

A large, bold, white letter 'Y' is centered on a solid orange background.

Y-SIZE YOUR BUSINESS

How **Gen Y Employees** Can Save
You Money and Grow Your Business

JASON RYAN DORSEY

Sample Chapter Package

SAMPLE CHAPTERS INCLUDED:

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Hiring Gen Y Makes Dollars and Sense

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An Overview on How to Y-Size Your Business

A Call to Action

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CHAPTER 1

Hiring Gen Y Makes Dollars and Sense

(Or, Why a 22-year-old with three tattoos who still lives with his mom could make a fantastic employee . . .)

“WHY SHOULD I HIRE YOUR GENERATION?”

Employers ask me this question almost every day. Then they start in with their stories about “people my age.” Two of my recent favorites: “I know all about employing your generation. Last year I hired a young guy right out of college. He had good grades and seemed like a hard worker. A week later I’m in the company bathroom and I hear him talking on his cell phone *in a restroom stall*. And his phone was on speaker! Even worse, he didn’t think he was doing anything wrong. He just kept talking and talking.”

Or, “I gave a 24-year-old woman her annual performance review last week, and she cried right in front of me! I couldn’t believe it. Here I was, a woman who had worked hard to climb the corporate ladder over 20 years, starting at a time when being a woman in the corporate world was hard enough, and here she was, crying on the other side of my desk because she got a good, but not perfect, review. Next thing I know, her mom’s on the phone asking to speak to my boss! What is going on with you people? How am I ever going to build a business with your generation as employees?”

Okay, I get it. My peers and I can be a *little* different when we enter the workplace (which is, on average, about 10 minutes later than you’d like). Sure, we show up to work with our iPod buds dangling out of our purse or backpack, and our ever-present cell phone is ringing loudly during the CEO’s Monday morning pep talk. Yes, many of us have a tattoo (or several); some of us sport nontraditional hair colors; and it’s not uncommon for us to have a piercing somewhere besides our ear lobes (and, no, it doesn’t hurt *much*).

However, in my work consulting and speaking with business leaders around the world, I’ve seen time and again that Gen Y can deliver tremendous workplace performance and loyalty at a substantial value—*when managed correctly*. This combination could not have come at a better time, because the current economic climate is forcing companies to do more with less in an increasingly competitive business environment. It’s my belief—and I’ve seen it in action—that Gen Y can be the strategic differentiator you’ve been looking for.

My interview with Tad, 25, is one example of the kind of value Gen Y can bring to the workplace. Tad graduated from college and went to work for Intuit, where he was placed in a Rotational Development Program. (I talk about creating these types of programs in Chapter 11.) Part of Intuit’s culture is to ask employees to spend 10 percent of their time thinking about ways to better the company or themselves. Tad was part of a group that was trying to come up with a new idea when they realized the area where Intuit could use help was the actual *process of innovation* within the company.

Tackling institutional innovation is a monumental task for an executive of any age, let alone a Gen Yer in his first year of employment at a large company. Undeterred, or possibly too young to know

better, Tad and four of his Gen Y coworkers went to work fixing the process of innovation during their “better-themselves-or-the-company” time. He also worked well past midnight and many weekends without any additional pay—something bosses who haven’t had good experiences employing Gen Y consider impossible, or simply unbelievable.

A year after his initial idea, and *hundreds* of unpaid hours later, Tad and his coworkers, together with several other employees he inspired to champion the cause, released Intuit Brainstorm, a product that has completely changed innovation at Intuit. In the six months after the new technology’s release, ideation at Intuit—meaning the rate of idea creation and advancement within the company—has increased 1,000 percent. Participation by employees in innovation has increased 500 percent, and new ideas have gone from concept to customer demo in as little time as three months—exceptional (and valuable) for a company as large as Intuit. Most impressive, other companies are now licensing Intuit Brainstorm for their own innovation processes, all because a 25-year-old Gen Yer wasn’t satisfied with something that was a cornerstone of his company for *years*.

