 2008:354).

- Transformational leaders truly care about the welfare of employees by paying special attention to them in order to understand and address their specific needs (Men, 2014:4;15).
- By leading by example, these transformational leaders inspire employees (Odumeru & Ifeanyi, 2013:356).
- Transformational leaders keep employees challenged through creating opportunities for growth as to keep employees motivated (Men, 2014:15; Özera & Tınaztepe, 2014:779).
- Transformational leaders often only see the bigger picture and are ignorant about the smaller detail associated with reaching the vision (Hodgetts & Hegar, 2008:354).

Aligned to the traits of transformational leadership, some participants described their leaders as persons who focus on the overall vision and not on the day-to-day activities. An interviewee further explained that although it is a good characteristic to have a high-level focus, there are times when they require support from their leader in dealing with everyday issues, which is lacking; and also mentioned as a disadvantage in the literature review on transformational leadership. Other interviewees referred to their leaders as “someone I would look up to and to be one day”, whilst other described them to be “...very good at influencing people...”, both favourable, and attributes of transformational leadership. Some participants also explained that their leaders understand their weaknesses and strengths and allocate tasks accordingly to get the most out of employees. An example provided of the leader’s ability by a participant: “...his (the leader’s) ability to set everyone at ease and get everybody to contribute something that they are interested in actually contributing.”

Emotional bonds are also important to participants; however, it was also mentioned that some leaders are treating some employees unfairly based on favouritism. It could be derived that although participants prefer emotional bonds with the leaders, they would still like the leaders to be treating everyone fairly and equally. An example provided of unfair emotional bonds, include: “He’s a very emotional manager, in other words, if you approach him in a friendly way and you spend time with him after work hours, he will treat you as his friend and so in the work place you will always be ahead

of everyone else, but if you question his authority or you question the way he does things, he will immediately cut you off.” Participants value the fact that their leaders are open about their emotions and do not hold grudges if they make mistakes. Their leaders will tell them that they did something wrong and move on and will not speak about it again. Also, not preferred is emotionally erratic leaders as a participant described their previous leader. It was explained that because of the inconsistencies in emotions, the employees were anxious as they did not know what to expect next. It can be derived that it denotes to emotional intelligence. The findings that are relevant to the charismatic leadership style are discussed next.

- **Findings relevant to the charismatic leadership style**

One participant explained his previous leader in relation to the attributes of charismatic leadership. A summary of the main characteristics of charismatic leadership discussed in Chapter 3 is provided below to assist with providing context to the discussion:

- The relationship between the charismatic leader and the employees can be explained as that of disciples to a master, where there is truly an emotional bond and followers show love, devotion and passion for these leaders without feeling obligated to do so (Achua & Lussier, 2013:306).
- Charismatic leaders are able to inspire employees because they have an attractive personality, and on top of that, they have knowledge and wisdom to share (Conrad & Poole, 2012:179).

An interviewee who previously worked in the legal industry indicated that their leader, also the owner of the firm, was very charming and charismatic which were desiring attributes, however, the participant raised that there were many flaws within the organisation in the way that the organisation was managed, and the example provided was: “His (the leader’s) business has since collapsed as well, uhm and I do think that whilst... whilst he ascribed to a sort off, once again a cult of personality around himself his day to day management did leave much to be desired.” Although this participant was fascinated and motivated by the leader’s charm, the individual was also aware of the flaws of the organisation that were hidden behind the leader’s charming

personality. The following section describes the findings that are relevant to the laissez-faire leadership style.

- **Findings relevant to the laissez-faire leadership style**

Some participants also described their leaders according to characteristics of the laissez-faire leadership style. A summary of the main characteristics of laissez-faire leadership discussed in Chapter 3 is provided below to assist with creating the context to the discussion:

- With Laissez-faire leadership, leaders perceive themselves as no different to their followers and are easy-going and not much involved in decision-making processes (Adams & Galanes, 2009:284).
- With this leadership style, employees have freedom, and no-one look over their shoulder with regards to achieving organisational goals (Khan *et al.*, 2015b:89).

A few participants explained that their leaders entrust them to do the work and to make decisions and as a result, these leaders are hands-off, which is in agreement to the laissez-faire leadership style. Although some mentioned that their leaders delegate, some also shared that there are times when they would like their leaders to be more involved or hands-on by helping them in difficult situations and to help solve problems, which is currently not the case. Another participant indicated that it is frustrating when concerns are raised with the leader, however, no action is taking from the leader's side to address the concerns and instead the employees are tasked to solve the issues themselves. An example provided was: "So if something goes wrong I need to sort it out uhm... and then that adds additional stress to my working day, so if my data runs out, if my WIFI is not working, if my PC is lagging, it is not the company's, it is my problem, I need to sort it out, there is not a IT person and if I go to her as well, the answer is always I need to sort it out."

Interestingly, two participants, both in the IT industry, described their leaders as being too lenient, indicating that they are too easy-going. The two interviewees referred to matters such as leaders being unresponsive towards employees that are not

performing according to expectations. These leaders are also reluctant to provide deadlines or make effort to follow up on projects. It was suggested by one of the participants who raised that their leader is too lenient, that the leader should be stricter as not to allow poor performance. Findings related to the servant leadership style follows next.

- **Findings relevant to the servant leadership style**

When participants were required to describe their leaders, some participants described attributes that are similar to the servant leadership style. A summary of the main characteristics of servant leadership discussed in Chapter 3 is provided below to assist with creating the context to the discussion:

- Servant leaders genuinely care for employees and are selflessly devoted to benefitting others and fulfilling the needs of the employees (Grisaffea *et al.*, 2016:43; Achua & Lussier, 2013:326; Spears, 2010:25; Zamorano, 2008:19).
- The main aim of this leadership style is to serve and not to be served (Achua & Lussier, 2013:327).

Some participants indicated that their leaders are taking interest in and caring for the employees, which they appreciate. These leaders are interested to know whether the employees are happy or not and attempts to keep the employees motivated. Other individuals shared that their leaders treat everyone fairly and equally. An example shared is: “He (the leader) is very fair like he'll treat every uhm... person on an equal level uhm... won't unfairly judge you and he'd rather ask your side of the story before making a judgement or ja... that is a good quality of him...” Some interviewees also shared that their leaders are sticking up for them and are diffusing difficult situations, which they value. In contrast, other participants shared that there is a need for their leaders to push back more with regards to unfair tasks from other parties, and to stand up for the team when it comes to difficult clients. The subsequent section describes the findings that are relevant to the communicative leadership style.

- **Findings relevant to the communicative leadership style**

As stated in Chapter 3, communicative leaders are not just communicating, but they are truly good communicators (Johansson *et al.*, 2014:155). When participants were required to describe their leaders, some explained certain aspects of their leaders which make them either effective or ineffective communicators. A summary of the main characteristics of communicative leadership discussed in Chapter 3 is provided as it guides the communication elements to be discussed:

- These leaders engage strongly in two-way communication by continuously sharing and seeking feedback from team members (Johansson *et al.*, 2014:154).
- Communicative leaders have the skills to persuade and get a message across effectively and clearly (Dalati, 2013:3).
- Communicative leaders are approachable and willing to listen to inputs or concerns (Johansson *et al.*, 2014:154).
- These leaders really care about the well-being of followers and show it to them (Johansson *et al.*, 2014:154).
- Communicative leaders are very involved (Johansson *et al.*, 2014:154-155).
- These leaders communicate to employees how they fit into the bigger scheme of things and where to find the resources needed to perform their tasks (Wright, 2009:237).

Naturally, the findings in terms of communication were very mixed. Some participants described their leaders to be providing clear, open and frequent communication, whereas some indicated that there is not sufficient communication and that they often find themselves in a position where they are not sure what is expected of them. It was mentioned by participants that it is important that leaders provide clear communication on the tasks that should be produced, including proper briefs when handovers are taking place as this was indicated as unsatisfactory by many participants. Although some participants explained that they do not get sufficient information about expectations, others mentioned that they do not receive any communication from their leaders. An interviewee who raised that there is not sufficient communication in terms of expectations, explained that they have an idea of what should be done, they are,

however, still unsure and require clarity from their leaders as to where they are heading. An example provided was: “If we don't ask and even if we ask we don't really get a good answer. So, we always, we know vaguely where we're heading but we are not exactly sure.” A reason provided for the lack of communication is because it is perceived that some leaders are taking on too much work and, therefore, neglect important aspects such as communication.

Although clear, open and frequent communication is valued by these participants, they indicated that it is important that the right messages should be communicated. An interviewee mentioned that there are times that their leader shares information with the team that should only be shared with individuals on an executive level. The example provided was that the leader would tell the team members when that individual's motivation levels are low, and when the person is searching for another job opportunity. Logically, team members cannot be motivated if their leaders, who are supposed to be keeping them motivated, are not positive about their jobs.

Some of the individuals who indicated that they do receive communication mentioned that they are sometimes bombarded with too much communication, while others raised that there are often too many areas of expectations communicated to them, which result in confusion as to what the main priorities should be. An example provided was: “...it feels to me every week there is something else, like I know what we stand for, I know who we are, what our focus is uhm... so I definitely know what our vision is but there is always... every week there is something else that we need to focus on, so I am getting confused...” It was suggested by a participant that their leader should have a discussion with them in terms of where the organisation is at the moment, and where they are heading, in order for them to understand their roles and how they could contribute towards the vision. From these findings could be derived that there should be a balance between clear, open and frequent communication and communicating the right messages.

Unsurprisingly, some participants described their leaders as approachable and others described them not to be approachable. Those individuals who described their previous/current leaders as approachable indicated that their leaders are people-

oriented persons and individuals who they can speak to about anything. They further described their leaders as relatable and understanding people who have mutual interests, people who are almost like their friends and who are easy to approach. These leaders embrace open-door policies, make themselves available to the employees and they are willing to listen. Another example of an approachable leader is: "...the one Director you can go to with a concern and feel like you can walk away with that concern solved." This emphasises that participants value it when leaders listen to their concerns and take action to help them resolve bottlenecks. When leaders listen to them, it makes the employees feel valued and that they are not only a number. Two participants added that their previous/current leaders are perceived not to be intimidating, which makes it easy to approach them, also a preferred attribute.

