

COACHING AND MENTORING MILLENNIAL EXTENSION FACULTY



What do we think we know?

It's what you think you know that you really don't know that can hurt you.



Recommendations?



Gen X Self Disclosure



- Question experts—"Prove it" attitude
- Sandwich generation—Alleged stalker
- Discontent
- Awful
- Just do it!
- Plan B

A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF MILLENNIAL GENERATION COOPERATIVE EXTENSION EDUCATORS' DEVELOPMENT OF CORE COMPETENCIES

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2011**

Understanding Millennials

- What do we know about the next generation of Extension educators?
- What do the new faces in Extension mean to the future of the organization?
- How can we help this generation succeed?
- What are the leadership implications?

Organizations who understand how to motivate these young professionals are well positioned to be effective and thrive in the future (Ensle, 2005).

Generation Time Periods

Generation	Birth Years	Ages
Veterans	1920-1945	67-92
Baby Boomers	1946-1964	48-66
Xers	1965-1976	36-47
Millennials (Y)	1977-1997	15-35

Marston (2007); Tapscott (2009)

U.S. Generation Populations and Workforce

Generation	Population (millions)	Population (percent)
Veterans	39	13
Baby Boomers	78	26
Xers	62	20
Millennials	84	28

Note: Adapted from United States Bureau of Labor Statistics (2010)

UNL Faculty Census

Generation	UNL Faculty (percent)
Veterans	13
Baby Boomers	49
Xers	26
Millennials	12

Note: Adapted from University of Nebraska-Lincoln Factbook, 2010; Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources Finance and Personnel Office, 2011.

UNL Extension Educator Census

Generation	UNL Extension Educators (percent)	Extension Educators (population)
Veterans	3	5
Baby Boomers	64	110
Xers	14	24
Millennials	19	32

Note: Adapted from University of Nebraska-Lincoln Factbook, 2010; Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources Finance and Personnel Office, 2011.

Research Methodology

A Phenomenological Study



Phenomenology

- Describes “the **meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences** of a concept or phenomenon” (Creswell, 2007).
- Recommended when it is “important to **understand common experiences in order to develop practices, policies or to develop a deeper understanding** about the phenomenon” (Creswell, 2007).
- **Focuses on the process rather than outcomes**, on context rather than variables, and in discovery rather than confirmation. **Reality is determined through individual and collective descriptions of the situation.**
- **This study empowered Millennial Generation Extension educators to immerse** Extension colleagues, supervisors and administrators in the essence of their lived competencies development journey.

Data Collection and Analysis

- Conducted semi-structured **face-to-face interviews**.
- **Audio recorded and transcribed** interviews verbatim.
- Read through transcripts.
- Identified significant **statements, sentences** or **quotes** that describe how the participants' are experiencing the phenomenon—**horizontalization of the data**.
- Grouped these statements into larger “clusters of meaning” or **themes**.
- Used **narrative description** to convey findings of the analysis.
- Interpreted “**what**” the participants experienced and “**how**” the experience happened. Synthesized the data into the “**essence**” of the phenomenon.

Extension Core Competencies

The **knowledge, attitudes, skills** and **behaviors** that make the organization a success and help the organization adapt to a changing environment. Competencies are used to raise the bar on employee performance and provide guidance for individuals to increase their capabilities.

Maddy et al. (2002)

UNL Extension Competencies

- ☐ Successful teacher
- ☐ Subject matter competent
- ☐ Skilled communicator
- ☐ Inclusiveness
- ☐ Entrepreneurial
- ☐ Collaborator/Team Player
- ☐ Leadership
- ☐ Balance
- ☐ Change Manager
- ☐ Professionalism
- ☐ Citizenship

Phenomenon and Central Question

Millennial Generation Extension educator development of core competencies.

How do Millennial Generation, county-based, Extension educators describe their core competency development experience in the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension Division?

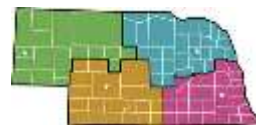
Primary Interview Questions

- What have you experienced in terms of Extension educator core competency development?
- What contexts or situations (environments, people, resources, life experiences) have typically influenced or affected your core competency development experiences?