I asked Tad why he would go so far beyond his normal job description to pursue such a farfetched idea. His response: “I just wanted to make the company better. I thought that if I could make innovation easier and more fun, then more people would want to do it.”

Before you think Tad is the exception to the rule, or that high-tech innovation doesn’t apply in your business, consider the view of Jamie Yarrow, president of Terra Resort Group, who has 500 employees at his hotels, the vast majority of whom are in Gen Y:

Anyone who says Gen Y is lazy, unmotivated, or can’t be a professional, simply doesn’t get Gen Y. Sure, they do some things different, but when you figure out where they’re coming from, you realize they are really driven to make an impact. The difference in the workplace is *how* they might try to make that impact.

As an executive, one of the things I value most about my Gen Y employees is that they don’t care how good I was last year or last month. They want to know what I’m doing *today* that is going to move the business forward. They never give me a chance to settle

for “good enough.” And I’m not saying it’s only my Gen Y managers who challenge me, I mean the Gen Yer who is painting my door wants to know how we are going to grow the business.

I can see where some executives would find this offensive, but to me it is a huge *competitive advantage*. They want me to get better every day—so they can get better every day. That kind of focus on ongoing improvement can build a business that is hard to beat.

While I’ve seen over and over that Gen Y employees can deliver strong performance with the right type of management and leadership, I also know there is a growing generation gap in the workforce that is frustrating employees of all ages. Making the generation gap more extreme, older workers are now delaying retirement, and many who had retired are back looking for jobs. The result is that several of my clients report they have *the largest age gap they’ve ever had* between their oldest and youngest employees—in some cases the age gap is more than 60 years!

I saw this age gap in action when I was keynoting a conference for executives of large companies in the Midwest. I asked the room full of executives to raise their hands if they felt Gen Yers have a lot to learn when we first show up to work for them. All the hands quickly went up (along with some supporting—and some unrepeatably—comments). Then I asked the executives if they, too, had much to learn at their first job. Again, all the hands went up (with some comments like, “Sure, but I started working when I was 12”). Then I gave them the dream new-hire scenario: “I want you to imagine that a member of my generation, Gen Y, has shown up to work for you. It’s our first real job, *so we’re probably . . . 24*. We’re excited, we’re nervous, we’re late. If you could give us one piece of advice based on all the lessons you’ve learned about work since your first job, what would you tell us in one sentence?” Hands shot up again, but the oldest gentleman in the room, who I later learned was in his late 70s, made sure he got my attention. I asked him, “What advice would you give that Gen Yer on our first day of work, at our first real job, that will guide us for the rest of our career?!”

“Pull up your pants!” he shouted. I almost fell off the stage. The entire room burst into laughter, agreement, and applause. Good thing I was wearing a suit and not the jeans I had on the day before . . .

THE GENERATION GAP IS BIGGER THAN OUR BAGGY PANTS

Anyone who has spent five minutes working in a company alongside Gen Y employees, whom I define as being born between 1977 and 1995 (more on why in Chapter 2), knows we bring different personalities and priorities to the workplace. Some of Gen Y's characteristics can add immediate value to an employer (such as text messaging one-handed while driving—ideal for pizza delivery), while others can be downright confusing or annoying (“Can’t you write an e-mail with at least one complete sentence?!”). I often hear employers say, “What’s so hard about showing up on time, turning off your cell phone, tucking in your shirt, rolling up your sleeves, and going to work? That’s what I did.” Clearly the person who says this still has a land line (i.e., home phone) and probably can do magic tricks with a pen, like balance their checkbook *by hand*. But I get where they’re coming from.

The attitude, behaviors, and values gap between Gen Y and other generations—the newest generation gap—shows up in all manner of workplace areas, including differences in communication style (“My boss gives me notes in cursive. *I can’t read cursive.*”), professionalism (“A tie? Where do I get a tie?”), punctuality (10 minutes early versus well, showing up before lunch), and my favorite, customer service (“You want *me* to count your change back to you? Can’t you count?”).