Some of the unfavourable attributes discussed which makes previous/current leaders less approachable are when leaders are introverts, shy, not willing to listen or when they are practising favouritism. A participant mentioned that their leader is an emotional leader and if you are not in the individual's good books or on a friend-level, then you cannot approach that person with anything. From the discussion can be derived that there are characteristics relevant to the communicative leadership style that is preferred by Generation Y employees. The next section discusses the communication satisfaction levels of participants.

6.2.5 Communication satisfaction levels

In order to determine the preferred leadership communication, the researcher asked Generation Y employees about their current satisfaction levels with the communication from their leaders. The question that was asked for this theme is listed below:

Describe and explain your level of satisfaction with the communication you are currently receiving from your leader/manager/boss at the organisation where you are employed.

It is an obvious fact that participants from different organisations and industries would have different levels of satisfaction when it comes to communication from their leaders. The responses ranged from poor to excellent when participants were requested to explain their level of satisfaction. The satisfaction levels are discussed according to being favourable or unfavourable characteristics. The favourable characteristics include clear communication in terms of expectations in order for employees to understand how they should execute tasks. Interviewees that were satisfied with the leadership communication, referred to their leaders as approachable, easily available and willing to assist when they need clarity with regards to expectations or to discuss any other matters. Those individuals who are able to get hold of their leaders easily, such as those who are sitting in the same office as the leader or those who are sitting close to the leaders in the workplace, scored the communication satisfaction levels higher. Being involved in high-level decisions also contributed to why communication satisfaction levels were high.

Unfavourable characteristics that impacted satisfaction levels negatively include situations where leaders communicate certain matters to selected team members only, which causes confusion and is perceived to be unfair. A participant provided an example: "...we realise there is certain things he (the leader) says to some team... team members and not to others which sometimes create a bit of confusion." Other negative experiences shared is that some leaders' communication evokes negative emotions in employees. Examples were given that certain leaders regularly remind their employees that they are replaceable, and consequently, degrades them. Other negative experiences shared include that the leaders do not address individuals if something went wrong and rather the whole group is reprimanded, without knowing exactly what the problem is. Furthermore, another participant shared that the leader does communicate, however not about the topics that employees would like to know about. The example provided was: "Because I won't say there is no communication, because there definitely is communication. But the communication I want... that is not really there." In addition, a participant shared that if they do not ask questions, then they will not know what is going on. Interestingly, a female participant who works in the M&A industry shared that she reports to two leaders, one being male and the other female. She shared that the communication from the male leader is not as great as

the communication from the female leader. When asked why, she indicated that the main reason for this is as it is a male dominated industry, and if they require information then they need to dig for it. Consequently, there are many rumours making the rounds within the organisation, as no-one really knows what is happening. This interviewee claimed that female leaders are much better with communication as they have a better eye, and are more likely to listen, and understand the needs of the employees. The profile of the preferred leader is discussed next.

6.2.6 The profile of the preferred leader

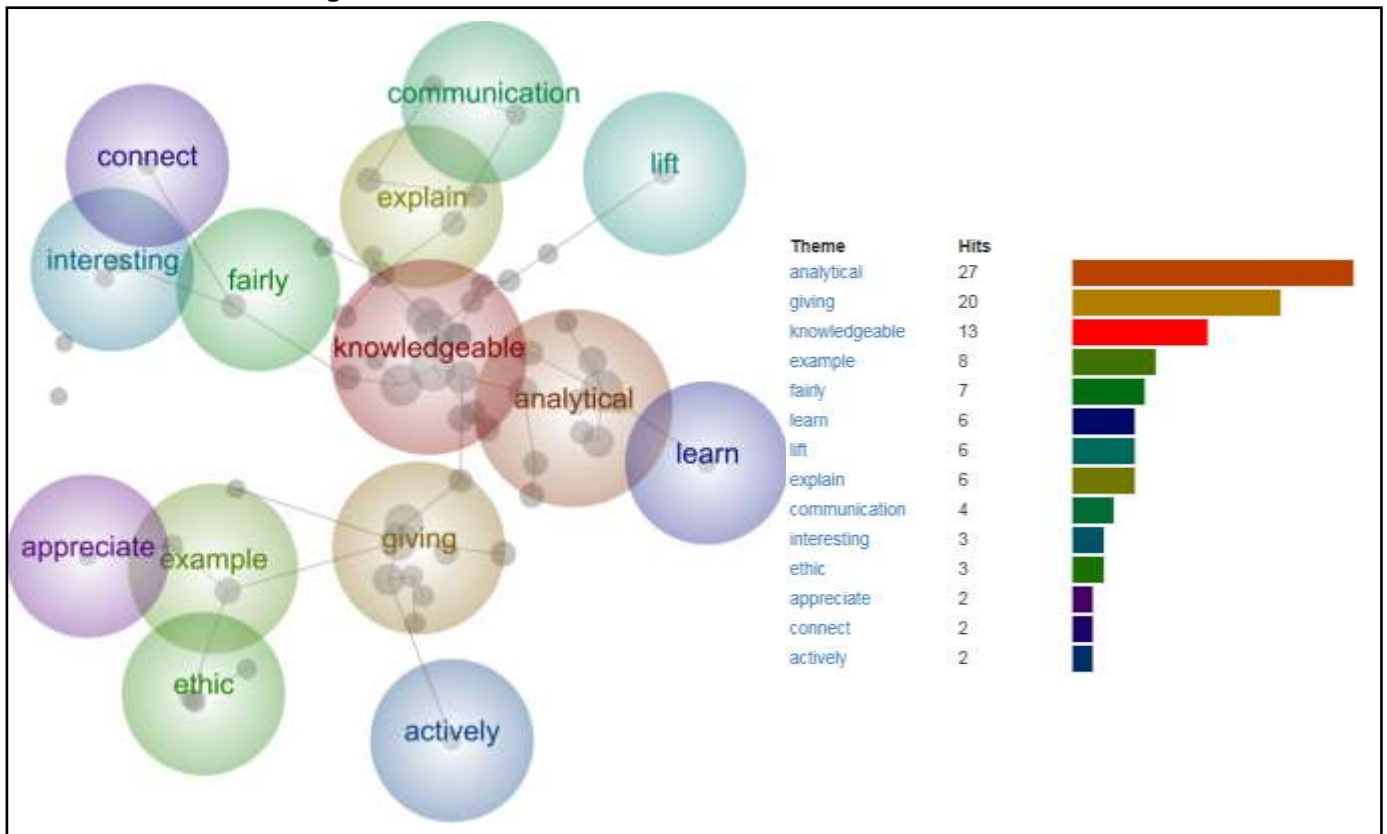
The questions that were grouped to identify the profile of the preferred leader are listed below:

- **Describe your ideal/perfect leader to work for in terms of characteristics, behaviours and leadership style?**
- **If you could choose anyone to be your leader/manager/boss in the workplace, who would it be?**

Interestingly, in the last-mentioned question, when participants named the leaders who in their eyes would be their ideal leaders, none of them referred to their current leaders who they are reporting to. All of them referred to either other leaders within their organisations, family members, colleagues, individuals whom they have a working relationship with, or well-known personalities such as Elon Musk, Richard Branson and Nelson Mandela. The reasons given for selecting these individuals, ranging from being knowledgeable in the industry, having good people skills, possessing charisma, being innovative, leading by example, or being highly intelligent.

The concept map in Figure 6.9 provides the main themes that appeared when the two questions were asked. Like the previous concept maps, the areas presented in the warmer coloured circles, are the most relevant themes as indicated by Leximancer. The main themes were, analytical with 27 hits, giving with 20 hits, knowledgeable with 13 hits, and explain with 6 hits.

Figure 6.9: Preferred characteristics of a leader



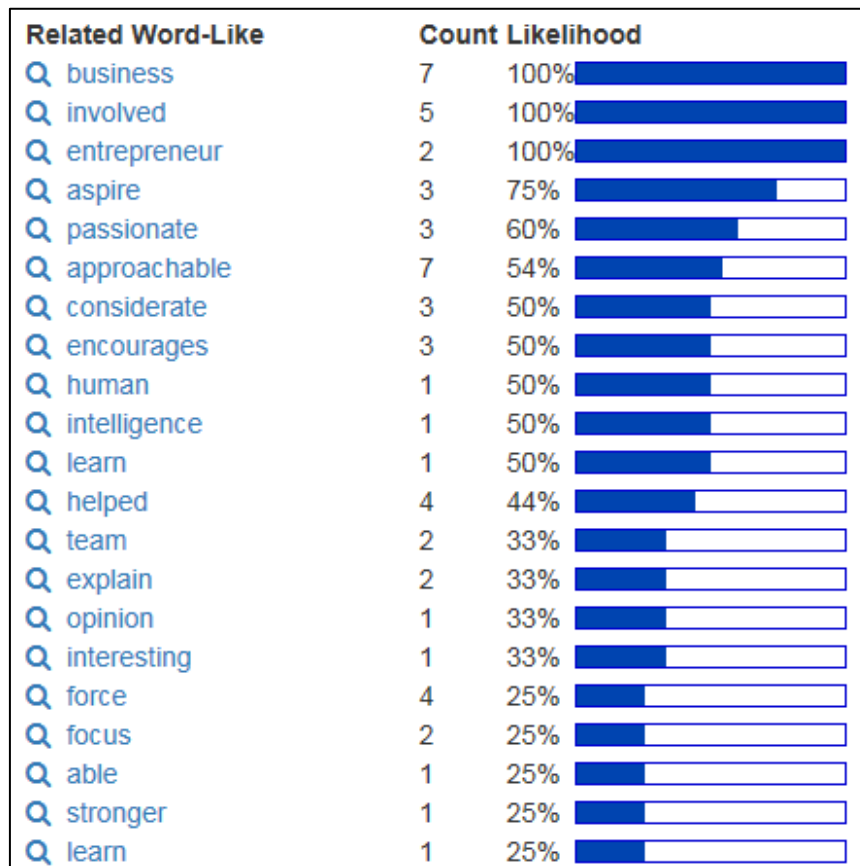
Source: Extracted from Leximancer

By way of explanation, a theme comprises of various concepts that have been grouped by Leximancer. The concepts relevant to each theme, in relation to its count and likelihood, are captured in Figures 6.10 to 6.13. From these figures, it can be seen that many of the concepts appear in more than one theme. Accordingly, the researcher will discuss the most relevant concepts to each theme as to avoid overlap. The themes, analytical, giving, knowledgeable and explain are discussed next.

