

Summer 8-30-2008

**Obstacles to Effectively Recruit Generation Y to County
Employment: A Case Study of the Monterey County Health
Department**

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Obstacles to Effectively Recruit Generation Y to County Employment:

A Case Study of the Monterey County Health Department

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August 30, 2008

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Introduction

On April 29, 2008, as I was rummaging through my hundred or so emails on Outlook, I realized I had skipped over the following email:

“To All:

The department of Labor Relations is hosting a forum in order to better prepare the county to address the issues that we face as the Baby-Boomer Generation prepares for retirement. The generations in line to fill these positions has been estimated to be 20% smaller than their peers which creates numerous interesting and exciting succession planning opportunities. This is our generation and this is our chance to create change. If we position ourselves well by understanding the environment that will be created we can increase productivity and efficiency as well as job competitiveness. You have been nominated to participate in the forum to discuss how best to address these issues on Friday May 2nd at 12:00pm till 2:00 at the County Administrative Office’s Esselan Room. Lunch will be provided and attached is an (agenda) of what will be discussed.

Please let me know if you are or are not going to be able to make it and feel free to contact me with any questions.

Thanks,
[Name Deleted]
Management Specialist
Labor Relations Authority”
(Anonymous, Personal Communication, April 29, 2008)

At that moment, I realized the County of Monterey was gearing up for the future and, as a part of their succession plan development process, involving discussion with several of its current employees from Generation Y. Furthermore, the email prompted me to seek what the County of Monterey, specifically the Health Department, has incorporated or plans to incorporate into their recruitment practices to target Generation Y for County Employment.

Based on my limited number of years in County government, my own biased assumptions for this research paper are the following:

1. Generation Y lacks awareness of the employment opportunities in the County, but is interested.
2. The Monterey County Health Department is interested in recruiting Generation Y.
3. The Monterey County Health Department's current recruitment process is not effectively reaching out to Generation Y.

The research methodology consists of primary and secondary data gathered through a review of relevant literature, such as academic journals and government documents. In addition, an analysis of data was obtained from a survey deployed to members of Generation Y and keynote interviews with representatives from the Health Department.

Literature Review

This research seeks to address Monterey County Health Department's (hereinafter referred to as "Health Department") need to understand Generation Y and tailor its recruitment practices to be more enticing, attractive, responsive and effective to attract Generation Y to employment with the County.

The literature review examines the following areas:

1. County of Monterey and its Health Department as an Employer.
2. Characteristics of Generation Y in comparison with the Baby Boomer Generation and Generation X.
3. Types of recruitment practices other entities, both private and public, are incorporating to attract Generation Y and how they may be applied to the Health Department.

Background

Employer: County of Monterey. The County of Monterey (hereinafter referred to as "County") governs cities and towns including Monterey, Carmel, Pebble Beach, Big Sur, Salinas, King City and Gonzales, located on the Pacific Coast of California with a population of just over 400,000. The mission of the County is to "excel at providing quality services for the benefit of all Monterey County residents while developing, maintaining, and enhancing the resources of the region"(County of Monterey, 2008).

According to the County's 2008-09 recommended budget for fiscal year ending June 30th, 41.8% or \$454.5 million dollars of the County's overall budget is dedicated to the salaries and benefits of its employees. This is an 8.1% or \$33.9 million dollar increase from the adopted 2007-08 budget, primarily due to negotiated compensation

agreements and employee step advances. An increase of 115.3 positions was also added to the budget to total 4,846.5 positions, a 2.4% increase from fiscal year 2007-08. It is also important to note, for the purposes of this study, that the recommended budget included a recommendation for a policy shift to designate \$1.0 million dollars in excess fund balance for payments of retirement/termination benefits. This is an indication that the County is strategically preparing, financially, for the growing number of "baby boomer" retirements (County of Monterey, 2008).

There are several departments within the County that provide employment opportunities. In addition to the Health Department, other departments include Probation, Parks, Libraries, Human Resources, District Attorney, Sheriff, Natividad Medical Center (County Hospital), Water Resources Agency, Auditor-Controller, Resource Management Agency and the Treasurer-Tax Collector. As the County continues to increase its appropriations and positions in the workforce, it is important for the County to retain and recruit Generation Y to be leaders of tomorrow. After all, the County is responsible for providing a strong public safety system to protect the public and services to assure an adequate safety net and quality of life for County residents (Monterey County Health Department, n.d.).

Health Department. The Health Department plays a very important role in the County's mission of providing quality services, more specifically, in the field of health-related services. The mission of the Health Department is described as "working to enhance, promote and protect the health of Monterey County's individuals, families, communities and environment." (Monterey County Health Department, n.d.). Although simply stated, its goals, objectives and broad responsibilities include providing public

health; educating on adopting and sustaining healthy and environmentally sound behaviors; preventing and controlling the spread of communicable diseases; and responding to health emergencies and disasters (Monterey County Health Department, n.d.).

The Health Department has an annual budget of over \$112 million and a full time workforce of 845 and is the largest operating department within the County government. Divisions of the Health Department consist of Animal Services, Behavioral Health, Clinic Services, Community Health, Emergency Medical Services, Environmental Health, Office of the Health Officer and Public Guardian/Conservator (Monterey County Health Department, n.d.). According to a report generated by the Human Resources Department, six of the Health Department's seven division directors, including the Director of Health, are eligible for retirement as of today. In addition, out of the Health Department's 88 managers, 25 are also currently of retirement eligible age. These statistics further promoted the question of succession planning and what the Health Department was doing to recruit and prepare for Generation Y (Monterey County Health Department, n.d.).

Health Department: Overview of the Recruitment Process. Regardless of whether you are a Management Analyst, Epidemiologist, Secretary or Physician, for every position in the County, lies a classification specification. A classification is defined as a collection of related positions that are similar enough in scope of work to share a common definition of job title. Classification specification is a general description of the typical duties, responsibilities, knowledge, skills, abilities and qualifications specific to the job title (County of Yuba, 2008).

A classification specification is derived from a job analysis. A job analysis is an analysis of what is conducted by the job, not the individual. It is normally completed by a subject matter expert who provides a written and statistical analysis of the specifications of the job. In order to recruit for a position, a classification specification and job analysis must exist and be up to date (HR-Guide.com, n.d.).

After human resources representative determines the job analysis and classification specification is current, the hiring manager submits a formal request to open recruitment. Human resources reviews the recruitment flyer with the hiring manager and then moves forward to advertise in local newspapers such as the Californian and The Herald; careerbuilder.com; and the County's job website at <https://jobs.co.monterey.ca.us>. If requested by the hiring manager, human resources will advertise on more specific sites, usually outlets related to the nature of the position.

