

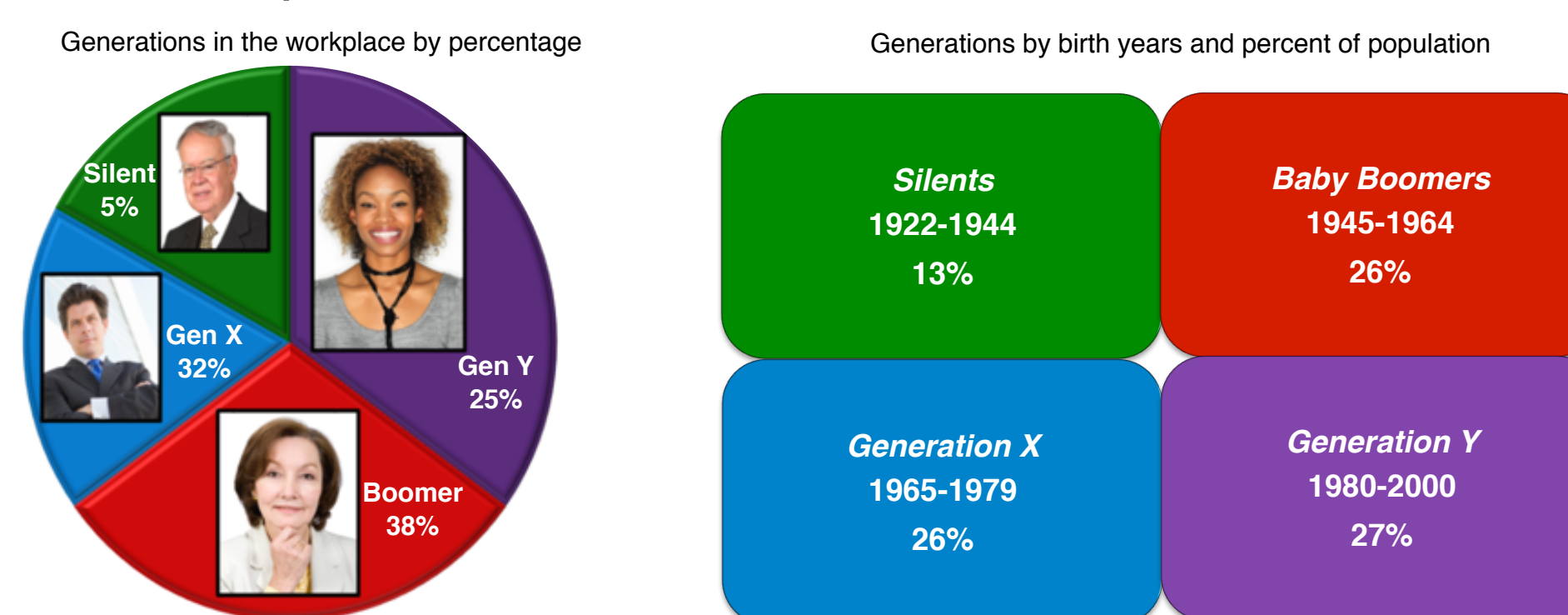
Generation Y and Leadership: How Will Leadership Be Defined by This Generation?

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Human Dimensions of Organizations, The University of Texas at Austin