- **The leadership theme, analytical**

Figure 6.10 indicates the count and likelihood of various concepts that have been grouped to form the analytical theme as indicated by Leximancer. Although, the word, analytical did not necessarily appear frequently in the findings, characteristics of being analytical did. The relevant concepts that appeared in both the manual coding and automated coding are discussed in this section. From the figure, the concepts with a 100% likelihood in relation to the theme, are business, involved and entrepreneur. These concepts are discussed.

Figure 6.10: Concepts related to the analytical theme



Source: Extracted from Leximancer

The concept, the entrepreneur, was mentioned by a participant in the communication industry who stated the following: "...a leader in my mind is an entrepreneur." The participant further explained that the ideal leader would be someone that is an entrepreneur as entrepreneurs are people who saw gaps in the market and who are actively searching for solutions to problems. Another participant who is in the marketing industry described the ideal leader to be a reflection of one of the individual's clients who own a start-up business and are very analytical about business. It could be derived that a leader in their opinion is someone who is analytical in terms of identifying business opportunities and taking calculated risks to take on opportunities. The preferred leader would also be involved in organisational matters such as developing the vision and being involved in other strategic matters. Other concepts outlined in Figure 6.10 are discussed in other themes where they are more relevant.

- **The leadership theme, giving**

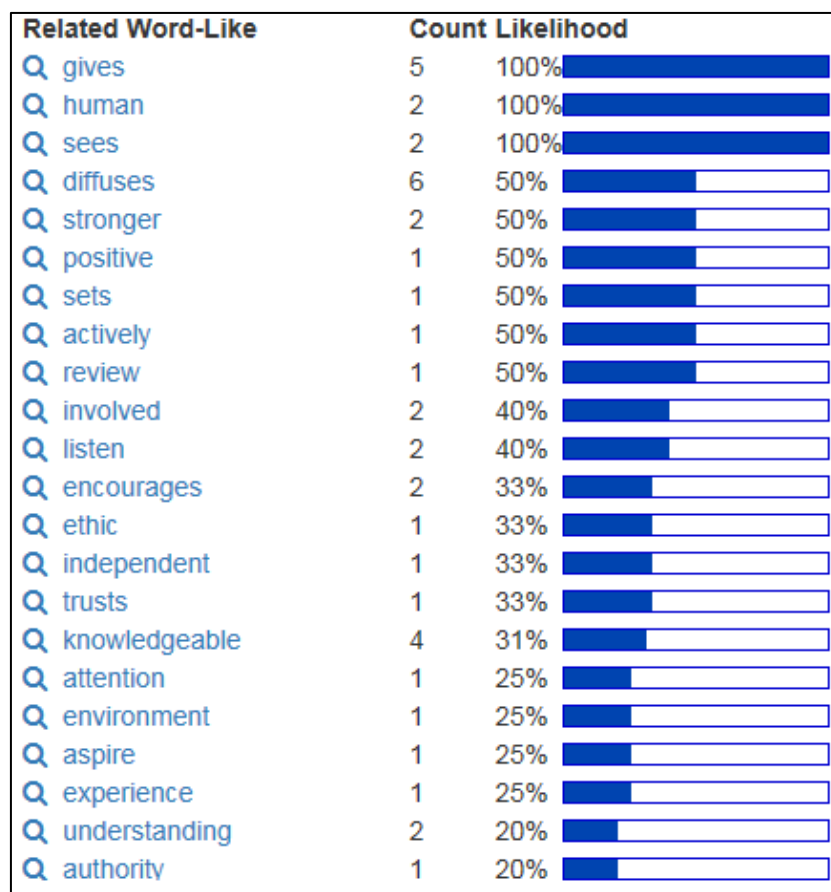
Figure 6.11 indicates the count and likelihood of concepts being related to the theme, giving, as indicated by Leximancer. The concepts with a 100% likelihood are gives, human and sees. Other relevant concepts that appeared in both the manual coding and automated coding are also discussed in this section. These concepts include involved, review, diffuses, ethic, trusts and authority.

The terms, give, gives, or giving, appeared frequently throughout the findings when interviewees described their ideal leader. The preferred leader would rather give advice or give guidance than force anyone to do tasks that the employees are not comfortable with. Participants referred to the preferred leader as someone who gives freedom to employees to make decisions and someone who empowers them to run with projects. Although there is freedom, there should, however, be a level of involvement such as by giving advice throughout projects or by reviewing projects afterwards. The preferred relationship is explained by a participant who shared: "I want someone that will allow me to run with things the way I want to do it, but guide me...". Similarly, another participant described the preferred leader as someone who is not as hands-on involved in the employees' job, however, they are approachable and available for questions or guidance if need be. Even though there should be some sort of involvement, the leaders should communicate that level of involvement to the employees to ensure that everyone knows what is expected of them. The preferred leader gives the framework of what should be achieved, explains the expectations, and allow employees to work independently to execute tasks. Although these leaders give freedom to employees, they keep their authority and enforce discipline when there is a need for it as to ensure that tasks are being performed effectively, according to expectations and agreed standards.

The preferred leader is human and, therefore, understands people and gives the necessary guidance to the team, and also gets excited about the things that excite employees. The ideal leader actively provides pointers and advice on how to handle situations differently and how to improve and grow as an employee. The preferred leader would diffuse situations when that individual sees that the employees are

experiencing difficulties, for example, when they are dealing with difficult clients. Important is that although the ideal leader empowers employees to make decisions and fulfil tasks, that person also has a good work ethic by setting the example and working just as hard or even harder than the work that the individual expects to be put in. The preferred leader is passionate, motivated and is described as an interesting person who influences the team positively and "...it's somebody you choose to follow because you want to be like them." Many of the respondents emphasised that the ideal leader would be someone that inspires them and someone that they aspire to be like. The theme, knowledgeable is discussed next.

Figure 6.11: Concepts related to the giving theme

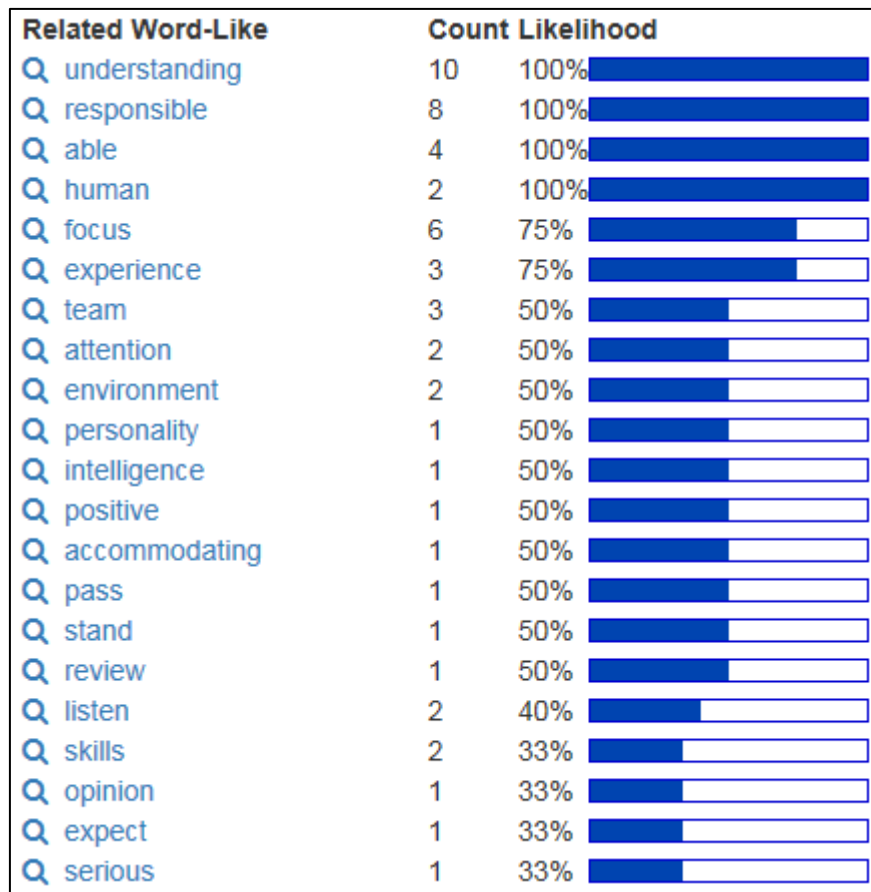


Source: Extracted from Leximancer

- **The leadership theme, knowledgeable**

Figure 6.12 indicates the count and likelihood of concepts being related to the theme, knowledgeable, as indicated by Leximancer. The theme, knowledgeable appeared very strongly when participants described their preferred leaders. The relevant concepts that appeared in both the manual coding and automated coding are discussed in this section. The concepts with a 100% likelihood were: understanding, responsible, able and human, however, the human concept was already discussed in the theme, giving. Some of the other relevant concepts that will be discussed include pass, focus, experience, team, intelligence, and accommodating.