While this divide can sometimes be comical to outside observers (unless it’s your change we can’t seem to count back), it is an absolute crisis in companies that are competing in a global marketplace during incredibly difficult times. This is especially true at companies reliant on Gen Y employees with specialized skills and high starting salaries, such as healthcare or high tech, those with much lower salaries but historically high turnover, such as QSR (fast food) and hospitality, and companies facing an impending retirement bubble or with ambitious growth plans.

HOW I ACCIDENTALLY BECAME THE GEN Y GUY

As a member of Gen Y who sleeps with his cell phone (really) and a business owner since age 18, I was pulled into bridging this growing generational gap by accident. On one hand, I was speaking and

consulting with executives, managers, and entrepreneurs on how to get their Gen Y employees to perform at a higher level and stick around longer without paying us more money (and especially without coddling us). On the other hand, my Gen Y career advice books are estimated to have helped more than 100,000 Gen Yers enter the workforce. I've also personally spoken to more than 500,000 of my peers, representing all 50 states and more than 100 different countries, on how to make the transition into the workplace and the real world.

With this unique vantage point, I was caught smack in the middle of the generational divide. I had unfiltered access to the pressures top business leaders were facing to make the most of Gen Y employees. I also saw the limitations on what business leaders could actually do, given market and operational realities (“No, not all employees get their own computers; we are a cleaning company, after all”). At the same time, Gen Y employees were reading my books, attending my seminars, and then e-mailing me about how “out of touch” their employers were—the *exact same thing* the employers were saying from the other side of their mahogany desks. Clearly there was a growing divide and *everyone* was losing.

I knew there had to be a middle ground that everyone could build on, so I went in search of it. I didn't stop searching until I discovered the solution (more on that journey in Chapter 4). The result of my search is the *Y-Size* process, which is more than just a few steps on how to best employ Gen Y. This process reveals *how employers can make the most of Gen Y while at the same time respecting and incorporating the strengths of the other generations in the same workplace*. The bottom line: Employees of all ages benefit; no one gets coddled; and companies move ahead faster.

EACH NEW GENERATION ENTERS THE WORKPLACE “THE HARD WAY”

To be fair, the generational disconnect (and head shaking) that many employers are experiencing with Gen Y is not unprecedented. In fact, it's pretty standard. Every new generation that enters the workforce causes stress, frustration, and criticism from the generations already employed. Experienced managers and executives believe the younger “kids” (who might be in their late 20s) need to pay their

dues “the same way they did.” They also believe the new generation had it easier than they did growing up (Okay, I’ll admit that you actually suffered through dial-up). At the same time, I’ve never found a company that did everything right when it came to employing Gen Y *or any other generation*, for that matter.

From an employee perspective, all the executives, managers, and entrepreneurs I have interviewed said they had much to learn when they landed their first real job. Gen Y is no different, except we are entering the workforce later in life, with much less (if any) real world experience, and with even less formal training or preparation. We’ve also been told by our well-meaning parents (and reinforced by society) that if we can dream it, we can achieve it. Talk about a setup for a knockdown, especially in this economy. Sure, you can be CEO, *but not in the first month*, and, by the way, you start out in the mailroom. And yes, that’s mail with stamps.

Although every new generation causes friction and stress in the workplace, there are three factors converging on our current workforce that are extraordinary—factors that are radically raising the stakes for companies to figure out how to best employ Gen Y. These are also the factors that add urgency and weight to the payoff for leading your company through the *Y-Size* process.