Population and Sample

- 32 UNL Extension educators born 1977 or later.
- 18 county-based, traditional Extension educators.
- 14 interviewed, 1 to 84 months of Extension educator experience.
- Extension district representation:
 - Southeast – 9 Extension educators
 - Northeast – 2 Extension educators
 - West Central – 2 Extension educators
 - Panhandle – 1 Extension educator

UNL Extension (2011); IANR (2011)

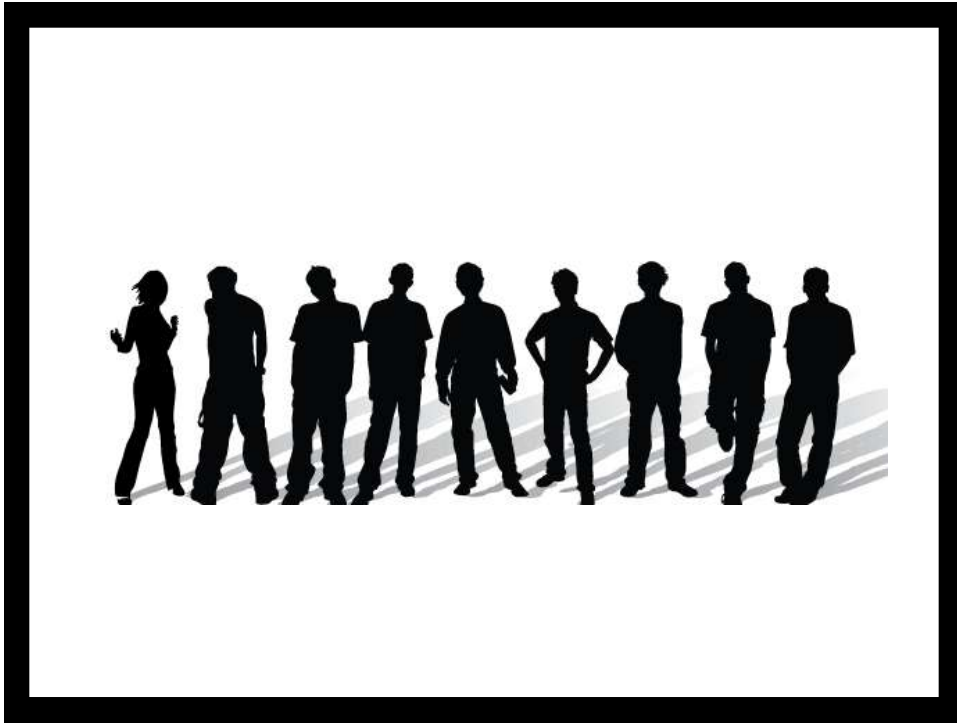


Significance

- **Understanding the competency development experiences of Millennial Extension educators** may answer questions about how to recruit, develop, motivate, retain and lead these professionals leading to improved work performance and organizational success (Garst et al., 2007; Maddy et al., 2002).
- **“...the best way to develop people—and net the greatest return on investment—is to identify the ways in which they most naturally think, feel and behave as unique individuals”** (Gallup, 2009).

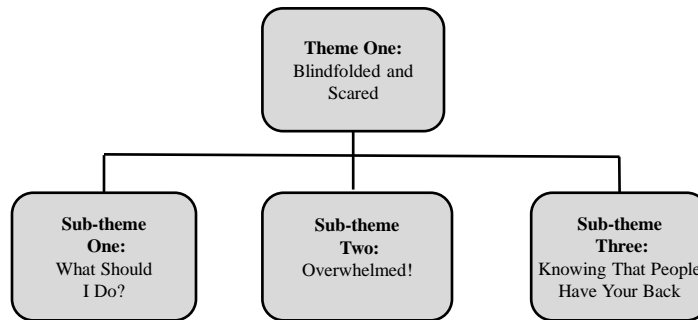
Themes and Findings





Blindfolded and Scared

Blindfolded and Scared!



What Should I Do?