Figure 6.12: Concepts related to the knowledgeable theme



Source: Extracted from Leximancer

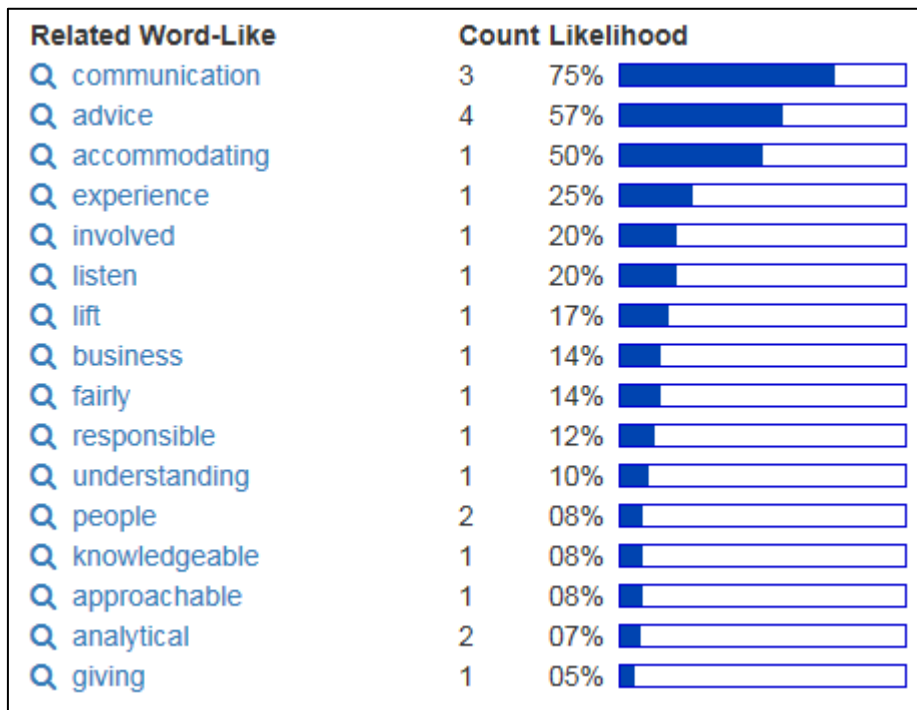
From the explanations about the preferred leader given by participants, similar to the theme, knowledge, identified in the descriptions of a leader in section 6.2.3, knowledge has also been classified into two for this section. Firstly, the preferred leader has an

understanding of the industry based on their experience in the workplace; and secondly, knowledge of people. Participants indicated that it is very important to them that the leader is knowledgeable about the industry and that these leaders pass the knowledge and experience onto the employees. A participant also indicated that although a leader should be knowledgeable, the individual should also be open and welcoming to fresh ideas of those who are less experienced. The individual should know that life is short and should not be too serious. The individual should embody the spirit of enjoying what you do. In terms of people knowledge, the preferred leader should be emotionally intelligent, people centric and know how to influence people and get the most out of them. The leader should know what the employees' capabilities are, how their days look like, what they struggle with, and help them to overcome their challenges. The preferred leader knows the areas that the employees want to focus on or areas where they want to improve themselves and help them to do so. The preferred leaders are aware of the people environment in terms of knowing what is happening on the ground and when there is a need for employees to get attention or more support. A participant indicated that they prefer it when a leader has a similar personality than what the employees have, as it makes it easier for them to understand each other and get along. Another trait of the preferred leader is to instead of being lenient, the ideal leader should be strict, but accommodating and flexible. The leader should be part of the team, however still responsible and take charge or take a stand when needed. The preferred leader wants the best for both the employees and for the organisation.

- **The leadership theme, explain**

Figure 6.13 indicates the count and likelihood of concepts being related to the theme, explain, as indicated by Leximancer. The relevant concepts that appeared in both the manual coding and automated coding are discussed in this section. These concepts include: communication, advice, approachable, fairly and listen. Other concepts listed in Figure 6.13 were discussed in other themes, such as the concepts business, accommodating, giving and involved.

Figure 6.13: Concepts related to the explain theme



Source: Extracted from Leximancer

The preferred leader according to Generation Y employees should possess various attributes that are relevant to communication. These elements include clear communication about expectations, goals and the strategy of where the organisation is heading, and how the employees fit within the strategy. Very important to participants is that employees are treated fairly and equally, for example as mentioned by a participant, all the team members should hear about new developments at the same time, regardless if the leader is friends with certain team members. Professional and open communication are both important aspects to Generation Y employees. It was mentioned by participants that they appreciate leaders who do not hold on to negative emotions. If employees have made a mistake, they will apologise and then the leader should move on and not be speaking about it again. The reverse is also true, if these employees performed well, then the leaders should recognise them and make them feel valued. Although touched on in the giving theme, the preferred leader is approachable and employees, therefore, feel comfortable to raise ideas or concerns. The leader listens and is open to suggestions. The succeeding section elaborates on the communication topics that are important to participants.

6.2.7 Preferred communication topics

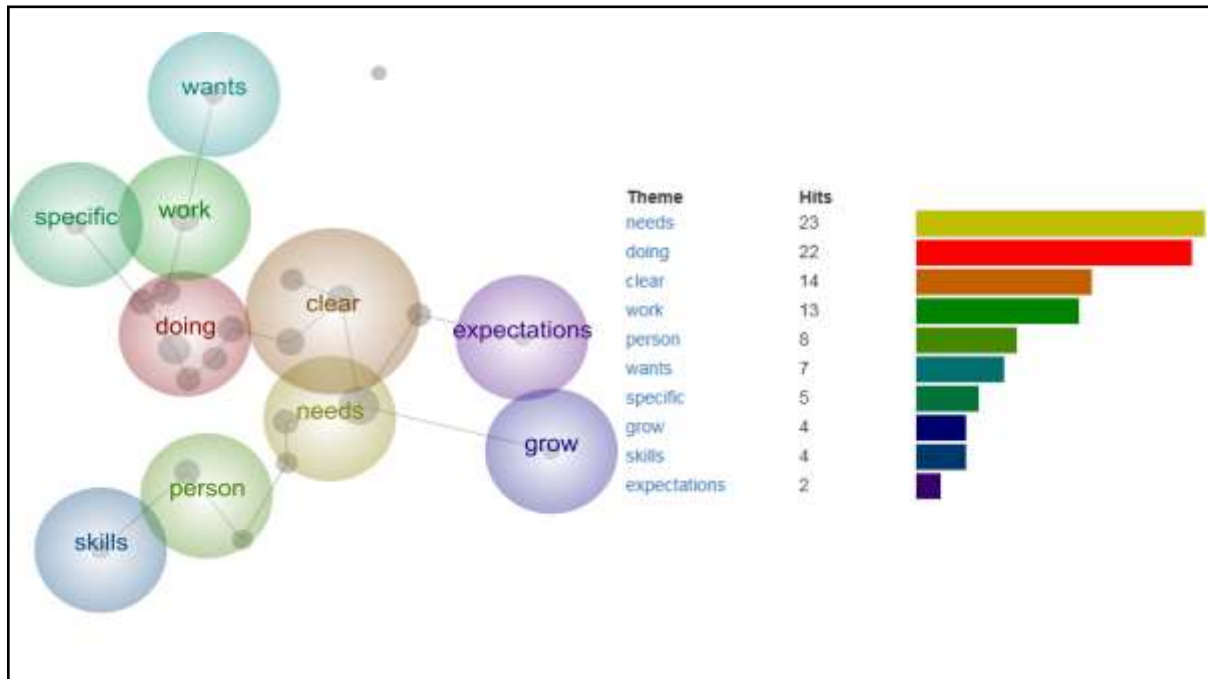
The questions that are relevant to the theme, preferred communication topics, are listed below:

- **As an employee, what topics of communication are important to you that you would like your leader/manager/boss to communicate to you about?**
- **How often would you like to hear about these topics from your leader/manager/boss?**
- **What channels should your leader/manager/boss use to communicate about these topics to you?**

Individuals who took part in the interviews were requested to share the communication topics that are important to them that they would like their leaders to communicate to them about. The concept map in Figure 6.14 illustrates the main and relevant themes, highlighted in warmer-coloured circles, namely the themes, needs with 23 hits, doing with 22 hits, and clear with 14 hits. These themes also coincided with the main themes identified in the manual coding. The theme, need, is linked to the themes personal and growth as seen in the concept map. Accordingly, the theme, need, refer to Generation Y employees' needs such as career growth opportunities as well as their need for feedback on personal performance; the theme, doing, refers to how the organisation is performing, and any changes within the organisational environment; and the theme, clear, points to having clarity in terms of expectations, roles and responsibilities. The concepts pertaining to personal development needs, namely growth and feedback on individual performance, were manually coded into two themes as they could be two separate topics of discussions between employees and leaders, and accordingly, the researcher will also discuss the two concepts separately as themes. Another theme that occurred frequently in the manual coding, was general updates or information about changes within the organisation that may impact employees and their jobs. Consequently, the theme, information about changes, has also been added as a theme for discussion. Based on the explanation in this section, the headings that will guide the discussion points include growth opportunities; feedback on personal

performance; financial performance; clear expectations, roles and responsibilities; and general updates or information about the organisation.

Figure 6.14: Preferred communication topics



Source: Extracted from Leximancer

- **Growth opportunities**

Aligned to the literature review on Generation Y in Chapter 3, most participants across all industries indicated that it is very important for them that their leaders help them to grow in their careers. Generation Y employees would like their leaders to communicate to them when there are opportunities to attend courses or training events or when there are opportunities for promotions. Informal activities such as mentorship and advice-giving from their leaders are also important in helping these employees to grow. For example, a participant indicated that mentorship would be valued to assist the individual with how to interpret sales more effectively or how to approach different clients. Different perspectives or advice from the leader on how to tackle tasks or problems would also be valuable to them. The employees would also like continuous support from their leaders such as that they follow up and find out how the training went. Important to them is that the leader helps them to track their progress in terms of where these individuals would like to be. Participants were requested to indicate the

preferred communication channel and frequency for leaders to communicate to them about growth opportunities. The majority of participants prefer face-to-face one-on-one time with their leaders to discuss growth opportunities. Some participants also had a need for email follow-ups in between face-to-face discussions. When the researcher asked these individuals how often they would like to have these discussions with their leaders, the responses varied from as and when the need arises, weekly, monthly, quarterly *et cetera*. It was found that the frequencies varied much as each individual has different needs with regards to career growth.

- **Feedback on personal performance**

The literature review also explained the need for Generation Y to receive instant and regular feedback on their performance within the workplace. Participants would like to receive feedback about how they are performing with respect to their roles and responsibilities, and whether the leaders are satisfied or unsatisfied with them. If they do not perform in line with the expectations, then they would prefer if leaders tell them, however, if they have done a good job, then the leaders should also tell them. Honest feedback is important to them as they want to improve themselves and feel like they are making a valuable contribution. All the participants who referred to feedback on personal performance as an important communication topic, prefer face-to-face communication with their leaders in this regard. Like the previous topic, the frequencies also varied, which was also as a result of the different type of industries or working environments that these participants form part of. The frequencies varied from communication ongoingly, after each project, half-yearly to once a year.

- **Financial performance**

Also, important to participants is how the organisation is performing financially. Participants indicated that they would like some clarification, not necessarily numbers, that the organisation is doing well as to know that they have job security. The interviewees also mentioned that it does not have to be lengthy documents, only an indication that the organisation is doing well or not doing well financially. It is self-evident that the two participants who are contract workers would like to know how the

organisation is performing in order for them to know what the chances are of them being permanently employed. The preferred channel for this communication topic by most participants is face-to-face engagements, while a participant, who also works on a virtual office basis, indicated that email would be sufficient, which is understandable given the working environment. Some participants indicated that there are many rumours about the financials within their company, however, no-one truly knows what is going on as this is not something that the leader communicates to them. The main reason why face-to-face interactions were selected for communication about financial performance, is that participants would like to have the opportunity to ask questions and obtain clarity on matters.