The amount of time a non-continuous recruitment remains open ranges from two weeks to a month, dependent on the classification. The applicant has the option to apply online or submit an application through the mail. The Monterey County Online Employment Center was implemented approximately two years ago and is a move toward simplifying the application process; thus, attracting the tech-savvy Generation Y.

After the recruitment closes, human resources screens the applications, tests the applicants (if necessary), enters the scores in the system and provides the hiring manager with a referral list from which to interview and hire. This process takes approximately two weeks. Once the applicant accepts the offer by signing the letter, he/she becomes an employee. Overall, on average, this recruitment and hiring process takes about three months to fill a vacant position.

Who is Generation Y?

Getting an Employer to realize there is a need to understand Generation Y in order to recruit for Generation Y is one of the obstacles. According to the Tribune Business News published on February 25, 2008, Generation Y consists of approximately 75 million strong, almost a quarter of the workforce (Truman, 2007). Labor statistics show by year 2020, Generation Y, also known as the Millennials, will rise to 44% of the workforce (Zimmerman, 2008). Therefore, in order to effectively recruit Generation Y, the Health Department must first understand Generation Y. There are four generations sharing today's workplace; however, for the purposes of this paper, comparisons will only be made with the Baby Boomers and Generation X.

Baby Boomers:

- Born between 1946 and 1964
- Approximately 80 million and largest generation working in the United States at 43% of the workforce.
- Original "me" generation
- Competitive; optimistic; high expectations; driven to achieve goals; and political.
- Workaholics. Baby boomers "live to work" and want more than what their parents had and will work hard and long hours for the organization to achieve success. Expect younger employees to "pay their dues" and "work up the ladder".
- Loyal and dedicated to their Employers.
- Rewarded-based compensation plans based on their longevity through merit increases, 401(k) plans, bonuses and benefits.

- Seeking financial independence through comprehensive health care and pension plans that will lead to an enjoyable retirement.
- Computers and electronic are viewed as tools, not a way of life.
- Defining life moments: Vietnam War; The Cold War; The Civil Rights Movement; Watergate; and Women's Liberation. (Turetsky, 2006; IGMT Generations Group, 2008)

Generation X:

- Born between 1965 and 1978
- Approximately 40 million at 42% of today's workforce. Half the amount in comparison to the Baby Boomers.
- Skeptical; self-reliant; pragmatic; efficient; and adaptable.
- Seeking an organization that will provide the skills and experience to prepare them for advancement; however, financial and corporate advancement often means switching jobs or transferring to a new organization. With so many Baby Boomers remaining in the workforce, Generation X wants to be marketable to other organizations.
- Less Employer loyalty in comparison to the Baby Boomers.
- Overshadowed by the large Baby Boomer generation. According to the AARP, 80% of Baby Boomers expect to work during their retirement.
- Techno-literate. Grew up on computers and television. First generation to use computers in school.

- Defining life moments: Stock Market Crash; Collapse of the Soviet Union; Corporate Downsizing/Mergers; and Drivers of the Internet Revolution.

(Turetsky, 2006; IGMT Generations Group, 2008)

Generation Y:

- Born between 1979 and 1997 (according to most experts).
- Tech-Savvy. The underlying trait of Generation Y is their knowledge and comfortableness of technology. Generation Y is connected 24/7 through computers, cell phones and television (Randolph, 2008).
- Large generation at approximately 75 million. Not as large in comparison to the Baby Boomers at 80 million, however, larger than Generation X at 40 million. Also known as the Millennials; Generation Next; Net Generation; and “I” Generation.
- Civic/community minded and service oriented
- Expect performance-driven salary increases rather than the reward-based compensation programs as shown in the Baby Boomer generation.
- Interested in having their career path laid out for them. Career path meaning short term (no more than five years) not the span of his/her lifetime. Wants increased responsibility earlier in career.
- Seeks constant and immediate feedback and recognition.
- Wants a balance of work and family.
- Self-confident; impatient; optimistic; hopeful; independent; looks to parents as role models; collaborative; lifestyle centered “work to live”; and innovative.

- Defining life moments: Columbine High School; 9-11; Iraq War; Enron; and China and India as emerging nations.

(Turetsky, 2006; IGMT Generations Group, 2008)

Generation Y's differences originate from world events, popular culture and technology.

There are several ways the Health Department can adapt to the characteristics of

Generation Y and effectively recruit:

- Tech-Savvy: Information is a click away. As the YouTube and MySpace generation, Generation Y is cynical about traditional advertising (Truman, 2007). Generation Y is influenced by the internet and appreciates interactive and online media (PR News, 2007). For the Health Department and County to provide the option of completing and submitting an application online attracts Generation Y and is the first step to modernizing the recruitment system. More importantly, it shows the Health Department realizes times have changed and updating the process to accommodate the future is now.

Furthermore, the Health Department should look into advertising on websites colleges are recommending to students and perhaps social websites such as myspace.com, facebook.com and linkedin.com. With the advancements in technology and the ability to communicate more effectively and efficiently, young people are much more aware of the choices available to them (Randolph, 2008).

- Populated generation entering workforce: Proves that the Health Department must take action and get familiar with, if not already, the soon to be dominant workforce (IGMT Generations Group, 2008).

- Civic/community minded and service oriented: Generation Y is looking for meaning in their work (Tobenkin, 2008). This is where the Health Department can shine and appeal to young people's value of wanting to make a difference in the world (Leidinger, 2008). The mission of the Health Department is to protect and safeguard the health and safety of the people and their environment. In this environmentally conscious society, the Health Department can, for instance, market careers in the Environmental Health Division where employees can be directly involved in the protection of the environment while suggesting innovative ways to be green.
- Performance-driven salary increases: The Health Department's salary system is a step based system, more or less based on seniority. Classifications in the County have seven steps. Once an employee works 2080 hours in a step, which is usually at the anniversary date of his/her employment, the employee is eligible to move up a step (unless he/she is at step seven). The step advancement is approximately a 5% increase in salary.

This County model is more reward based than performance based. With the expectation from Generation Y for performance-driven salary increases, the Health Department should look at performance based models, such as pay for performance (Trahan, 2008).

- Immediate and constant feedback appreciated: Generation Y has grown up in a society where they have been micromanaged by their parents and provided constant feedback, even through the means of text messaging (Randolph, 2008). The Health Department; instead of only providing formal evaluations once or

twice a year, should encourage Managers and Supervisors to provide feedback as often as possible.