- “Oh, my God! What have I just gotten into? It’s nothing like I thought it would be, It’s completely different! Everybody in the room can see, but I am blindfolded.” (Kelsey)
- “A lot of times when I’ve talked to new educators, we talk about sitting at our desks and wondering, what are we supposed to be doing? What are we doing here?” (Brittany)



What Should I Do?

- Arnold and Place (2010) “**The lack of clearly stated job expectations was frustrating to entry-level agents.**”
- Safrit and Owen (2010) advocate for **recruiting authentically**—a model whereby recruiters reveal realistic, day-to-day demands and expectations of Extension educators.



Overwhelmed!

- “It’s a little more complicated than I thought it would be.” (Kelsey)
- A year into her educator role, “Right now, I’m just getting my feet wet.” (Emily)
- “Oh, you make your own schedule. What does that mean?” (Amanda)
- Management versus teaching—“I feel like I’m getting run over sometimes...” (Ashley)



Overwhelmed!

- Amanda said, “I could see why maybe some other educators had left. When I started I kind of wanted to go back to (my old job), mostly because of the lack of training.”
- Courtney described her experience as “exciting, nerve-racking at different points...at one point, wanting to quit.”



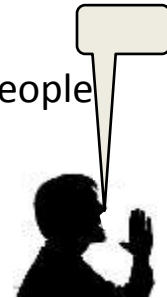
Overwhelmed!

- Place and Bailey (2010) agreed, “Extension educators may feel **overwhelmed with all of the information regarding the organization, job duties, and operational policies and procedures.**”

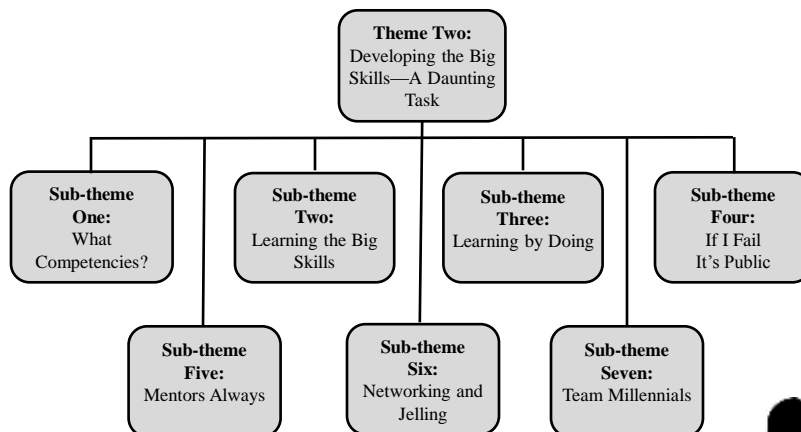


Knowing That People Have Your Back

- Having the support of colleagues and clientele.
- “Those things were critical for me at really establishing respect and a reputation for knowing (my subject matter).”
- “I think it’s just kind of knowing that people have your back.”



Developing the Big Skills— A Daunting Task



What Competencies?

- “Oh, my goodness. You know, it’s been awhile since I’ve really looked at them.” (Ashley)
- “It’s been something I haven’t really necessarily consciously thought about.” (Samantha)
- “I didn’t have a clue what they were.” (Courtney)
- “Well, I’ll tell you, this (interview) has actually been a good deal because when you said core competencies, honestly I couldn’t right off the top of my mind remember or exactly picture them.” (Chris)



Learning the Big Skills

- “The big skills needed to be successful.” (Megan)
- “Holy cow! I’ve got to know how to do everything on this list and do it proficiently?” (Stephanie)
- “Seemed kind of daunting.” (Michael)
- We learn the “what” but not the “how” or the “who.” (Kelsey)
- “Two or three years ago (three to four years into her career) is probably when I finally started to feel like I’m getting there....it clicked.” (Amanda)



Learning the Big Skills

- “These skills are either **present at the time of hiring** or (the educator) has the capacity to develop soon after hiring” (UNL Extension, 2005).
- Marston (2007) suggests that if an **employee is kept on the job for four years, turnover numbers drop dramatically** because they have acclimated to the workplace and have likely bonded with a leader who is their mentor or coach.