- **Clear expectations, roles and responsibilities**

When participants were requested to share communication topics that are important to them, a strong theme that appeared was clear communication in terms of expectations, roles, standards and responsibilities, both for projects and in the long run. Some participants felt very strongly about this theme and shared that if they do not understand what is expected of them, it may hinder an effective working environment. Interviewees placed emphasis on clear communication about the tasks that should be done and how the tasks should be executed, for instance, what the deadline is if there are special instructions, and clarity on how the project fits into the bigger scheme of the organisation. Similarly, the literature review on Generation Y also explained the need of Generation Y to know the 'why' behind tasks and their role in achieving the vision. Once again, most participants prefer face-to-face communication when their leaders communicate about expectations to them. Some also indicated that they like a paper trail, such as a follow-up email on what was discussed, in order to revert to it in case there is something that they do not understand or to have evidence in case the leader decides to change expectations. One individual in the education industry indicated that emails are preferred, and another individual in the IT industry, who works on a virtual office basis, prefer using Slack, a business messaging application for instant communication. An individual in the cosmetic industry indicated that for urgent communication from retailers that may impact expectations, a phone call is preferred. It could be derived that the majority prefers face-to-face

engagements, however, for certain working environments, other channels may be preferred.

- **General updates or information about changes**

Also, important to many participants was that their leader communicates to them any updates of changes that may impact them. Some of the examples provided include significant business changes, budget cuts, complaints from clients, when a team member is leaving, the influx of new technology, when new people have been appointed and *et cetera*. A participant shared the following: “If someone leaves the company, who is going to take over. If someone joins the team, who is going to train him or her, how is that process going to look like.” The participants emphasised that they would like to, not only know about the changes but also how the changes will affect them. Most of the participants prefer face-to-face interactions with their leaders for general updates or information about changes. One participant, who works in a virtual office, would prefer an email about new updates such as when the organisation is purchasing new technology. Very important, was that the leaders keep the employees updated on the topics by not only communicating about it on a once-off basis. An interviewee mentioned that if the organisation is investing in new technology, such as laptops, then the leader should keep employees informed on the progress of the process. Like the other topics, the preferred frequencies also varied based on the industry, the working environment and the type of updates or changes that may occur. Most participants indicated that the leader should communicate to them these updates, as and when there is a need for them to do so. For organisational updates, sporadic communication is preferred instead of an agreed-upon date and time.

6.3 CONCLUSION

This chapter discussed the findings obtained through conducting 20 semi-structured face-to-face interviews, to determine what the preferences are of Generation Y employees. Based on the findings, the areas that motivate most of these participants include that when they have opportunities to grow within the workplace, and when they work with a competent and hardworking team. Main challenges in the workplace raised

by interviewees include: pressure associated with time management and capacity; communication barriers such as language, culture, and education differences; not receiving clear communication about expectations; as well as challenges pertaining to complexities such as sales targets, deadlines, project/job specific difficulties and complexities with managing different people.

Generation Y employees who participated in this study shared that they think their leaders are mostly motivated by the fact that they are working themselves to the top; the fact that they have a sense of accomplishment when they have managed to get certain tasks done; and because they are very determined to make a success of their careers. Participants believe that the main challenges of their leaders are work related, such as managing multiple projects, time management, deadlines, and managing people as well as ensuring that the employees who they have delegated the tasks to are performing according to expectations.

When participants described the characteristics of their ideal and preferred leaders, the descriptions coincided with the explanations provided by them on what a leader is in comparison to a manager. Accordingly, it could be argued that these participants prefer to report to individuals that possess greater leadership qualities than managerial qualities, however, the industries of these participants also played a role in their preferences. For example, in the engineering industry, it may be required to have greater authority and enforce discipline at times to ensure safe practices; to protect both the company and the employee in the greater scheme of things.

Participants described various strengths and weaknesses of their previous and/or current leaders and explained their satisfaction levels with the current leadership communication, which also varied amongst Generation Y employees. From the findings discussed, when it comes to leadership, participants prefer a style where the leader is delegating tasks to them and when the leader is not micro-managing, however, when the need arises such as for advice or a different perspective, then it would require the leader to be more involved and hands-on. From a leadership communication point of view, the participants prefer someone who is clear and open

when communicating, however, important is that the individual should be approachable to these employees and willing to listen to their ideas or concerns.

There were also similarities in the topics that Generation Y employees want to receive communication about by their leaders. The main topics of communication preferred by participants include topics on growth opportunities; feedback on personal performance; how the organisation is performing financially; clear expectations, roles and responsibilities; and other business information/updates that may impact them and how they execute tasks.

The majority of Generation Y employees indicated that they would prefer face-to-face communication for most of the topics. There were instances where participants would prefer a quick call or an individual that works on a virtual office basis would, for certain matters, prefer emails or using the platform, Slack. Interestingly, some participants indicated that they prefer to have a paper trail of the face-to-face discussions and suggested that the leaders share the main points discussed after the face-to-face interactions with them. Preferred frequencies for the communication topics varied for different participants. However, if they require clarity in terms of expectations or if there is information that impacts them, they would like to receive the communication sooner rather than later. The findings discussed in this chapter will be used to develop the guidelines and framework in Chapter 7.

CHAPTER 7

GUIDELINES AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study was to propose guidelines and develop a conceptual framework on the preferred leadership style and leadership communication for Generation Y employees, ultimately assisting organisational leaders to keep this generation engaged and also to maximise their contribution in the workplace. The purpose of this chapter is, therefore, to utilise the findings discussed in Chapter 6 in order to develop the proposed guidelines and conceptual framework.

As discussed in Chapter 3, there is no perfect leadership model (Wright, 2009:236) and also from a post-modern point of view, there will not be a universal leadership style or leadership communication approach that would work in managing all Generation Y employees across all industries. Based on the findings, there are, however, similarities in the preferences by participants, which is utilised to propose guidelines and develop the conceptual framework. Although the guideline and conceptual framework will provide leaders with insight as to how they could lead Generation Y employees, it will be leaders' responsibilities to assess situations and select the right leadership style and leadership communication approaches correspondingly. As mentioned in Chapter 3, emotional intelligence plays a vital role in the ability of the organisational leader to select the right leadership style.

In order to assist with developing the guidelines and conceptual framework, this chapter discusses the findings on the basis of the literature review in Chapter 3 on leadership styles and leadership communication, which will translate into proposing the guidelines in section 7.4 and developing the conceptual framework in section 7.5.

7.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS IN RELATION TO LEADERSHIP STYLES

Various strengths and weaknesses of the 20 participants' previous and current leaders were discussed, as well as the traits of the preferred leader. Many of these attributes fell within various leadership styles. As a result, the preferred leader would not have one leadership style, but rather possess characteristics from a few leadership styles, depending on the circumstances and the needs. Thus, the preferred leadership style is a combination of leadership styles depending on what the circumstances require. The majority of participants described attributes of their preferred leader in correspondence to the participative, transformational, laissez-faire, servant and communicative leadership styles. Certain attributes of the autocratic leadership style were also preferred, however, not to a large extent, which means that Generation Y employees would not prefer to report to organisational leaders that are purely using an autocratic leadership style. There are, however, weaknesses associated with the aforementioned styles too, which organisational leaders should be aware of, and therefore as mentioned, these leaders should adopt the styles interchangeably depending on the circumstances.

The participative, transformational, laissez-faire, autocratic, servant and communicative leadership styles are discussed in relation to the findings. The transactional and charismatic leadership have been excluded as these styles were not predominantly preferred by participants. For discussion purposes, the researcher grouped the laissez-faire and autocratic leadership styles as participants prefer a balance between the two, and similarly, the participative and transformational leadership styles are grouped for the reason that participation is also an attribute of the transformational leadership style.

7.2.1 Participative and transformational leadership styles

Generation Y employees enjoy being part of the decision-making aspects of leaders. They appreciate when their inputs and suggestions are listened to as it makes them

feel like they are not only just a number but truly a valuable contributor to the organisation. As mentioned above, participation is also an attribute of transformational leadership and accordingly it has been grouped for discussion purposes. Other traits pertaining to transformational leadership, such as having a clear vision with goals on where they are heading, are also preferred by Generation Y employees. When individuals were asked about their preferred communication topics, the theme, clear expectations, goals and responsibilities appeared frequently. With transformational leadership, the organisational leader sets a clearly defined vision that inspires employees toward achieving the bigger picture (Hodgetts & Hegar, 2008:354), which is what is preferred by Generation Y employees. These individuals want to understand how they fit into achieving the vision as to help contribute towards reaching the goals. Good and effective communication is important to these individuals and they prefer leaders who are approachable and who engage in two-way communication in order to build strong relationships with the employees. The communication aspects preferred are elaborated on in the section that discusses the communicative leadership style.

Furthermore, transformational leaders are problem-solvers and individuals who want to improve things (Khadar, 2012:45), and as a participant explained, they prefer to walk into the leader's office with a problem and walk out with the problem solved. Generation Y employees prefer organisational leaders who are willing to listen to them and who take action to help resolve issues. If the issue cannot be solved, then the leader should explain what the next best steps will be to address the problem and continuously keep the employees updated on the progress as this is an aspect that is important to them, and this is also discussed later in this chapter. For example, these employees may require problem-solving advice from their organisational leaders on how they should address their main challenges discussed in Chapter 6, namely pressure, communication and complexity issues. Important to them is that these organisational leaders are empathetic and considerate towards them, which are also attributes of servant leadership discussed later.

In addition, transformational leaders are inspirational and according to Generation Y employees, they prefer a leader who leads by example, someone that inspires them to want to follow them. Another example shared by a participant is that they prefer a

leader who works just as hard, or even harder than the work that they expect the employees to put in. A tactic used by transformational leaders to motivate employees is to keep them challenged and help them to grow, which are key motivators of Generation Y employees as discussed in Chapter 6.

Although Generation Y employees prefer characteristics of transformational leaders, organisational leaders should be mindful that they do not neglect the smaller details in order to reach the vision. A participant indicated that it is frustrating if the leader is only focussed on the high-level aspects and forget about the detail that should happen on the ground. The following leadership style discussed is laissez-faire leadership.