1. The economic downturn now affecting the national and global economy

It seems few industries or geographies are immune. Storied companies such as General Motors are filing for bankruptcy or seeking government intervention. Credit is expensive or nonexistent (even if you pay on time!). Revenue and profit margins have been replaced by losses and resignations. Flat is the new growth. As employers look to reduce costs, they are paying close attention to one specific line item: employee costs. At many companies, employee costs are the largest or second largest operational expense. In determining how to maximize the return on their employee investment, executives and CFOs are finding that the numbers don’t lie: *Gen Y is often the least expensive employee to hire, especially when you factor in benefits*. On the other hand, Gen Y also brings many skills, albeit in need of refinement, that can be valuable right away, with a little instruction. (See Chapter 11 on how to do this in less than 30 minutes.) And there are a lot of us:

Numbering 79.8 million in the United States, Gen Y is also the fastest growing generation in the workforce. The same situation is true in many other countries.

Talk about a generation being at the right place at the right time! Combine all these factors together and you can't miss the potential return on investment from effectively employing my generation. In my view, Gen Y's emergence in the workforce is a huge strategic opportunity for an employer to create short-term gains as well as position themselves for a long-term competitive advantage *if they know how to employ us*. That's what the *Y-Size* process is all about.

2. Gen Y's fundamentally different attitude toward work

*Gen Y is the first generation to enter the current workforce without any expectation of lifetime employment. We have never expected to work for one company for 40 years and retire with a 401k (Good thing, because we think a 401k is a painfully slow Internet connection). Once Gen Y has job options, which will happen when the economy ultimately improves or our workplace skill set develops, our generational viewpoint will also make us more inclined to leave an employer where we don't feel we fit. (However, don't worry: I show you exactly how to retain Gen Y with little extra effort or cost in Chapters 13 and 14.) While on the surface this may seem like Gen Y is born to be disloyal, the opposite is actually true. We are intensely loyal, to the point where we will take a *pay cut* to help an employer we believe in. That said, earning our loyalty means doing a few things differently, but none of these things requires paying us more, and each of these is described later in this book.*

3. The multigenerational collision happening in the workplace

These collisions, or disconnects, have reached an unprecedented level because *for the first time ever four distinctly different generations are working side by side*. This has never happened in the modern workforce, and it is creating all kinds of new and unexpected

problems. Companies with a four-generation workforce will likely see disconnects (and possibly straight-up conflicts) in communication, motivation, innovation, teamwork, engagement, professionalism, customer service, and leadership. If companies do not bridge these generations and embrace their newest generation of frontline employees, their operating costs will go up, their effectiveness will decrease, and both morale and profits will suffer (although anonymous blog postings will go through the roof).

On the other hand, if companies can successfully navigate the dynamics of a multigenerational workforce, in particular Gen Y's tidal wave-like entry, they can unlock tremendous workplace potential where other companies only unlock infighting. This will become even more valuable when the 80 million Baby Boomers in the United States eventually transition into retirement or more lifestyle-friendly jobs (which has been delayed due to the economy and their 28-year-old son with a master's degree moving home to "find himself"—by playing online poker).

These three converging factors—the economy, Gen Y's workplace attitude, and a multigenerational workforce—underscore the importance of making the most of Gen Y's emergence during a pivotal time for business competition. Adding to a sense of urgency in the United States, our economy is increasingly dominated by service and knowledge industries. By their very nature, these industries depend on younger workers to open doors (literally), answer questions, and shape the customer experience. This is important because at the most expensive service- and knowledge-based companies—whether boutique hotels or highbrow law firms—the first and last person a customer encounters is often a member of Gen Y. This means members of my generation are literally the bookends of the entire customer experience, and some of us don't even own books!

DON'T CATER TO GEN Y—LEAD US

I think it's important to clarify up front that I am 100 percent opposed to catering to my generation's every whim (after all, who really needs a company car in New York City?). In fact, businesses that coddle Gen Y end up attracting the wrong kind of Gen Y employees (the kind who

quit without notice and then ask for a job reference). You don't want employees seeking to be coddled and catered to. You want employees seeking to make an impact from Day One, employees who are motivated to prove their potential and show how wise you were to give them a chance. The latter are the employees the *Y-Size* process attracts, retains, and develops.