Learning by Doing

- Hands-on, learning-by-doing was highly desired by all educators.
- “I think you need them (competencies) modeled somehow. I mean, you need to be able to see it.” (Kayla)
- “I’m a real visual and action learner. I would say the hands-on, learning-by-doing, being involved with other educators that do well in a certain competency area.” (Chris)
- Early program involvement important.



If I Fail It's Public

- "If I do fail, it's very public (to both colleagues and clientele)." (Kelsey)
- "Both of my support staff members could be my Mom. I feel like there's even more to prove at work because I am so much younger. Whereas in my personal life, I can be twenty-five and still make mistakes." (Kayla)
- Female educators asking "How do you get your guys (farmer clientele) to listen to you?"
- Brittany stressed the importance of being accepted among her colleagues and clientele.



Mentors Always

- "Oh my gosh, she got me through my first couple years in Extension." (Ashley)
- "She's easy to get a hold of and she always answers my questions in a timely fashion." (Rachel)
- "She's always there, If I have a question or anything. I can call her anytime. I absolutely love it because we built a friendship at work and personally." (Courtney)
- "I think about these competencies and I can hear comments or I can think of people (educators or others that she has learned them from)." (Courtney)



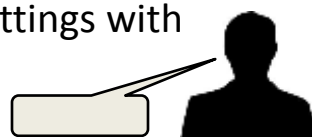
Mentors Always

- Place and Bailey (2010) noted that **mentees learned:**
 - How to find and build relationships with important clientele in the community
 - How to manage volunteers
 - Knowledge of how the Extension services work
 - Technical information about their program area
 - How to develop an advisory committee
 - How to develop and report impact accomplishments.



Networking and Jelling

- “You want to make sure everybody knows that you are in town, that you need resources, and that you can be a resource.” (Amanda)
- ...you have to say “yes” and you have to get involved or people won’t ask you to do things...” (Kayla)
- Spending time away from the office, in one-on-one or small group settings with colleagues is beneficial.



Networking and Jelling

- “That was a huge thing for me. Having your colleagues meet you and do something together that first day I think would help more of my colleagues be successful. Forming a team of core people right away that I could count on and talk to made a big difference for me. If I would have just come into the office and sat there that first day, I would have twiddled my thumbs asking, what do I do? So it was just funny how that first day really jelled us as a team so well.” (Brittany)



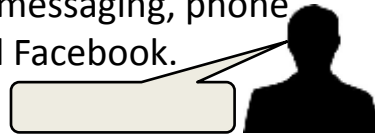
Networking and Jelling

- Safrit and Owen (2010) reported that educators **“who feel a sense of belonging and who have a strong social network of colleagues at work are more engaged and less likely to leave the organization.”**
- Kutilek and Earnest (2001) reported that **mentors and protégés preferred interacting in a calm, relaxed atmosphere.**

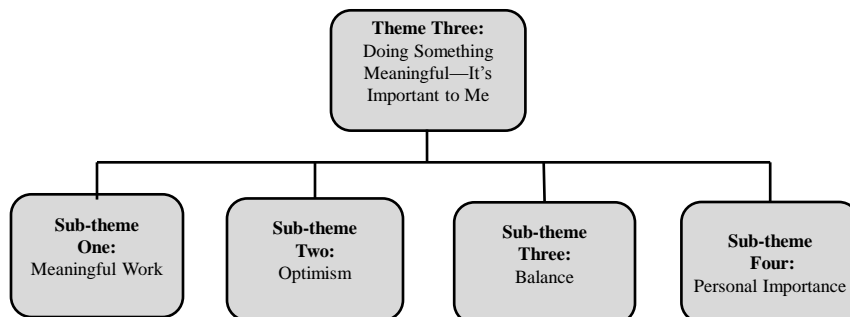


Team Millennials

- “We like individuality, yet we travel in packs.” (Michael)
- “Everybody got on the wrong page and so we kind of started our own page (team).” (Stephanie)
- Brittany rallied several female educators together to offer advice and hands-on field training.
- Millennials undercurrent of communication among their cohort via text messaging, phone calls, instant messaging, and Facebook.