7.2.2 Laissez-faire and autocratic leadership styles

A balance between being hands-off and hands-on is required by Generation Y employees. Not one of these two leadership styles on its own would be effective to lead Generation Y employees. Although these employees prefer that a leader does not micro-manage them, they still value a degree of assertiveness to ensure good performance of colleagues as some participants described their leaders as being too lenient. Depending on the industry, it may not be ideal for the leader to be too hands-off, for example, in the engineering industry where safe practices should be performed, the leader should enforce more discipline in certain aspects as to protect the employees and the organisation. However, there should be a balance as not to suppress the ideas of employees who may have valuable contributions. In other industries, such as where the leader works with a more mature and experienced team, the leader could be hands-off during projects and review the efforts afterwards.

Although employees want to be empowered and have the freedom to make their own decisions, they still want to be able to approach their leaders for guidance and support if need be. In these cases, leaders should make themselves available and become more involved. An example provided by a Generation Y employee is that if they approach organisational leaders with a problem, they want them to action it and not sit back and expect for employees to resolve it, which was also touched on in the

previous section. A discussion on the findings in relation to the servant leadership style follows.

7.2.3 Servant leadership styles

Generation Y employees also prefer certain attributes of the servant leadership style. These employees want their leaders to be empathetic towards them and take their interests at heart. When they want to move into other areas of the business or if the employees want to work on their weaknesses, then the ideal leader will provide them with the necessary support to grow professionally and personally. The preferred leader by Generation Y employees is an individual that knows employees personally as well as what their strengths and weaknesses are. These organisational would allocate tasks, not only in line with strengths but also according to the interests of team members. Feedback on personal performance is crucial to these individuals in order for them to improve and grow in their careers. These employees want to feel like they are making a valuable contribution. Servant leaders show that they care about the employees and consequently would recognise them and make them feel important.

The preferred organisational leader would also diffuse difficult situations and stand up for the team to protect them as the employees are genuinely cared for. Before assumptions are made, the leader will consult with employees to obtain a fair view of perspectives. It is important to Generation Y employees to be treated fairly and equally, which is also a trait of servant leadership. For example, all employees should be informed about new developments or updates at the same time, unless it is something that impacts a specific individual more than others. With servant leadership, the employees are also involved in the decision-making aspects of the leader, which is preferred by Generation Y employees as discussed earlier. The following section explains the findings in relation to the communicative leadership style.

7.2.4 Communicative leadership styles

The preferred organisational leader for Generation Y employees is a good communicator and someone approachable who they can speak to about anything, without feeling intimidated. The preferred organisational leader is compassionate, people-orientated and relatable. These leaders encourage two-way communication and are always willing to listen to the team's inputs, ideas, suggestions and concerns as mentioned in section 7.2.1. To avoid confusion, the leader's communication is clear when it comes to communicating the vision, expectations of employees and how they fit into the bigger scheme, which are also attributes of the transformational leadership style. These leaders truly care about the employees and their communication portrays the same message. The preferred leader for Generation Y employees would continuously update them on business information or developments that influence them. These organisational leaders would communicate to employees when they made a mistake, and once it has been addressed, the leader will move on and not speak about it again, unless employees indicate that they need guidance or support. Important is that the organisational leader passes on the knowledge to employees in order for them to grow, learn and become better employees. The communication of the preferred leaders is positive and motivational. Instead of degrading, Generation Y employees prefer someone who would motivate them. The leader should communicate frequently, however, be wary not to bombard the employees with too much communication. The preferred leadership communication aspects, communication topics and communication channels are discussed in the subsequent section.

7.3 SUMMARY IN FINDINGS RELATION TO LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION

This section explains the findings in relation to the literature review on leadership communication in Chapter 3. This section is divided into four areas, namely Synopsis FAME model; leadership communication styles; leadership communication dimensions; leadership communication topics; and leadership communication

channels and frequencies. The first section, Synopsis FAME model, describe the preferred leadership communication in relation to the literature review on the model. In the second and third section, leadership communication styles and leadership communication dimensions, refer to the preferences of Generation Y employees in comparison to the styles and dimensions discussed in the literature review. The fourth and fifth sections, leadership communication topics, channels and frequencies, summarise the findings obtained in Chapter 6.

7.3.1 Synopsis FAME model

As mentioned in the previous section, Generation Y employees prefer leaders who are good and effective communicators. The Synopsis FAME model discussed in Chapter 3, proposes four areas of effective leadership communication. These areas are: focus, articulate, model and engage. This section compares these four areas in relation to the preferences of Generation Y employees. An overview of the Synopsis FAME model described in the literature review is re-stated below to create the context of the discussion.

The first area, focus, refers to leaders assessing the internal and external environment for issues and accordingly, identify the priority areas on how the employees could contribute towards achieving is (Wright, 2009:245). The second area, articulate, links to the previous area discussed and refers to conveying the focus into linguistics to ensure that the bigger picture is memorable and understandable to the employees (Wright, 2009:246; Walters & Norton, 2008:17). It is all about speaking the language of the followers and turning the focus into a workable elevator pitch that evokes excitement (Wright, 2009:246). In line with these two areas, Generation Y employees would like their leaders to communicate the vision of the organisation to them and how they fit into the bigger scheme. If the employees understand the vision and what is expected of them, they will be able to help achieve it. It comes down to clear communication and communicating in easily understandable terms to ensure that employees understand what is expected of them. Clear communication on expectations was identified as a key topic by Generation Y employees.

The third area, model, refers to the aspect where leaders practise what they preach and live the values that they communicate about. It is about always walking the talk and leading by example (Wright, 2009:246; Walters & Norton, 2008:17). It also includes what the leaders portray in their informal communication (Wright, 2009:246). Generation Y employees prefer to follow a leader who leads by example and someone who is inspiring to them who they want to follow. These employees expect the leaders to work as hard or even harder than the work that they expect to be put in.

The fourth area, engage, refers to leaders engaging with followers by listening to them, facilitating communication, asking effective questions and addressing any questions that the employees may have. The process of engaging requires leaders to be passionate, approachable, considerate and to be caring about the employees (Wright, 2009:245), which are all characteristics of the preferred leader as indicated by Generation Y employees. Based on the discussion, it could be argued that the Synopsis FAME model provides a good guideline in terms of the leadership communication preferred by Generation Y employees. It is important to note that the model proposes the ideal situation, however, for some instances such as when it is required for the leader to be stricter, the engage element may not be applicable. The succeeding section explains the leadership communication styles according to the research findings.

7.3.2 Leadership communication styles

In Chapter 3, situational and interpersonal communication styles were discussed. Table 7.1 lists these styles. The leadership communication styles are discussed in line with the findings of what Generation Y employees prefer.

Table 7.1: Communication styles

Situational communication styles (Achua & Lussier, 2013:316-317)	Interpersonal communication styles (Walker, 2014:252)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autocratic communication style • Consultative communication style • Participative communication style • Empowerment communication style 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoidance communication style • Aggressiveness communication style • Assertiveness communication style

For the reason that the preferred leadership style would comprise of a combination of the autocratic, participative, transformational, laissez-faire, servant and communicative leadership, various communication styles may follow to accompany these leadership styles. As a leader's style and leadership communication are closely aligned, a combination of communication styles would also be preferred depending on the situation. The first column of Table 7.1 lists situational communication styles and the second column lists interpersonal communication styles.

The situational communication styles listed, include the autocratic, consultative, participative and empowerment communication styles (Achua & Lussier, 2013:316-317). For the situational communication styles, when a situation requires the leader to have an autocratic leadership style, such as when safety procedures should be adhered to or when there is a need for the leader to be stricter, then the leader would also adopt an autocratic communication style where the leader is controlling and telling employees what to do without allowing them to give input. With transformational leadership, the leader communicates the vision and welcome employees' inputs. Similarly, the consultative communication style would follow as the leader communicates the expectations and would allow employees to give their inputs. With the participative leadership style, the leader welcomes the entire team's inputs, feedback and suggestions, as a result, the participative communication style would be adopted as both parties, the leader and the employee, play a role in the decision-making. With laissez-faire leadership, the leader empowers the employees to make decisions by being hands-off, and accordingly, the leader would adopt the empowerment communication style where the leader gives all the power to the employees and provide minimal guidance. With the servant and communicative leadership styles, a combination of the participative, empowerment and consultative styles would be utilised.

The interpersonal leadership styles listed, include the avoidance, aggressiveness and assertiveness communication styles (Walker, 2014:252). Based on the preferences of Generation Y employees, only the assertiveness communication style would be effective. When leaders use the assertive leadership style, they simply express what is expected of the employee, which is what is preferred by Generation Y. An avoidance

or aggressive approach will not get the most out of Generation Y employees. Preferred leadership communication dimensions are discussed next.

7.3.3 Leadership communication dimensions

The preferred leadership communication findings in Chapter 6 is discussed on the basis of the PRESENT dimensions explained in Chapter 3, namely preciseness, reflectiveness, expressiveness, supportiveness, emotionality, niceness and threateningness (De Vries *et al.*, 2009:195). Referring to the preciseness element, Generation Y employees prefer clear and effective communication in order for them to understand what is expected of them and what is happening within the organisation. It is also preferred that the leaders have a balance between too little communication and bombarding them with communication. It is about communicating what these employees would like to hear and what is important for them to know in order to do their jobs. In agreement to the reflectiveness element, Generation Y employees prefer leaders who are engaging and fair in all communication activities. Expressiveness is important to these employees as they would like their leaders to be honest and open when expressing their messages such as when they are satisfied or unsatisfied with the employees' performance. Also important is that the organisational leader projects motivational and positive communication when there is a need for it. In terms of supportiveness, Generation Y employees would like their leaders to be considerate, empathetic and caring towards them. With regards to the emotionality element, emotional intelligence is important to these employees. They do not like it when their leaders are emotionally erratic or when they are lingering on emotions. They prefer when their leaders are intelligent about their emotions. The preferred leader would know what to say and to do to get the most out of the employees. Niceness is also important to them. These employees would like a friendly and approachable leader who would listen to them. Important is that this person should be a relatable individual. The final element, threateningness is naturally not an aspect that Generation Y employees would prefer their leaders to possess. These employees would like to report to someone who does not intimidate them or lead by fear. The preferred leadership communication topics are summarised below.