Generation Y is comfortable with constructive “in-your-face” discussions and has been exposed to both positive and negative feedback, not only by their parents but also through reality television made popular during this time. Generation Y craves validation and wants to know whether or not they are going in the right direction now and not a year from now (Robbins, 2008). Constant feedback would also benefit the Health Department because it promotes productive dialogue between employee and manager/supervisor (Turetsky, 2006).

In addition, if the employee is doing a great job, provide recognition. This is a motivator that resonates with Generation Y (Turetsky, 2006). After all, Generation Y is used to the glam of the over-the-top sweet 16 extravaganzas and expects the work world to be somewhat similar (Randolph, 2008).

- Work-life balance: Ideally, Generation Y would like to be happy with his/her job, while being able to balance work and home life (IOMA, 2008). In response, the Health Department should develop its rewards and recognitions program. One benefit under this program could be flexible work hours. Knowing that Generation Y values the balance of work and family, this option could provide younger workers with the incentive to stay with the County (Sweeney, 2008).
- Clear career development plan with increased responsibility: Generation Y is looking for the opportunity for advancement. They will become disengaged if not challenged (Randolph, 2008). The Health Department should, as part of its recruitment process, entice Generation Y with a well defined career path and

articulate career progression options (Sweeney, 2008). For instance, if the recruitment was for a Management Analyst I, state to the applicant the possibility for advancement to a Management Analyst II or Management Analyst III position. Provide them with ladder opportunities to make them want to build a career with the County.

With 80% of Baby Boomers expected to work during retirement, effective mentoring programs with the Baby Boomers can help Generation Y develop leadership and management skills and identify short term goals, which may then lead to more long-term objectives (Sweeney, 2008). According to Sweeney, “providing growth opportunities for young talent should be a top priority. Developing such a program is perhaps the best investment an organization can make in its employees because it fosters an environment where these self-confident and in-demand employees feel valued and empowered and, as a result, are more likely to stay (2008).”

Taking the Lead: Examples of Private and Public Organizations Incorporating New Techniques to Attract and Recruit Generation Y

Private Industry. It can be argued that the private industry has the autonomy, in comparison to public governmental agencies, to provide Generation Y with a wide array of employment benefits, rewards and activities. Private corporations like Merrill Lynch and Disney are seeking the assistance of head-hunters and consulting companies to teach them innovative ways to recruit and retain young people (Zimmerman, 2008; Truman, 2007). An example of a company that is listening to Generation Y and tailoring their recruitment practices to meet the needs of Generation Y is Ernst & Young.

Ernst & Young. Ernst & Young is a global leader in assurance, tax, transaction and advisory services with a workforce of approximately 130,000. The career page on their website states key words to attract Generation Y such as “Make a Difference”; “Develop and Succeed Personally and Professionally”; and “Working Together” (Ernst & Young.com, 2008).

According to the article “Wooing Gen Y: Recruiting/Retaining Recent Grads Isn’t Child’s Play”, Ernst & Young hired the consulting firm of Fleishman-Hillard in 2006 to develop ways to reach out and recruit Generation Y. One recommendation was to set up a company page on the social website Facebook (PR News, 2007). Facebook’s membership is free and offers many network-based connections among friends, companies, regions and schools. Facebook is a popular website among Generation Y and, as of August 26, 2008, announced that it had reached 100 million members around the world (Facebook.com, 2008)

The company’s webpage on Facebook contains corporate information; a message board for questions and answers; weekly career tips; videos of new recruits discussing their experiences with the company; as well as links to its 7,497 members Facebook web pages. Ernst & Young created a Facebook page for several reasons: to educate Generation Y about the corporate culture of the company; advertise career opportunities and spark interest in employment; provide for networking and the opportunity for interested applicants to ask current employees questions; and engage young people in an outlet where they spend most of their time communicating with one another (PR News, 2007).

Ernst & Young recognized that attracting Generation Y to entry-level positions through average job postings on its own corporate website was not the best method of advertisement. Generation Y would rather log onto MySpace, Facebook or Craigslist before visiting any type of corporate websites, unless, of course, he/she was interested in employment specific to a company. Other companies are also realizing that a corporate website is not enough these days to attract Generation Y. Being creative and strategic is and having an online presence is paramount (Robbins, 2008).

The Health Department currently does not participate nor advertise for employment opportunities on social networking websites like Facebook or MySpace. Starting last year; however, the Health Department has started to advertise employment on Craigslist, which is a step in the right direction.

Public Governmental Agency. The need to change culture within government has been echoed many times throughout the years. According to Raduege, "culture is the set of shared attitudes, values, goals and practices that characterizes an organization." Altering the way the Health Department recruits for positions is a change in culture. However, in order to remain relevant, leaders must recognize the need for change and adjust the culture of the organization accordingly (Friend, 2004).

Below are agencies from the three layers of government that are adjusting its culture to adapt to the demands of the changing world:

- 1) Local Government. As with the County of Monterey, other localities are also seeing a high number of retiring managers and low number of young professionals ready to step in and take their place (Friend, 2004). As a way to attract and retain young people, the County of Riverside's Board of

Supervisors recently approved the option of a flexible schedule, meaning with manager's approval, an employee can work four ten hour days per week.

Generation Y is enticed by flexible schedules and the County of Riverside took notice and incorporated it in as an approved alternative schedule. (V. Ignacio, Personal Communication, August 28, 2008).

- 2) State Government. The state's employment online system called NEOGOV was revamped in September of 2007 to make it easier for people to submit an application online. Improved functions include the ability to narrow down search to a specific agency or county; upload resumes to electronically send to any job opening; store biographical information online; revise each job application to the posted requirements; and modify job applications without having to re-enter information like work history (Werner, 2007).

Similarly, two years ago, the County of Monterey implemented an online application system, in part, to cater specifically to the technologically savvy Generation Y. With the continuous advances in technology, the online system will provide more user-friendly options and grow in use.

- 3) Federal Government: The Federal Government does little proactive recruiting and is usually not recognized as a potential employer by recent college graduates. However, an exception to the statement is the U.S. Department of Education (hereinafter referred to as "ED").

ED radically reengineered its hiring process, calling their ten month project "Extreme Hiring Makeover". The redesign called for an increase in communication between HR professionals and hiring managers at the start of

the hiring cycle; consultation with outside vendors to re-write job descriptions to eliminate federal government jargon and replace with functions of the job and advancement opportunities; and customization of the information technology system to track recruitments and the length of time it took to accomplish each step in the hiring process. The major culture change of ED was the strategic partnership between the HR specialist and hiring manager. Instead of viewing HR personnel as administrators or paper shufflers, HR personnel is seen by hiring managers as an effective and valuable team members (Trahant & Yearout, 2006).