Doing Something Meaningful— It's Important to Me



Meaningful Work

- “My goal is to come in and feel like I’m doing something meaningful.” (Ashley)
- Recognition and promotion are important milestones in a Millennial Educator’s career.
- Brittany suggested that simple verbal or token recognition would go a long ways towards guiding and reassuring her Millennial cohort that they are on the path to a successful and meaningful career.



Meaningful Work

- “I’ve been reassured by seasoned educators and the district director that for no longer than you’ve been in you’re doing exceptionally well. I would say it’s been a pretty rewarding experience. It’s good.” (Chris)
- Amanda welcomed comments from colleagues such as, “Hey, you know, you’re doing good.”



Meaningful Work

- Assuring a **supportive work environment**, **reasonable workload** and **recognition** was the second most **important** workplace issue “**for attracting, retaining and motivating Extension educators over the next 5 to 7 years**” according to Kroth and Peutz (2011).
- A recent survey of 10,000 employees of Fortune 1000 organizations found that **40 percent identified “lack of recognition” as a major reason for leaving a job** (Gibson, 2008).



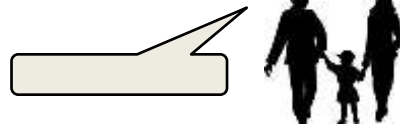
Optimism

- Millennial educators exuded enthusiasm and professionalism.
- “There are some educators that are able to think about the future and that is really nice, then there are others where the word “change” is terrible.” (Courtney)
- Kayla suggested that *attitude* should be a competency and that having the proper mindset was important to future success.
- Millennials are moving forward with or without us!



Optimism

- Stephanie was excited about employing social media technologies to augment her programs, but found a contradiction among what her supervisors said and indeed what they supported. (Stephanie)



Optimism

- Qualman (2009) stated that more than **96% of Millennials have already joined at least one social network.**
- Accenture (2010) found that companies that **“fail to embrace Millennial behavior are at risk of failing to attract and retain new hires,** while also seeing their competitive edge erode from lack of innovation in information technology.”



Balance

- “Oh my gosh Balance! “It’s a little nerve racking balancing family and work.” (Ashley)
- Regardless of Millennials’ preference to “work to live” or “live to work,” balance emerged as a challenge.
- “I have a good career here, but I don’t have a life.” (Kayla)



Balance

- “The balance of family time is going to be huge. It’s going to be family over work and in the future what does that look like for Extension? I’ve thought about that, what does our future office look like?” (Brittany)



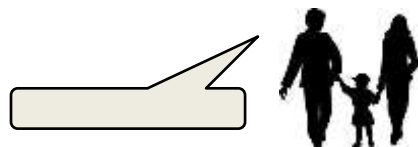
Balance

- Kroth and Peutz (2011) reported **work-life balance** as one of three priority issue issues **influencing the ability of Extension to attract, motivate and retain** Extension educators.



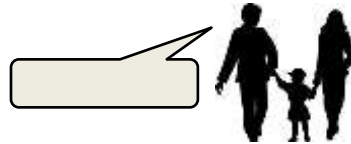
Personal Importance

- Millennials sought more interaction and direction from their supervisors.
- “We are not the previous generations. We want people to be upfront with us. Just up and tell us!” (Michael)



Personal Importance

- Emily and Samantha both referred to the “good old boys club” as they shared frustrations.
- “The older educators “...weren’t as open to teaming up on things.” It was like, “Oh, we have our project, and we’re working on it. We don’t need any help type of thing.” (Samantha)



Personal Importance

- Emily recommended that teams take time out to socialize and get to know each other beyond their professional lives and “break down some of those barriers.” “We always see each other in super professional settings. When our group gets together it’s like let’s get to business. Here’s the agenda. No time for play. It’s all work right?”



Personal Importance

- Morgan (2006) suggested that loyalty and job satisfaction among Millennials **“can be encouraged by involving them in decision making and showing value and respect for their opinions.”**
- **“The Millennial wants entertainment and play in their work, education and social life”** (Tapsott, 2009).



Personal Importance

- Branham (2005) identified **several reasons why employees decide to leave a job**, including:
 - The job or workplace was not as expected .
 - The mismatch between job and person.
 - Too little coaching and feedback.
 - Too few growth and advancement opportunities.
 - Feeling devalued and unrecognized.
 - Stress from overwork and work-life imbalance.
 - Loss of trust and confidence in senior leaders.