7.3.4 Leadership communication topics

The section below lists the preferred leadership communication topics by Generation Y as discussed in Chapter 6:

- Firstly, communication to address their personal development needs, such as training and mentorship in order for them to grow and become better employees in the workplace;
- Secondly, communication about their personal performance in order for them to know whether the leaders are satisfied with them and if not, so they could adjust and improve;
- Thirdly, communication about the financial performance of the organisation in order for them to plan and know that they have job security; and
- Finally, general updates or information about organisational changes that may impact their jobs.

7.3.5 Leadership communication channels and frequencies

As discussed in Chapter 6, the preferred communication channel, by most Generation Y employees, for the aforementioned topics, is face-to-face interactions with their organisational leaders. Those employees who work in fast-paced or virtual office spaces, may at times for convenience purposes, prefer a call, email or to use the platform Slack, however, generally preferred is face-to-face engagements. Some Generation Y employees do prefer that an email follows after the face-to-face discussions as to summarise the matters that were discussed and to have a paper trail. Frequencies of communication for the topics varied for different organisations, industries and individual needs and accordingly, specific time frames cannot be suggested by the researcher. However, for communication about expectations and organisational changes or updates that may impact these employees, the majority of Generation Y employees prefer instant communication as it impacts their jobs and tasks immediately. Based on the discussions in sections 7.2 and 7.3, guidelines are proposed to organisational leaders who are tasked to lead Generation Y employees.

7.4 GUIDELINES TO LEADERS TASKED TO LEAD GENERATION Y EMPLOYEES

The researcher compiled eight guidelines to assist organisational leaders with leading Generation Y employees. The sections 7.2 and 7.3 informed the guidelines. Guideline one is listed next.

Guideline one:

Organisational leaders of Generation Y employees should assess circumstances in order to determine what the ideal leadership style and leadership communication should be for the different scenarios.

There will not be a leadership style that will work for all Generation Y employees or in all situations. The leader should select the ideal leadership style based on the type of working environment and the different situations. A combination of styles is preferred by Generation Y employees. Transformational leadership would be ideal to create the expectations, however, to ensure that employees adhere to safety procedures in the engineering industry, it may require the leader to enforce more discipline. Generally, Generation Y employees prefer that their leaders are hands-off and do not micro-manage, nonetheless, when there is a need for the leader to provide guidance and support, it may require becoming more hands-on and involved. When decisions are being made, Generation Y employees would like to be involved, yet, there may be instances where decisions should be made without involving employees. The preferred leader would have a balance between the different leadership styles depending on the circumstances.

Guideline two:

Organisational leaders should have clear, open and frequent communication with Generation Y employees at all times.

Generation Y employees do not want to be unsure about what is expected of them. Similarly, they do not want to be confused with regards to organisational matters or

changes. Although communication about organisational changes should be clear and open, it is important the organisational leaders also communicate how the changes would impact the employees. While Generation Y employees prefer frequent communication to ensure that they stay up to date with new development or information that may impact their jobs, they do not want to be bombarded with too much communication. The leader should find a balance as to communicate effectively and sufficiently to these employees.

Guideline three:

Organisational leaders of Generation Y employees should be approachable and willing to listen to them.

Generation Y employees want to be heard. Organisational leaders should be open to the ideas, suggestions and to listen to the concerns of the employees. Leaders should be approachable and relatable people who the employees can speak to about anything. Important to this generation is that the organisational leader not only listens, however, still take action to address their concerns or incorporate their ideas. If action cannot be taken, leaders should explain to the employees why action cannot be taken. Most important is that the organisational leader is open and honest if action cannot be taken.

Guideline four:

Organisational leaders of Generation Y employees should lead by example at all times.

Generation Y employees would like to work for organisational leaders who lead by example, walk the talk and who they can look up to. These leaders should be individuals who the employees choose to follow. Important is that the organisational leaders work just as hard or even harder as the work that they expect the employees to put in. Rather than telling employees what to do, show them on what should be done.

Guideline five:

Organisational leaders should explain to Generation Y employees the 'why' behind tasks.

In agreement with the literature review in Chapter 4, Generation Y employees want to feel that they are making a meaningful contribution and accordingly want to know the 'why' behind tasks. Organisational leaders should explain to the employees how their roles fit into the bigger scheme of things. Not only will this motivate them, it will also provide them with an understanding of how they could contribute towards reaching the vision.

Guideline six:

Organisational leaders should communicate to Generation Y employees the things that they would like to know and the things that they should know in order for them to execute their jobs and stay motivated.

The communication topics that are important to Generation Y employees that they would like to know about, include: communication about career growth; feedback on individual performance; communication about the organisation's financial performance; clear communication on expectations, roles and responsibilities; and finally, general updates or information about changes that may impact them. Organisational leaders should communicate to them about these topics and other relevant topics that the leader deem to be important for Generation Y employees to know about.

Guideline seven:

Organisational leaders of Generation Y employees should involve them to participate in decision-making processes where possible.

Generation Y employees value it when their organisational leaders involve them in decision-making processes. Important is that the leaders do not assume what these employees want, and to rather ask them and engage with them. It will make the

employees feel valued and that they are more than just a number. For example, organisational leaders could ask these employees what they think of a new Human Resources policy as explained by a participant.

Guideline eight:

When needed, organisational leaders should provide advice, guidance and mentorship to Generation Y employees.

Growth is a key motivator to Generation Y employees as discussed in Chapter 6. These employees value it when organisational leaders pass on their knowledge and experience to them. Advice, guidance and mentorship from organisational leaders are aspects that Generation Y employees appreciate as it helps to grow and become better in their careers. It does not necessarily have to be a formal engagement. It could be providing a different perspective on tasks. A conceptual framework of preferred leadership styles and leadership communication for Generation Y are provided in the next section.

7.5 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF PREFERRED LEADERSHIP STYLES AND LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION

Based on the discussion in this chapter, a conceptual framework has been developed to assist with addressing the research question, which is: What are the preferred leadership style and leadership communication for Generation Y employees? The summary of findings in section 7.2 and 7.3, together with the guidelines in section 7.4, informed the conceptual framework. Although the conceptual framework encapsulated in Table 7.2 provides a good foundation for organisational leaders on how to lead according to the preferences of Generation Y employees, the researcher proposes that organisational leaders follow The Integrative Leadership Theory approach. This entails that leaders consider assessing or interpreting each situation to determine what the most effective leadership style and leadership communication approaches would be to best lead this generational cohort in the workplace.

Table 7.2: Conceptual framework on leading Generation Y employees

GRAND RESEARCH QUESTION	What are the preferred leadership style and leadership communication for Generation Y employees?
LEADERSHIP THEORY	The Integrative Leadership Theory guides the approach to this conceptual framework, which is that leaders should interpret the various circumstances and select the ideal leadership style and leadership communication on that account.
LEADERSHIP STYLES	<p>The favourable leadership style to Generation Y employees is a combination of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A balance between the autocratic and laissez-faire leadership styles - Mostly hands-off, however, sharing clear expectations to avoid being perceived as lenient. • Participative leadership style - Involving employees in decision-making processes. • Transformational leadership style - Setting clear expectations and inspiring employees toward reaching goals by leading by example. • Servant leadership – Truly caring about the well-being and needs of the employees. • Communicative leadership – Good, effective and clear communication to employees.
LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION MODEL	<p>According to the Synopsis FAME model:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The leader creates the focus for employees. • The leader articulates the focus through clear, effective and understandable communication. • The leader lead by example by modelling the focus that was outlined. • The leader engages with employees by being passionate, approachable and by listening and caring about Generation Y employees.
LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION STYLES	<p>Situational communication styles (Achua & Lussier, 2013:316-317):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The autocratic communication style when there is a need for the organisational leader to be stricter. • The consultative communication style when the leader communicates expectations and require feedback and inputs from Generation Y employees. • The participative communication style when problems become a shared problem between the organisational leader and Generation Y employees. • The empowerment communication style when the leader gives power and freedom to Generation Y employees to make decisions. <p>Interpersonal communication style (Walker, 2014:252): Assertiveness communication style where the leader provides clear expectations to Generation Y employees.</p>
LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION DIMENSIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear and effective communication. • Frequent communication without bombarding Generation Y employees. • Communicating what Generation Y employees want to hear and what is important for them to know. • Communication should be engaging and fair. • Open and honest communication is key. • Positive and motivational communication when there is a need for it. • Communication should be considerate, empathic and caring. • Emotional intelligence is key in knowing what should be communicated and how it should be communicated. • The organisational leader should be friendly, approachable and willing to listen to Generation Y employees. • The organisational leader's communication should not intimidate Generation Y employees.
PREFERRED COMMUNICATION TOPICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth opportunities • Feedback on personal performance • Financial performance • Clear expectations, roles and responsibilities • General updates or information about changes

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CHANNELS AND
FREQUENCIES**

Face-to-face engagements with email summaries of the points discussed. Frequencies may vary for different industries, working environments and individual needs. The organisational leader, in consultation with employees, should determine what the ideal frequencies would be.

7.6 CONCLUSION

The aim of this chapter was to provide guidelines and a conceptual framework on the preferred leadership style and leadership communication for Generation Y employees. From a post-modern world view, there exists no universal truth and as a result, leaders should use these as a guide to lead these employees. The preferences of Generation Y employees informed the development of the guidelines and conceptual framework, however, with industry and people knowledge, organisational leaders should assess each scenario and adopt the most effective style and communication approaches that would be most effective at the time. However, if organisational leaders adopt the preferred leadership styles and leadership communication approaches, it would assist with keeping Generation Y employees motivated. The last and final chapter comprises of concluding remarks and recommendations.

CHAPTER 8

**CONCLUSIONS, CONCLUDING REMARKS AND
RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE IDEAL EMPLOYER TO
LEAD GENERATION Y IN THE WORKPLACE**

8.1 INTRODUCTION

Reflecting on Chapters 1 to 7, it is evident that Generation Y brings unique characteristics to the workplace, and that leaders should adapt to unlock the potential of the employees, ultimately keeping them motivated and engaged. A combination of leadership styles could be utilised, and a variety of communication approaches could be adopted to lead Generation Y employees, nevertheless, the focus of the study at hand is to propose guidelines and a conceptual framework that leaders could follow in order to lead them in terms of Generation Y's leadership styles and leadership communication preferences. This chapter, therefore, serves as the conclusion to this study and comprises of the following sections: conclusion of findings related to research objectives; the contribution of the study; concluding remarks; recommendations for future research; and finally, limitations of the study.