I believe that with the right insight, and a small amount of effort at key employee life cycle moments, employers can easily find a common ground that benefits them and makes the most of their Gen Y employees. This belief is the backbone of my *Y-Size* process, which is inexpensive to implement, easy to customize, and leads to *measurable results*. The secret is to balance larger Gen Y employment strategies with tactical actions so that every business leader recognizes that they can do something *today* to help make Gen Y a cost-effective, highly productive employee group.

GEN Y ROI

When it comes to the bottom line of your business, Gen Y's emergence could not have come at a better time. Companies must compete to win based on price or quality—or risk going out of business. You want to be Wal-Mart or Nordstrom's, but definitely not Mervyn's. Being flexible to compete on price or quality or both will ultimately trump more bureaucratic competitors, who can only watch the change happening around them and ask for a memo (and probably a PowerPoint summary). Employers also have realized—and are telling me—that despite the fact that unemployment is at a 25-year high, good, reliable, affordable employees remain hard to come by, and they are more valuable than ever because employers have to do more with fewer resources.

Here's the good news: If you've picked up this book, you realize that Gen Y is an opportunity masquerading as a problem (albeit a problem with big expectations). I'm here to help you find the opportunity within the problem, to leverage it strategically and tactically, and to do so while saving you money and growing your business. Before I share my *Y-Size* process, it's essential to dive a little deeper into who Gen Y is and what we are thinking

(especially when we got that tattoo at 4 AM). These insights in the next few chapters will help you to see why and how the *Y-Size* process will benefit you as a business leader and your company as a market leader.

Y-SIZE QUESTIONS

1. Do you depend on Gen Y employees for the successful operation of your business?
2. Is your company experiencing difficulties with employees in Gen Y?
3. What one thing would you like to see your Gen Y employees do better?

CHAPTER 4

An Overview on How to *Y-Size* Your Business

(Or, How to maximize Gen Y's employment value without hiring our mom, Twittering in the bathroom, or invoking the word "Dude")

It's obvious the workforce is in the midst of rapid change. Companies large and small, new and established, are feeling the pressure to do more with less. *I believe Gen Y employees are a key part of the solution.* We are entering the workforce in record numbers; we are eager to have an impact; and we can provide an attractive cost versus benefit ratio as we continue to develop our skills. The *Y-Size* process is your road map to maximizing our workplace potential.

Sure, you might have to see our potential through the glare of our lip piercing, but we have tremendous value to offer nevertheless

(especially once the swelling goes down). Until then, I challenge you to see us for what we can bring to your workplace, and not just how much we have left to learn. Whoever embraces us first will reap a cost advantage now and a strategic advantage later.

To understand how big an opportunity Gen Y can be to your career and your company, let's put a number on it.

CALCULATE YOUR COMPANY'S CURRENT INVESTMENT IN GEN Y

(The more accurate your numbers, the more accurate your answers.)

How many Gen Y employees does your company currently have? If you don't know, ask someone who does, or go ahead and guess.

Answer: _____

What is the average compensation for a Gen Y employee at your company? Again, ask if you don't know; otherwise, go ahead and guess.

Answer: _____

Now multiply the number of Gen Y employees by our average compensation.

Answer: _____

This last answer is your company's current financial investment in Gen Y as employees. You can also view this investment as the risk your company is taking by assuming that Gen Y will meet your employment needs. The better you manage this investment and decrease your risk based on my *Y-Size* process, the better the return for *everyone* involved—employers and Gen Y.

To consider your company's Gen Y employee investment in the big picture of your operations, compare us to your company's total revenues or total employee costs. To see how rapidly this reliance might grow, multiply the average compensation of a Gen Y employee by the number of us your company is likely to employ five years from today. You can reach this number by considering trends such as your five-year growth plan, average annual turnover, and percentage of new hires likely

in Gen Y. The answers to these questions always lead to the same reaction from my clients: “&#*%!” Or as a Gen Yer would text, “OMG!”