Shared Leadership

- The Millennials enter the workplace viewing **teamwork as the preferred mode of operation.**
- They are **committed to moving everyone forward into the future together.**
- Millennials reported **learning the most and having the best experiences when team members were offered shared program responsibilities.**
- Offers members opportunity to **share or rotate specific leadership functions.**
- A strong **hands-on, learning-by-doing competency development preference** was also voiced by educators.
- They **cherished opportunities to share time with experienced educators who respected them.**

Essence



Essence

- It takes a **family of mentors** and a **community of networks** to meet the needs and fully realize the potential of our next generation of Extension educators.
- The essence of Millennials' Extension educators' core competency development journey was about **finding pathways to success in the Extension organization among colleagues and within their communities—it's about relationships.**

Recommendations



What can you do to recruit, develop, motivate, retain and lead Millennial Educators?



Recommendations

- A **mentoring committee** should meet with Millennials their first day or week of employment.
- **Mentoring training** should be required of educators motivated to serve as mentors
- Competency training should focus on not just the “what” but also the “**how**” and “**who.**”
- Consider **competency specific workshops** for Millennial educators and their mentors.

Recommendations

- Develop a more robust **early-career educator recognition strategy** whereby Millennials are reassured of their career trajectory and quality of work.
- State action team leaders should be mindful and sensitive to **Millennial educators' professional relationships with experienced Extension professionals.**

Recommendations

- **Special attention and training for Millennial Generation female Extension educators** and experienced educators regarding **aggressive, demeaning clientele behavior.**
- **A systematic and enduring approach to Millennial educator orientation,** training, coaching and mentoring should be adopted statewide.
- **Apprenticeship** experience.
- Supervisors should not discount the importance of **communicating early and often** with Millennial educators.

Questions?

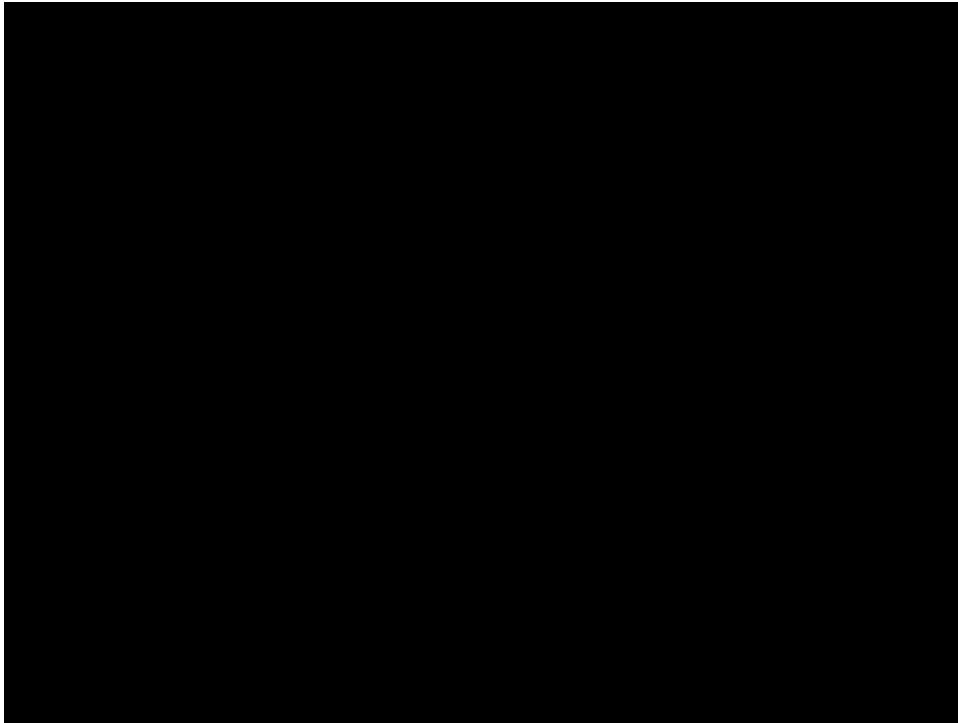
**Ask a Millennial—The future of our
organization—Our future clientele.**



COACHING AND MENTORING MILLENNIAL EXTENSION FACULTY

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**How do Millennial Generation
Extension educators describe
Extension core competencies?**

- “The **big skills** that you need to be successful.”
- “**Daunting,**” “**complex,**” and “**overwhelming.**”
- A **complicated process** and challenge.
- The **means to career advancement** and promotion.
- The **roles and expectations** of an educator are **not well understood.**

How do they learn core competencies?