Summary

Unifying three generations into one workforce presents its challenges. By cultivating and molding the best characteristics of the Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y, Employers, such as the Health Department, can flourish in a time of difference. Based upon the comparisons made between the Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y; illustrated with the examples from the public agencies and private corporation; and coupled with the opinions and analysis received from authors of journals and articles, further attention in the form of primary data is needed to validate the assumptions and determine whether or not the Health Department recruitment practices are effectively reaching Generation Y.

Methodology

Overview of Methodology. This study's objective was to research the obstacles the Health Department faces in recruiting Generation Y; identify the need to understand Generation Y because of their influence in the workplace; and provide suggestions for the purposes of adopting changes to improve the effectiveness of the Health Department's recruitment practices. In order to identify the need and examine what changes can be recommended, both qualitative and quantitative research was conducted to collect and analyze data. To my knowledge, no study has been performed by the Health Department which exclusively compares the Health Department's recruitment practices of Generation Y to other agencies or corporations.

The research methodology started with a focus on secondary data, literature review, which was conducted primarily through a search of scholarly journals and articles on the search engine ProQuest and Business Source Complete. Several Golden Gate University librarians assisted in the search for relevant information. A comprehensive literature search was conducted, which included an extensive review of documents produced by governmental agencies, public management, human resource representatives, research companies, and consulting firms. A colleague and former Golden Gate University graduate, who attended Intergovernmental Management Training, also provided information on generations in the workplace. Moreover, websites such as the County of Monterey and Facebook provided additive information regarding background and organizational specifics.

That being said, in order to add validity to the paper and further test the assumptions, primary data was compiled with a research design combining both

qualitative and quantitative approaches. Keynote interviews from three individuals working at the Health Department were conducted as well as a survey deployed to Generation Y, ages 11-29 years old.

Limitations of the Research. The most significant limitation to designing the research was time. Although information on Generation Y was readily available on the internet, researching for literature review on ProQuest and Business Source Complete was a time-consuming challenge. It is important to note that the challenge was not finding relevant articles on the characteristics of Generation Y; instead, it was finding articles in connection to local governments, specifically counties. The internet and online library had limited journals and articles on what counties were doing to effectively recruit Generation Y. Also, there were several times where a specific journal article on Business Source Complete was unavailable electronically and the librarian had to special order the article from another library, which took about eight days to arrive.

Another example where time played an important factor was in the search for Health Department statistics. Since this research paper is a case study on the Health Department, the desire to have more Health Department specific statistics such as the average age of the workforce and where applicants find out about County employment opportunities, would have been ideal for this paper. However, due to time constraints, human resources was unable to provide the requested information.

It should also be noted that time also limited the number of respondents to the survey. The purpose of the survey was to poll Generation Y to see whether the County's current recruitment is effective in reaching out to Generation Y; what benefits entice Generation Y; and whether social websites are a good venue to advertise positions.

Ideally, to obtain a larger sample, the survey could have been deployed to high schools and colleges around Monterey County; however, the survey was developed and deployed during a time most students were out on summer break. In order to receive respondents in the short amount of time, the survey was limited to co-workers, family, friends, friends of friends and MySpace members. While all survey respondents represented Generation Y, limitations compromise whether the sample is truly a representation of the population.

Characteristics of the Research Sample.

- Survey: The survey's focus was Generation Y and could only be completed by those between the ages of 11-29 years old. As mentioned, the research sample from the survey primarily consisted of co-workers, family, friends, friends of friends and MySpace members. This information leads to a bias in the sample as most of the respondents are in some way familiar with the identity of the surveyor. However, because the study is a representation of Generation Y, the sample size should be deemed adequate. To increase the validity of the results, key informant interviews with two Generation Y representatives from the Health Department were added to the research design.
- Keynote Interviews: All three keynote interviews were from representatives at the Health Department. Keynote interview #1 was conducted with the Human Resources (HR) Manager, who part of the Baby Boomer generation. Keynote interview #2 was conducted with an agency temporary employee, who has been working with the Health Department for five months. She is twenty-four years old, graduated from San Jose State in 2006 and is part of Generation Y. For purposes of confidentiality, she will be referred to as "Sue". Keynote interview

#3 was conducted with a Health Department permanent employee of nine months. She is also a part of Generation Y, has a college and master's degree and is from Fresno, California. For purposes of confidentiality, she will be referred to as "Ann". All three individuals are Caucasian.

Data Collection.

- Survey: A multiple choice ten question survey was created on the website surveymonkey.com and disseminated to males and females through two outlets, email and MySpace bulletins. The survey was developed to poll Generation Y, to assess their interest in employment with the County and its effectiveness of recruitment. On July 18, 2008, the first draft of the ten question survey was emailed to Professor Jay Gonzalez and feedback was provided the next day during the class conference call.

After incorporating Professor Gonzalez's feedback, the Health Department HR Manager provided further insight during her keynote interview which created a revision to question number 4. The statement "I am interested in County employment (agree/disagree)", was replaced with "Are you aware of the positions at the County of Monterey? For instance, the County hires Nurses, Accountants, Attorneys, Cooks, Dietitians, IT Support Techs, Mechanics, HR Analysts, Physical Therapists, Social Workers and Veterinarians".

The HR Manager explained one reason why Generation Y may not be interested in employment opportunities with the County is because they are not familiar with the positions in the County. To validate her argument, the question was asked in the survey.

On August 13, 2008, before finally deploying the survey, a friend provided the last review and said it was ready to go live. The respondent completed the survey in less than 5 minutes. Note: the survey did not require respondents to identify themselves. All responses remained anonymous. A copy of the survey is provided in Appendix A.

After the initial survey was completed, an email, which included a personal narrative and purpose of the survey, was sent directly to thirty-four friends and family members. Not only was a request made that they click on the link to take the survey, but also to forward it on to members of Generation Y. By August 15, 2008, thirty-one responses were received.

Since one of the questions in the survey was to determine whether social networking websites, such as MySpace, facebook and/or linkedin were good venues for advertising, I decided to post the survey link on the bulletin board of my personal MySpace webpage. After posting it twice on August 14, 2008, nine more responses were received.