Clearly, the more value your company can gain from your Gen Y employee investment—both in the present and in the near future—the more successfully your company will operate. If you understand the need (and accompanying urgency), the question to answer now is: What do you do?

MANY HAVE TRIED, BUT NO COMPANY HAS PERFECTED GEN Y EMPLOYMENT

“Okay, so, what do I do?”

That was exactly the question I was asked over and over by seasoned Fortune 500 executives, mid-level managers, and first-time entrepreneurs who wanted to know how to better employ Gen Y. To find the answer, I went in search of a company or an individual who had figured out exactly how to best employ Gen Y through our *entire* employee lifecycle (from attracting us to keeping us for years as we fill increasingly important internal job openings).

I interviewed executives, managers, entrepreneurs, corporate board members, and frontline Gen Y employees. I talked with them in-person, by phone, at their place of business, during roundtable discussions, and via e-mail in industries ranging from healthcare to fast food. I wanted to find the one person or organization that had figured out exactly how to best employ my generation. After countless conversations, e-mails, intensive research, and literally tens of thousands of airline miles, I could not find a single company or organization that was doing everything right to maximize Gen Y’s employee performance from start to finish. Instead I discovered two things.

First, I found that the underlying employer / Gen Y employee issues were almost always the same. Employers wanted to attract the best and the brightest Gen Y employees, get us to show up on time (or even a few minutes early—especially if we needed to change into our uniforms), give our best effort while on the job, solve problems and innovate, develop our professional abilities, work well with others of all ages, and then stick around for more than a month (most employers said they wanted 3–5 years). This was as true in companies with 50,000 employees as it was in those with four employees sharing one

cramped office, two desks, a computer, no bathroom, and a hairless dog (really).

Whether it was a hotel chain, a law firm, a tech company, or even a government entity, employers kept voicing the same concerns, albeit in their own words and occasional industry jargon. (My favorite was hearing senior partners at a huge law firm call 30-year-old associates at their firm “kids.” I never felt so...10 again!) However, the level of urgency to better employ Gen Y depended entirely on our current and near-term importance to the employer’s operations.

This makes obvious sense. If a company already depends heavily on Gen Y in critical positions, such as customer service in the retail industry, then management already knows the challenge Gen Y presents and wants immediate answers. Companies who are only starting to rely on Gen Y, such as those requiring more advanced degrees (which we are *finally* completing), are just beginning to realize they might have to do something different.

My second discovery was realizing how many individuals had creatively mastered one specific piece of the larger Gen Y employment puzzle. Finding these frontline-tested examples of what actually worked was the most exciting part of my journey to best employ Gen Y. One week I’d talk to a Fortune 500 executive who had found a great way to develop Gen Y talent, and another week I would listen to a small business owner who had invented a creative way to recruit quality Gen Y applicants for virtually no money. I collected these ideas with a focus on identifying those that were the most cost-effective, time efficient, and acceptable to the other generations in the workforce, and which could be customized for adoption in companies large or small. These ideas were further evaluated and refined with the help of executives, managers, and Gen Y employees themselves to determine which could work in industries as diverse as sanitation and semiconductor manufacturing, with degreed and non-degreed employees, both hourly and salaried.

THE END RESULT: A TREASURE TROVE OF STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

The end result became the foundation for this book: a treasure trove of strategies and tactics for best employing Gen Y collected from the frontlines of businesses across the board. These strategies and tactics

were then refined, based on my team's additional research into Gen Y preferences, priorities, beliefs, and values. I focused on those employment aspects that executives and managers told me they most wanted help with for their Gen Y employees: accountability, retention, motivation, communication, innovation, teamwork, and overall performance.