Introduction

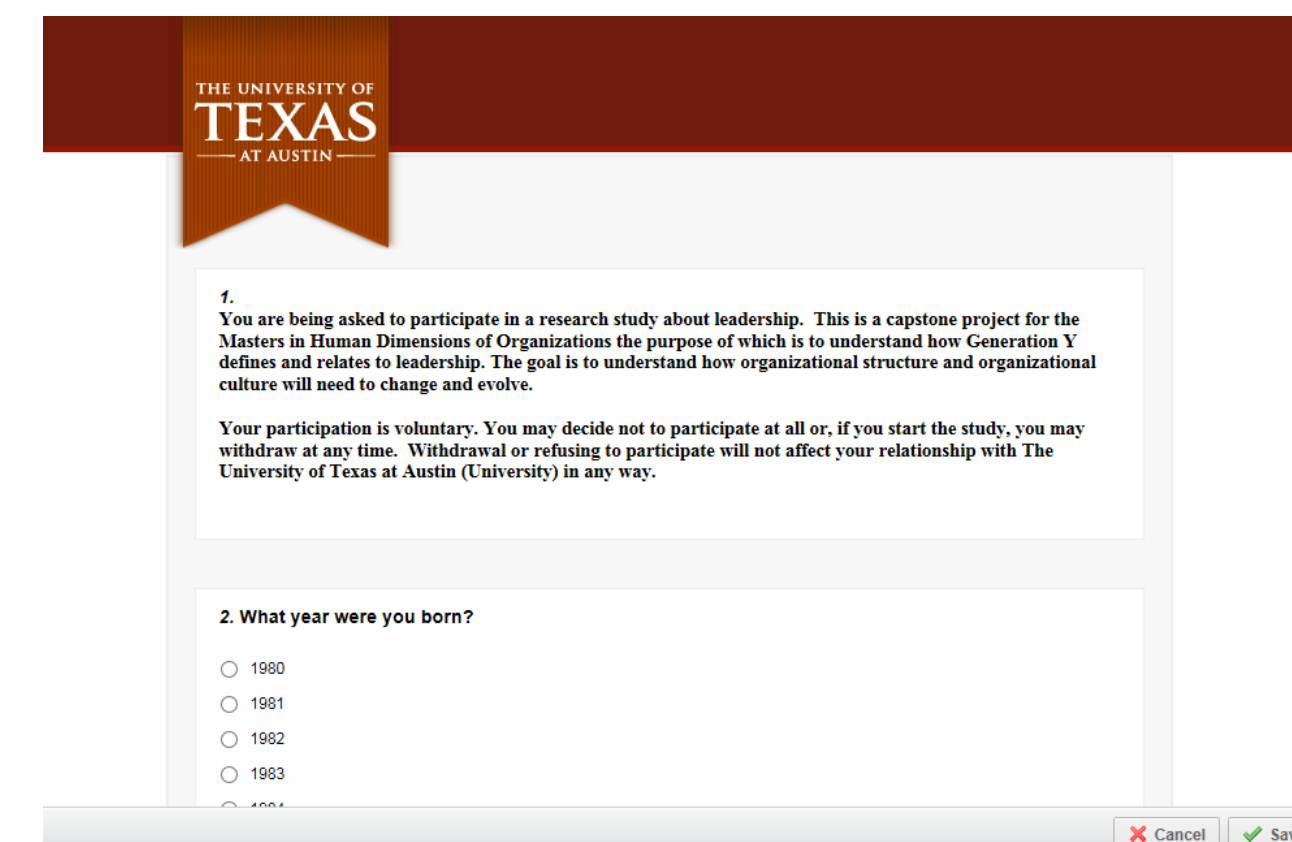
This is the first time four generations have interacted in the workplace.



This project explores how The University of Texas at Austin should change its leadership model in order to attract and retain Gen Y leaders.

Methods Qualitative study of views of Gen Y toward leadership/being leaders. Survey questions included:

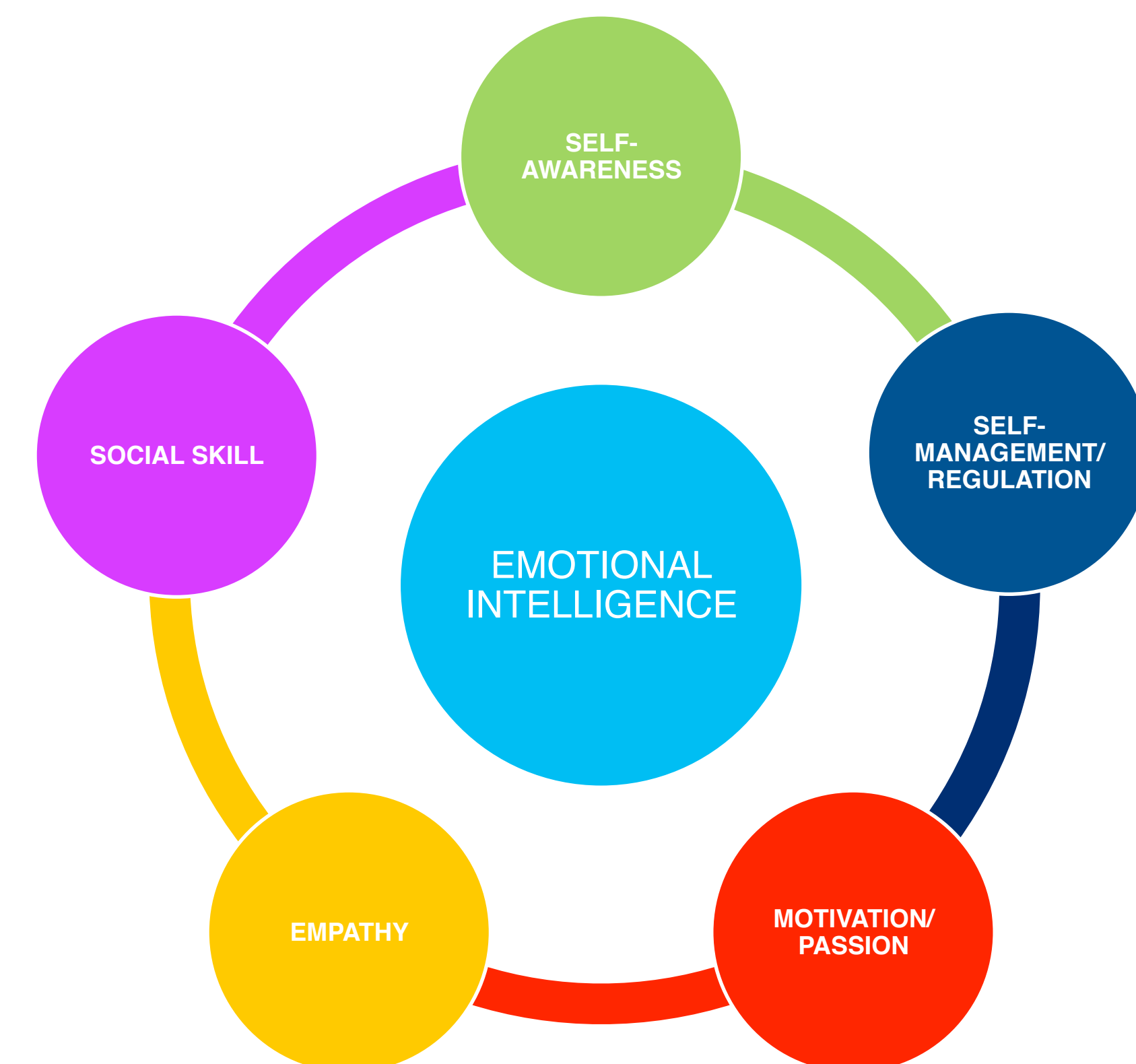
- How would you define leadership?
- What motivates you to follow a leader?
- How do you motivate followers?



- 79 undergraduate survey participants
- Average age of 21.1 years
- Enrolled in UGS 303, Ideas of the Twentieth Century or PHL 301, Introduction to Philosophy.

Results

The themes that emerged from the survey aligned with Daniel Goleman's five components of emotional intelligence at work. Gen Y defines leadership as having the following competencies: (1) self-awareness, (2) self-management, (3) motivation, (4) empathy, and (5) social skill. Gen Y has a stronger preference for leaders who demonstrate empathy and social skills than previous generations. Other identified competencies inherent across all five components were communication skills, listening skills, and knowledge or expertise.



Gen Y also looks for leaders with adaptability, charisma, courage, and discipline. They want a leader who is encouraging to others, has a giving nature, shows humility, knows how to instruct, knows how to ask for help, is open minded, and understanding. This leader should be uniting and welcoming. Gen Y prefers leaders who provide constructive criticism, are effective listeners, treat others with respect, are approachable, and provide praise and encouragement.

Attracting this generation will require

- ♦ web use and leading edge technology
- ♦ developmental and learning opportunities
- ♦ constructive, and frequent feedback
- ♦ physical work place design that include spaces for collaboration
- ♦ org commitment to social causes
- ♦ performance reward system
- ♦ a diverse workplace; diversity focus
- ♦ flexible work options for family/personal life; virtual workplaces

Conclusions

Recommendations for The University of Texas at Austin:

1. Hold workshops/seminars on **emotional intelligence**.
2. Encourage **collaboration** and a **collaborative work place** as a way to surface new ideas/processes.
3. Design a **formal mentorship program** that enables Gen Yers to find mentors anywhere on campus. Design a **lateral job ladder**.
4. Design jobs for **teamwork**. Let teams decide who will be the leader.
5. **Redesign the physical workspace** to be conducive to collaboration and teamwork with fewer private offices (i.e., Student Activities Center).
6. Use leading edge or cutting edge **technology**. (i.e., mobile devices and mobile applications)
7. **Flexible work schedules** are beneficial to all employees of any generation. Central HR must be more proactive in working with supervisors so they know how to manage and evaluate employees who have flexible work arrangements.
8. Redevelop its **performance management system** from a once-a-year exercise to a continuous feedback loop (Ex: UT System, McCombs School of Business).

Literature cited

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Remember, *there's a Big Bang Theory for that.....Hook'Em*.

Further information



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