In order to have a larger sample size, additional reminder postings were placed on my MySpace page on August 18, August 21 and August 25, 2008 requesting friends to complete the survey. The survey closed August 27, 2008 with 61 respondents. See "Figure 1" for an illustration of the MySpace bulletin board and example post.

Figure 1: MySpace.com Bulletin Board

Post a bulletin and your message will show up on all your friends' bulletin boards. You can delete the bulletins you post; you can't delete other people's bulletins. Bulletins will expire in 10 days.

	From	Date	Subject
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sheena	Aug 25, 2008 9:54 PM	<u>*LAST DAY*</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sheena	Aug 21, 2008 9:55 PM	<u>Just 10 More!</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sheena	Aug 18, 2008 6:13 PM	<u>Are you between the ages of 11-29???</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sheena	Aug 14, 2008 10:51 PM	<u>11-29 years old? I Need Your HELP!!!</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sheena	Aug 14, 2008 1:00 PM	<u>HELP! Please Complete My Survey!</u>

(<http://bulletins.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=bulletin.ShowMyBulletins&friendID={0}&MyToken=a6bf0998-814b-4413-94f9-a282c6a97e69>)

From:	Sheena
Date:	Aug 21, 2008 9:55 PM
Subject:	Just 10 More!
Body:	<p>I just need 10 MORE responses to my survey, so if you haven't taken it yet, PLEASE =)</p> <p>It will only take 5 minutes.</p> <p>Here's the link: Click Here to take survey</p> <p>It's for my thesis. My topic is "Recruitment Obstacles to Effectively Market County Employment to Generation Y"</p> <p>THANKS!!!!!!!!!!!!</p>

- **Keynote Interviews:** The first keynote interview was with the Health HR Manager on August 13, 2008. Nine questions were asked relating to current HR practices and recruitment; obstacles HR faces to recruit Generation Y; and whether the County Administrative Office was taking action to address the issue. The interview lasted about an hour, was recorded through an audio tape recorder and later transcribed.

The second and third keynote interviews were completed over email and more or less extensions of the multiple choice questions in the survey. The first email was sent to "Sue" on August 14, 2008 and consisted of seven questions ranging from perceptions of government employment to what types of employment offers attract. The second email also consisted of seven questions and was sent to "Ann" on August 20, 2008. Since Ann is originally from Fresno, one question unique to her interview was how she first found out about employment opportunities with County.

Summary of the Research Process.

- Survey. The ten question survey was designed specifically for Generation Y with question number one asking whether or not they were between the ages of 11-29 years old. If the respondent answered no, the respondent could not continue with the survey. The second and third were yes/no questions and set the base for the type of respondents surveyed. By asking whether the respondent was a resident of Monterey County and if he/she has ever been employed by the government provided insight as to the population taking the survey. The fourth question set the stage for whether the respondents knew what type of career opportunities were

available in the County. The fifth and sixth question provided a list of benefits and tested whether benefits would entice them to work for the County. Lastly, questions seven through ten tied it all together to inquire about County advertisement of career opportunities and its effectiveness. Questions five, six, eight and nine provided the respondent with an alternative answer box labeled "Other".

- Keynote Interviews. The HR Manager's interview was more specific to HR operations and outlook in comparison to the second and third interviews. The HR Manager was asked to comment on a recent ruling by the Board of Supervisors from Riverside County to provide the option of a four ten hour day workweek; current recruitment practices; sites where the Health Department currently advertises employment; whether the Health Department reaches out to the next generation; if the Central Administrative Office is taking any action to address the issue of reaching out to Generation Y in response to the aging workforce; recruitment obstacles to effectively market County employment to Generation Y; and if the current recruitment process is effective.

In creating the interview questions for the second and third interview, the decision to keep most of the questions unchanged between the two was in part to compare their perceptions about government based on their status at the Health Department. One is a permanent Health Department employee who went through the recruitment and hiring process to work at the County; while, the other is an agency temporary employee, who never considered County employment, yet was presented with the opportunity to work in the Health Department. Common

questions were asked like the length of time they have worked at the County; if they considered a career at the County after graduating from college; original perceptions of county government; and types of enticing employment offers. The questions ended with whether the County's recruitment process effectively reaches Generation Y and their thoughts on advertising on social websites.

Overall, both the survey and employee keynote interviews followed the same format design. First, general questions were asked to get a feel of the representation; benefits questions were asked; then questions on the effectiveness of County recruitment; and ended with a question on an innovative way to improve recruitment.

Results/Findings

Overview of Methodology. The methodology of this research first started with a review of relevant literature. To test the assumptions presented in the research, primary research was conducted through surveys directed specifically to Generation Y and, to provide further validation to the study, three keynote interviews were added. The results were then analyzed to determine if and how the current Health Department HR recruitment practices can be improved to effectively market County employment to Generation Y.

Assumption 1: Generation Y lacks awareness of the employment opportunities in the county, but is interested.

In order to research the obstacles for recruiting Generation Y, the assumption needed to be made that Generation Y is interested in County employment, but lacked awareness of the employment opportunities in the County. To test this assumption, question number 3 asked, "Are you currently or have been employed by the Government

(Federal, State, County, City)?" The thought for the development of this question was getting to know the respondent. If most of the respondents answered yes, this would more likely mean the respondents did not lack awareness of at least governmental employment opportunities. However, this was not the case, 61% or 40 of the respondents answered no. That meant most of my respondents are not nor have they been employed by government.

Number 4 of my survey was another question that tested this assumption. The question asked "Are you aware of the positions at the County of Monterey? For instance, the County hires Nurses, Accountants, Attorneys, Cooks, Dietitians, IT Support Techs, Mechanics, HR Analysts, Physical Therapists, Social Workers and Veterinarians." As discussed earlier under methodology, this was a question that was revised after my keynote interview with the HR Manager. What prompted this interest was she stated young people may not necessarily view the public sector as a place for employment, not due to disinterest; instead, due their lack of knowledge about the types of services and careers provided by the County. Moreover, the HR Manager went on to state that generation Y needs to be educated about the services and career opportunities under the Health Department.

The survey results for number 4 showed 62.3% or 38 respondents were not aware of the positions at the County of Monterey. After conducting my keynote interviews with Ann and Sue, the two Generation Y representatives from the Health Department, the results of number 4 were not shocking. Both ladies were asked whether they considered County employment as a career path. Ann provided no comment, while Sue answered

no. Since both of Sue's parents worked in the private companies, their employment advice to her after graduating from college never included the County.

Assumption 2: The Monterey County Health Department is interested in recruiting Generation Y.