- District director assignment to **visit with Extension colleagues** regarding each competency.
- New employee **orientation**.
- **Learned the “what” but not the “how” or “who.”**
- **Learning-by-doing, hands-on** competency development experiences.
- **Shadowing** experienced educators who excel in various competencies.
- **Apprenticeships, mentoring, coaching and team relationships.**

How do they view the core competency development experience?

- **Timeline and scope** difficult for educators to comprehend—“soon after hiring” versus several years.
- Competencies initially appeared **clear and straight-forward, but soon became complex.**
- At some point in their careers they said “**it clicked**” meaning that they understood and had established **confidence in their competence.**
- The competency development process happens over time—**it is an on-going process.**

What is important to their core competency development?

- A **conscious effort** to develop competencies.
- Early **program involvement with colleagues and clientele.**
- **Spending time with mentors**, especially colleagues with the **same subject matter expertise.**
- Belonging to a **supportive program team.**

How do core competencies affect their professional experience?

- **Subject matter expertise is important to acceptance and appreciation by colleagues and clientele.**
- Becoming **respected and adopted by colleagues** was an important key to success.
- **Early networking paid great dividends.**
- **Acceptance of change and challenges** served Millennials well.

How do core competencies affect their professional experience?

- The early Millennial educators offered **entrepreneurial mentorship and leadership** to novice Millennials.
- **Balancing** personal and professional roles **was challenging**.
- Desired frequent communication and **excellent relationships with their supervisors**.

What leadership approaches are best suited for their competency development?

- **Full-Range Leadership** (Transactional early with subsequent emphasis on **Transformational**)
 - Barbuto and Scholl Motivational Theory
- **Servant Leadership**
- **Shared Leadership**

Transformational Leadership

- Individualized Consideration – empathizing, interpersonal connections, genuinely caring, encouraging continuous growth, looking out for employee's best interest.
- Intellectual Stimulation – Challenging the status quo, looking for better ways of doing things, willing to take risks.
- Inspirational Motivation – Clarifying organization's future, create strong sense of purpose, align individual and organization needs, we can achieve whatever we desire.
- Idealized Influence – Demonstrate vision, walking the talk, developing trust and confidence among employees.

Barbuto and Scholl Motivational Theory

- Intrinsic process motivation is when people are **motivated by their work** and they have **fun** in the process.
- Instrumental motivation exists when a person is **motivated** by money, **promotion**, **awards** or other **extrinsic tangible items**.
- External self-concept-based motivation is where individuals **seek acceptance** and **status gain in social groups**.
- Internal self-concept-based motivation focuses on **personal goals**.
- Goal internalization motivation is when individuals adopt **attitudes and behaviors for the good of the organization**, community or society.

Servant Leadership

- *Selflessness and listening* provide the foundation for **committed, quality mentorship and coaching** by experienced educators.
- *Emotional healing* lends itself to “**having the back**” of Millennial educators.
- *Foresight* is an asset that positions leaders to offer **sound, visionary guidance to mentees**.
- *Persuasive mapping* offers **organizational insight, vision and inspiration** to younger generation educators.
- *Organizational stewardship* is depicted by leaders who “**develop a community spirit in the workplace**, one that is preparing to leave a positive legacy” (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006).

Implications for Further Research



Implications for Further Research

- Further study of **female Extension educator career development**.
- A **longitudinal study of Millennial Generation competency development** throughout their careers.
- Explore **core competency development among the campus and work station communities** offering a more comprehensive perspective of the process.

Implications for Further Research

- Comparing and contrasting **core competency development among former and subsequent Extension educator generation cohorts**.
- Studying **personality type influence on core competency development**.