**8.2 CONCLUSION OF FINDINGS RELATED TO RESEARCH
OBJECTIVES**

The overarching research question of this study was aimed at identifying the preferred leadership style and leadership communication for Generation Y employees. Table 8.1 encapsulates the research objectives and the respective chapters that addressed each of the research objectives.

Table 8.1: Research objectives versus chapters

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES	CHAPTERS
To provide a literature review on the general leadership styles, leadership communication approaches and leadership challenges within the workplace.	Chapter 3
To provide a literature review on Generation Y's unique characteristics and values that they bring to the workplace.	Chapter 4
To design a semi-structured interview guideline to identify leadership style and communication preferences of Generation Y employees.	Chapter 5
To provide guidelines and develop a conceptual framework on how business leaders should lead and communicate with Generation Y employees as to maximise their potential within the workplace.	Chapter 7

The intent of the first research objective was to investigate the leadership phenomenon and provide a literature review on the general leadership styles, leadership communication approaches and leadership challenges within the workplace. The chapter commenced by providing an explanation of the differences between leadership and management, followed by a discussion on the various leadership theories that have been developed over the years, namely The Trait Theory, The Behavioural Leadership Theory, The Contingency Theory, and The Integrative Theory. The subsequent section examined the various leadership styles in terms of strengths and weaknesses. These styles encompassed the autocratic, transactional, participative, transformational, charismatic, laissez-faire leadership, servant leadership and the communicative leadership styles. Being an integral part of leadership, the concept leadership communication was explored. The Synopsis FAME model was also investigated to determine what would make leaders effective in terms of their communication. After the model was introduced, leadership communication styles were delved into and the challenges that may hinder effective communication of leaders were pinpointed. The challenges explained include hurdles pertaining to technology, personality, the communicator's competence and culture differences.

The second research objective was aimed at exploring the generational cohort, Generation Y, by providing a literature review on their unique characteristics and values that they bring to the workplace. The chapter started off by discussing the generations who are found within a multi-generational workforce, namely the Traditionalists, the Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y. This section also

introduced the newest generational cohort, Generation Z, who is preparing for and making their way to the workplace. Characteristics of each generation were identified. As the target population of this study at hand is Generation Y, their profile was discussed in line with the misperceptions about them. Their profile elaborated on their technology savviness, the importance of having a work-life balance, the influence of relationships and parents on them, their ability to work in diverse teams, their social consciousness, their desire to have a meaningful work and growth opportunities, and their need to have instant feedback on their performance.

The purpose of the third research objective was to design a semi-structured interview guide to identify the leadership style and communication preferences of Generation Y employees. The interview guide was developed by the researcher based on the literature review, and with a focus on what the research objectives wanted to achieve. The interview guide is explained in the research methodology chapter of this study, Chapter 5. The interview guide comprised of two main areas, namely elements to identify leadership style preferences, and areas to delve into preferred leadership communication approaches. To provide the context for the interviews, the researcher added introductory questions requesting that participants take the interviewer through their work day, as well as their leaders' work days, which provided the context of the interviews to the interviewees before the theme-related questions were asked.

The third research objective supported the fourth one, which was to develop guidelines and a conceptual framework on how organisational leaders should lead and communicate with Generation Y employees as to maximise their potential within the workplace. The researcher conducted 20 face-to-face semi-structured interviews with Generation Y employees (excluding the two participants from the pilot test) and made use of manually and automated coding to identify the main themes and develop the guidelines and conceptual framework in Chapter 7. The themes of the guidelines and conceptual framework are summarised below.

The guidelines provide a list of eight areas, that, in conjunction with the conceptual framework, will assist leaders with leading Generation Y employees. The guidelines

refer to leaders adapting their styles to different situations; open, clear and frequent communication; being approachable and willing to listen; leading by example; explaining the 'why' to the employees; communicating important things that they would like to know, but also what is important for them to know; involving them in decision-making; and finally providing advice, guidance and mentorship.

The conceptual framework proposes a selection of leadership styles that the leader could choose from depending on what the circumstances require. The preferred leadership style would be a balance between the preferred styles, namely autocratic, participation, transformational, laissez-faire, servant and the communicative leadership style. The conceptual framework also suggests the accompanying communication styles for the leadership styles, such as for different situations, a balance between the autocratic, consultative, participative and empowerment communication styles may be ideal. For general interpersonal communication, the assertiveness communication style should be adopted. The Synopsis FAME model serves as the ideal leadership communication process to be followed by organisational leaders and four areas that form part of it include: focus, articulate, model and engage. Preferred leadership communication dimensions, communication topics, channels and frequencies are also summarised in the conceptual framework. The preferred topics include communication about growth opportunities; feedback on individual performance; updates on the organisation's financial performance; clear expectations, roles and responsibilities; and general updates or information about changes that may impact the employees. For these topics, the employees prefer mostly face-to-face engagements with the leader. Also preferred, is an email afterwards with the main topics discussed. The frequencies of receiving the communication may vary, however for expectations or updates on organisational matters, these employees would like to know about it sooner rather than later. The succeeding section encapsulates the contribution of the study.

8.3 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

This study contributes toward both the Business Management and Strategic Communication Management academic fields. The aim of the study was two-fold. Firstly, to propose practical guidelines on how organisational leaders should lead Generation Y employees. Secondly, to develop a conceptual framework on the preferred leadership styles and leadership communication for Generation Y employees. According to the knowledge of the researcher, there does not yet exist a conceptual framework on this subject of interest. Due to many leaders, from older generations, being tasked to lead the newest generation in the workplace, a need existed on the best ways to lead Generation Y employees as to keep them motivated and maximise their contributions in the workplace. The proposed guidelines and conceptual framework were aimed to address this need. The subsequent section provides recommendations for future research.

8.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

There are two main areas listed below to be considered for future research:

- Firstly, with Generation Z making their way to the workplace, it would be interesting to compare the preferred leadership style and leadership communication of Generation Y employees with those of Generation Z employees once they have entered the workplace.
- Secondly, the proposed guidelines and conceptual framework could be tested in different industries and sizes of organisations to further refine it according to practicalities.

8.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The limitations of this study include the following:

- Due to the snowballing sampling method utilised, participants from Gauteng, the Western Cape and Mpumalanga, were included and Generation Y employees in other regions within South Africa did not form part of this study.
- Generation Y employees from various industries participated in this study, however, some industries only had one participant, which meant that the researcher was not able to identify industry-specific trends.
- Each Generation Y employee who participated had unique preferences when it came to preferred leadership communication frequencies of their preferred topics. Consequently, the researcher was not able to identify an agreed-upon timing of communication to be received by all participants.

8.6 CONCLUDING REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE IDEAL EMPLOYER TO LEAD GENERATION Y IN THE WORKPLACE

From a post-modern world view which this study is approached from, the researcher agrees with the Integrative Leadership Theory that combines the beliefs of The Trait Theory, The Behavioural Theory and The Contingency Theory, and suggests that leaders should select the most appropriate styles and communication approaches based on the interpretation of the various circumstances. Although the guidelines and the conceptual framework developed in Chapter 7 propose a structure of preferred behaviour and characteristics that could be used in different situations, it remains the responsibility of organisational leaders to select the most effective ones to best lead Generation Y employees. Based on the needs and preferences of these employees, an integrative leadership style is required, which includes various elements from the autocratic, participative, transformational, laissez-faire, servant and the communication leadership style.

To conclude this study and summarise the findings, a profile of the preferred organisational leader is discussed. The preferred leader should create clear expectations on the vision that should be achieved, and the leader should explain to the employees how they could contribute to achieving it. Once the expectations, roles and responsibilities have been communicated, the leader should empower and give employees the freedom to make decisions and execute tasks. Although employees have freedom, the leader should not tolerate poor performance and the leader, therefore, should be assertive when expectations are set to ensure that everyone knows what is required of them and as a result, avoid that employees take short-cuts. Important to these Generation Y employees is that they know exactly where they stand with the leader. Emotional intelligence is key in leading them, and these employees would like their leaders to be fair and to be treating everyone equally.

Should the employees get stuck with a task and require support and guidance, the leader should be approachable and should get more involved in the project to help the employees to become better and to grow. If the employees have suggestions, inputs or concerns to raise, the organisational leader should be willing to listen. The leader truly cares about the employees and their needs and shows it to them. During, and after projects have been executed, organisational leaders should provide feedback to the employees on their performance. For work that has been done very well, the leader should acknowledge and recognise employees. Similarly, for those areas that Generation Y employees should work on, the leader should inform them and help work on a plan together with them on how to address those areas. When there are times when employees could be part of decision-making, leaders should invite them as it makes them feel valued and that they are not only a number. The preferred organisational leader would engage in face-to-face communication to speak to employees, and would share an email afterwards with the main points discussed to ensure that there is a paper trail. Organisational leaders should ensure that the topics of interest are included in the communication activities to these employees, namely: growth opportunities; personal performance; financial performance; expectations, roles and responsibilities; and any updates that may impact them.

8.7 FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS ON LEADING GENERATION Y EMPLOYEES

Certain findings were obtained, however not necessarily relevant to the research question, which according to the researcher is important to mention. A list is provided below:

- A key motivator for Generation Y employees is being able to work with competent colleagues. This emphasises the importance that organisational leaders should recruit the right team members, with similar work ethic, and who will get along and work well with the team.
- Industry knowledge, although it is not necessarily relevant to a particular leadership style, it is important to Generation Y employees that their organisational leaders are knowledgeable about the industry. For the reason that these employees value opportunities for growth, they appreciate when their organisational leaders pass on their knowledge and experience to them.
- Consistency in terms of emotions is important to Generation Y employees. Important is that they are not emotionally erratic as this causes anxiety in employees. These leaders should treat everyone equally regardless if they get along with some people better than with others. If emotional intelligence is not a leader's strength, then they should work on it as to build better relationships with Generation Y employees.
- Many of the Generation Y employees were unsure as to what their organisational leaders are doing on a day-to-day basis. Participants raised that they are assuming that their leaders are attending meetings often. Based on these findings, it is highly recommended by the researcher that the organisational leaders provide a visionary map on what their tasks and responsibilities are, in order for these employees to understand their leaders' challenges, and to know how to assist them accordingly.

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