Since the research was based on whether there was a need to take into account the characteristics of Generation Y in recruiting for employment, the assumption that the Health Department was interested in recruiting for Generation Y had to be made. To test this assumption, it was important to know whether the respondents were residents of Monterey County in order to get a better understanding of the data. Only 23% or 14 of the respondents were residents of Monterey County, which meant the remaining 47 were from outside of the area.

In number 6, the assumption had to be made in order to pose the following multiple choice question "I would be interested in employment with the County of Monterey if the County offered: signing bonus, cost of living allowance, flexible schedule, option to work from home, promotional opportunities, competitive salaries, option to reduce benefits and increase salary, personal internet time at work, day care, and newest and best technology". There was also the option to mark "other" to specify an alternative option. Respondents could check up to three choices. The top three percentages were "Flexible Schedule" at 57.4%, "Competitive Salaries" at 48.1% and "Option to Work from Home" at 42.6%. Surprisingly, two out of the top three options indicated the respondents were veering away from the traditional nine to five workday.

In the interview, the HR Manager was asked whether there was a need to reach out to the next generation and the response was "absolutely." In follow-up, she was also

asked whether Monterey County would follow suit to the Board of Supervisors from Riverside County recently approving the option of a flexible schedule from the traditional five eight hour workweek to a modified four ten hour workweek. The HR Manager responded by saying not right now, but eventually. The reason why it cannot be implemented now is due to the limitations of the payroll system. As an aside, the current payroll system is going under reconstruction and the new system is scheduled to be in effect by year 2010.

However, contrary to the results of the survey, when Ann and Sue were asked "what types of employment offers entice you to apply for a position", they did not stress any of the top three factors of the survey as a top priority. Sue said when she first graduated from college, what was most important to her was finding a job with good benefits. Now, she is looking for a career where she can develop her skills. The change could have occurred due to her employment experience working in the County. She has a better understanding that something more is needed since benefits are a part of the employment package.

Ann stated in her response that the County already provides competitive salary and benefits, so the next best offer Generation Y would be an investment in a leadership training program, promotional opportunities, child care and a countywide recognition program for Generation Y.

Assumption 3: The Monterey County Health Department's current recruitment process is not effectively reaching out to Generation Y.

This was the underlying assumption for the research paper. Without this assumption, there would be no further policy recommendations, solutions or suggestions.

Since this was an important assumption, several questions were asked in the survey and interviews to test it out.

Number 5 of the survey stated "I am interested in employment with the County of Monterey for the following reasons: salary, benefits, retirement, location, education allowance, promotional opportunities, stable employer/job security, relatives/friends who work for the County of Monterey, and not interested in employment with the County of Monterey". There was also a box for the respondent to check "other" to specify an alternative option. Respondents could check up to three choices. The top three percentages were "Not Interested in Employment with the County of Monterey" at 48.3%, "Benefits" at 30% and "Stable Employer/Job Security" at 28.3%. One reason why the top choice was Not Interested in Employment with the County of Monterey could be due to the high percentage of non-residents as exhibited in question number 2.

Question number 7 asked "How often do you see/hear advertisements for employment opportunities in the County of Monterey?" The responses were "Never" at 62.3%, "Rarely" at 21.3%, "Sometimes" at 11.5% and "Often" at 4.9%. Again, the responses could be skewed due to the number of non-residents completing the survey. However, this begs further inquiry as to whether HR is advertising outside of the Monterey County area.

Question number 8 was a follow-up to Question 7. It stated "I see/hear advertisements for employment opportunities in the County of Monterey through the following areas: career fairs, print (newspapers, magazines, journals), radio, relatives/friends, television, internet and I do not see County of Monterey employment advertisements. There was also a box for the respondent to check "other" to specify an

alternative option. "I do not see County of Monterey employment advertisement" came in with the highest percentage at 57.4%, next was "Internet" at 24.6% and "Relatives/Friends" at 14.8%. Also, it may be valuable to note that during the interview with Sue, she was asked if any of her friends worked for the County and her response was no; however, she would definitely recommend applying for County positions.

Question number 9 was asked in response to number 8. If the respondent checked "Internet" in number 8, the survey asked to specify through which website. Since only 24.6% of respondents checked "Internet", it was only fitting that 73.8% of respondents checked "I did not check 'Internet' in #8"). Otherwise, "County of Monterey Human Resources Website" came in second with 16.4%.

All three keynote interviews contained the question whether they felt the Health Department's recruitment process effectively reaches Generation Y. If not, whether they had any ideas on how to recruit and retain Generation Y. The HR Manager said having one person placing the ads on the internet, journals and newspapers was not the most effective way to recruit. She would like to routinely use careerbuilder.com or possibly hire a consultant, who is a subject matter expert in the field of advertising. Sue said she did not feel the recruitment practice effectively reaches her generation. She suggests developing flyers to post around college campuses as a way to recruit graduates. Ann provided praise to the process. She said the online site is very well designed, easy to use and paperless. Ann however commented on the timing of screening applications and hiring new employees. She said it is a lengthy process that could be improved and streamlined.

And lastly, question number 10 asked respondents whether "Advertising for jobs on social websites such as myspace.com, linkedin.com and facebook.com is a good way of recruiting Generation Y? Fifty respondents or 82% of the respondents answered "Yes" social websites are good way of recruiting for Generation Y. To validate this with more of a response, a similar question was asked to Sue and Ann. Sue responded favorably stating that MySpace would be a better choice for advertising than facebook. She also suggested craigslist.com, careerbuilder.com and monster.com as effective websites to reach out to Generation Y searching for employment.

In summary, by conducting a survey and interviews allowed for more depth and insight to the study. Not only was there statistics available to analyze, but there were also short answers which, in my opinion, added to the validity of the research. More importantly, it proved that the assumptions presented were in line with the information gathered and, hopefully, the Health Department specifically will find this study helpful.

Policy Recommendations

Based on the literature review, survey and keynote interviews, my recommendations are as follows:

- **Streamline Hiring and Recruiting:** Conduct an in-depth analysis of the current recruitment process, just as the U.S. Department of Education did and look into creating your own "Extreme Hiring Makeover". In the competitive war to hire highly qualified individuals, employers need to understand, foster and grow the values of Generation Y and streamline the recruitment and hiring process as speed is an important element in getting the talent.
- **Update the County Application to Track Where Applicants are Hearing about Employment:** In order to effectively advertise for employment opportunities, the Employer needs to know where the applicants are hearing about vacancies. The current County application contains a box to check for internet but does not allow the applicant to mark which website he/she found the advertisement on. Since we are heading in the direction of online advertising, it is important for HR to know specifically where the applicants are finding the advertisement.
- **Appeal to Generation Y Values:** Generation Y values community service, has the desire to protect the environment, and after 9-11 has a great sense of patriotism. The public sector can use this to their advantage when advertising for positions. Advertisements should use these key messages when promoting a career in public service.
- **Build Strong Brand Identity:** Build upon the reputation of who the Health Department is and what it represents. Appeal to young people by advertising

online, creating a positive image of opportunity to get them excited about how wonderful it would be working for the government. It is also important to note that, from the survey, Generation Y rated "Stable Employer/Job Security" as the number one factor for interest in employment with the County.

- Utilize Young People to Help Recruit: HR should send young employees, especially new hires, to schools/colleges career fairs and other recruiting events to inform and promote Health Department employment opportunities.

Areas for Further Research. While this study provides some insight into characteristics of Generation Y, its differences to the Baby Boomers and Generation X; similar challenges organizations are facing; and examples of agencies incorporating new styles of advertising, recruitment will always be an area of further research due to the complexity of human beings affected by the changing times.

What could be looked into further is whether growing up in a single or double income family plays into the development of Generation Y. What other counties, other than the County of Riverside, is doing to attract Generation Y and whether it is successful. Also, it would be also helpful to find out if advertisements on social websites have actually attracted a large number of young people to organizations.

Further research could also be conducted limiting the sample size of Generation Y to new college graduates. That way, the Health Department can devise a recruitment plan to specifically target that population, especially since six out of its seven directors are eligible for retirement. It is good for future purposes to have a succession plan in place to recruit talent and grow talent in any organization.

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Appendix A

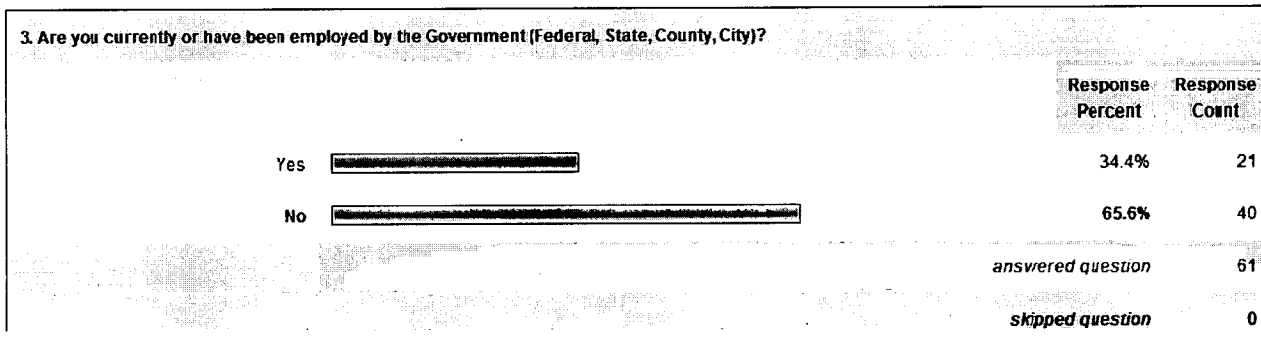
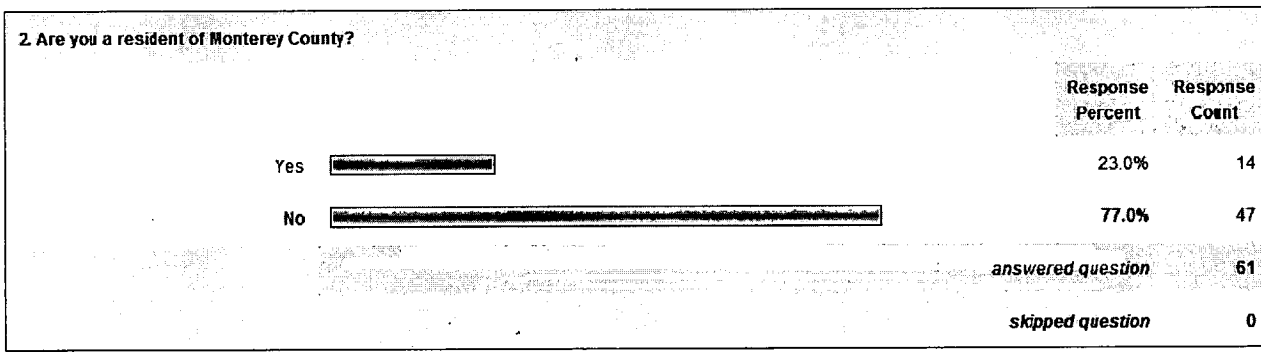
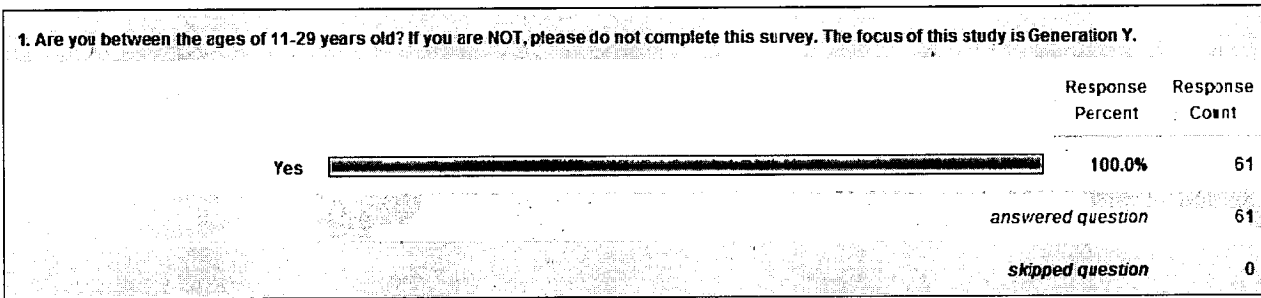
Survey: SurveyMonkey.com



Response Summary

Total Started Survey: 61
Total Completed Survey: 61 (100%)

Page: Default Section



Obstacles to Effectively Recruit 42

4. Are you aware of the positions at the County of Monterey? For instance, the County hires Nurses, Accountants, Attorneys, Cooks, Dietitians, IT Support Techs, Mechanics, HR Analysts, Physical Therapists, Social Workers and Veterinarians.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	37.7%	23
No <input type="checkbox"/>	62.3%	38
<i>answered question</i>		61
<i>skipped question</i>		0

5. I am interested in employment with the County of Monterey for the following reasons: (please check no more than 3 choices).

	Response Percent	Response Count
Salary <input type="checkbox"/>	25.0%	15
Benefits <input type="checkbox"/>	30.0%	18
Retirement <input type="checkbox"/>	20.0%	12
Location <input type="checkbox"/>	8.3%	5
Education Allowance <input type="checkbox"/>	8.3%	5
Promotional Opportunities <input type="checkbox"/>	15.0%	9
Stable Employer/Job Security <input type="checkbox"/>	28.3%	17
Relatives/Friends Work for the County of Monterey	0.0%	0
Not Interested in Employment with the County of Monterey <input type="checkbox"/>	48.3%	29
Other (please specify) <input type="checkbox"/> view		1
<i>answered question</i>		60
<i>skipped question</i>		1

Obstacles to Effectively Recruit 43

6. I would be interested in employment with the County of Monterey if the County offered: (please check no more than 3 choices)

	Response Percent	Response Count
Signing Bonus	35.2%	19
Cost of Living Allowance	35.2%	19
Flexible Schedule	57.4%	31
Option to Work from Home	42.6%	23
Promotional Opportunities	35.2%	19
Competitive Salaries	48.1%	26
Option to Reduce Benefits and Increase Salary	3.7%	2
Personal Internet Time at Work	5.6%	3
Day Care	7.4%	4
Newest and Best Technology	3.7%	2
Other (please specify) <input type="button" value="view"/>		3
<i>answered question</i>		54
<i>skipped question</i>		7

7. How often do you see/hear advertisements for employment opportunities in the County of Monterey?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Often	4.9%	3
Sometimes	11.5%	7
Rarely	21.3%	13
Never	62.3%	38
<i>answered question</i>		61
<i>skipped question</i>		0

Obstacles to Effectively Recruit 44

8. I see/hear advertisements for employment opportunities in the County of Monterey through the following areas:

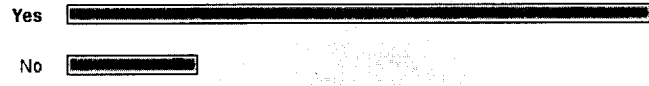
	Response Percent	Response Count
Career Fairs <input type="checkbox"/>	3.3%	2
Print (Newspapers, Magazines, Journals) <input type="checkbox"/>	11.5%	7
Radio <input type="checkbox"/>	0.0%	0
Relatives/Friends <input type="checkbox"/>	14.8%	9
Television <input type="checkbox"/>	11.5%	7
Internet <input type="checkbox"/>	24.6%	15
I Do Not See County of Monterey Employment Advertisements <input type="checkbox"/>	57.4%	35
Other (please specify)		0
<i>answered question</i>		61
<i>skipped question</i>		0

9. If you checked "Internet" in #8, please specify website:

	Response Percent	Response Count
County of Monterey Human Resource Website <input type="checkbox"/>	16.4%	10
Federal/State/Local Government Website <input type="checkbox"/>	4.9%	3
Careerbuilder.com <input type="checkbox"/>	1.6%	1
Newspaper Website <input type="checkbox"/>	0.0%	0
School Website <input type="checkbox"/>	0.0%	0
Monster.com <input type="checkbox"/>	3.3%	2
Craig's List <input type="checkbox"/>	3.3%	2
Myspace.com <input type="checkbox"/>	1.6%	1
Linkedin.com <input type="checkbox"/>	1.6%	1
Facebook.com <input type="checkbox"/>	3.3%	2
I Did Not Check "Internet" in #8 <input type="checkbox"/>	73.8%	45
Other (please specify)		0
<i>answered question</i>		61
<i>skipped question</i>		0

Obstacles to Effectively Recruit 45

10. Advertising for jobs on social websites such as myspace.com, linkedin.com and facebook.com is a good way of recruiting Generation Y?



Response	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	82.0%	50
No	18.0%	11
answered question		61
skipped question		0

Appendix B

Key Informant Interview Questions

Interview #1: Health Department Human Resources (HR) Manager

In-person interview on Wednesday, August 13, 2008

1. The Board of Supervisors from Riverside County recently approved the flexible work schedule of a four day ten hour work week schedule. Do you see Monterey County following suit?
2. What is the Health Department's current recruitment practice?
3. Where does the Health Department advertise for employment opportunities?
4. Does the Health Department need to reach out to the next generation?
5. What is the Health Department doing now to reach out to the next generation?
6. Has the County Administrative Office expressed concern or taken action to address this issue?
7. In your opinion, what are the recruitment obstacles to effectively market County employment to Generation Y?
8. On average, how long does it take from when a successful applicant submits an application to his/her start date at the County?
9. Do you feel the recruitment process effectively reaches the next generation? If not, do you have any ideas on how the process can be improved?

Appendix C

Key Informant Interview Questions

Interview #2: "Sue", a twenty-four year old recent college graduate (class of 2006) started working at the Health Department five months ago through a temporary agency.

Emailed questions on August 14, 2008; received response through email on August 15, 2008.

1. How long have you worked as an agency temp for the County?
2. After graduating from college, did you ever consider County employment as a career path? If not, why?
3. What were your original perceptions of County government? If any, how has that changed since you have been working at the Health Department?
4. Do any of your friends work for the County? What do you think about having friends work at the County?
5. What types of employment offers entice you to apply for a position (for instance, benefits, salary, schedule, etc.)?
6. Do you feel the County's recruitment process effectively reaches Generation Y? If not, do you have any ideas on how to recruit and retain Generation Y for County employment?
7. What do you think about the County advertising on social websites? Are there any particular websites you feel would be effective in reaching out to Generation Y?

Appendix D

Key Informant Interview Questions

Interview #3: "Ann", a recent grad school graduate who started working at the Health Department nine months ago and is a permanent employee of the Health Department. She is a part of Generation Y.

Emailed questions on August 20, 2008; received response through email on August 21, 2008.

1. How long have you worked for the County?
2. After graduating college/graduate school, what made you consider County employment as a career path? More specifically, why did you choose the Monterey County Health Department? (Note: No Response Provided)
3. Coming from Fresno, how did you first find out about employment opportunities in the County?
4. What were your original perceptions of County government? How has that changed since you have been working for the Health Department?
5. What types of employment offers entice you to apply for a position (for instance, benefits, salary, schedule, etc.)?
6. Do you feel the County's recruitment process effectively reaches Generation Y?
7. What do you think about the County advertising on social websites? Are there any particular websites you feel would be effective in reaching out to Generation Y?

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