I knew that when applied independently, the value of these strategies and tactics was positive; that's how I'd found them in the first place. But I also knew the impact was often short-term. Why? Because the actions were not connected to a larger Gen Y employment strategy. Instead, they were fragmented, with some serving as big ideas and others as extremely specific tactics. The missing link was a step-by-step framework based on the Gen Y employee lifecycle—which is much shorter than the employee lifecycle of 20 years ago—and built on an insider's understanding of Gen Y's mindset in our multigenerational workplace (i.e., someone who sleeps with his or her cell phone—yes, again, I'll admit, I'm guilty of it).

I made it my mission to develop and refine this framework until I was confident it was an *actionable methodology* that met the demands of today's challenging business climate and that also was built on the strengths of the other three generations already employed. The result is my *Y-Size* process, which begins with attracting the right Gen Y applicants and ends with keeping us longer to fill increasingly important internal job openings. The *Y-Size* process benefits Gen Y because we have a better employment experience and our talents are developed faster. The *Y-Size* process benefits you and your company because Gen Y has an impact sooner, offers greater value quicker, and will literally save you money while growing your business.

A CHAPTER-BY-CHAPTER OVERVIEW OF THE Y-SIZE PROCESS AND YOUR BUSINESS

Chapter 5: What Gen Y Really Looks for in a Job

Gen Y approaches the job search differently. To attract more high-quality applicants, you have to get us to *want* to apply as soon as we find out about your job opening (in person, online, or by phone while driving). However, receiving more applicants doesn't automatically

translate into better applicants or, more important, the right applicants. This chapter will make Gen Y's approach to the job search work in your favor so that you get the right applicants applying 24/7. You will then be able to quickly weed out the applicants who don't fit while advancing the best applicants to the next step of the hiring process.

Chapter 6: Attract Quality Gen Y Employees Faster Than Free Pizza at 2 AM

In this chapter I provide four straightforward, nuts-and-bolts steps that every company—no matter the size or industry—should use to attract even more quality Gen Y applicants in a matter of days (or, if you type slowly, a matter of weeks). These ideas work. I've made them as basic as possible so that you can customize them to fit your specific situation. Each of these four ideas is cheap, and each will get you more applicants in a big way—and persuade the applicants to complete the *entire* application. I'm confident you will like the results. When you do please, let my mom know (more on that in Chapter 12).

Chapter 7: Day One Is All-Important

Gen Y decides on our first day at work whether or not we will stay with an employer long term. The unprecedented importance of the first day to Gen Y makes it the easiest opportunity you have to build a foundation for our loyalty, enthusiasm, and tenure. In this chapter I share step-by-step actions on how to make Gen Y's first day at your business so enticing that we can't wait to return—and might even show up early the next day (with roommates in tow). These ideas take only a little effort or forethought, and they consistently work. No big out-of-pocket expenses here, just ideas that will make the first day absolutely unforgettable.

Chapter 8: Orientation: Seeing Our Fit within Your Culture

Most organizations are dealing with new hires on an ongoing basis, either because of growth or turnover, and they need to standardize their orientation process for quality, consistency, and efficiency. The benefits of standardizing your orientation process are big because you see immediate payoff whether you hire two employees or 2,000. This

is especially true as Gen Y represents an increasingly greater percentage of new hires. Orientation is important to us because we need to know exactly how you want us to perform. Otherwise, we have to go to you for help *all* the time, and that's a no-win for everyone (especially your e-mail inbox). In this chapter I will share several ways to make your orientation process interesting and interactive without making it more expensive. Better yet, I will add accountability to the mix so that you can hold Gen Y responsible once we start working.

Chapter 9: Keep Gen Y Engaged @ Work

My interviews with Gen Y reveal that the first 30 days of employment largely determine our career trajectory with your company for the next 30 months. The sooner Gen Y employees find our fit and path within your organization and are able to identify and measure the results most important to you, the sooner you can begin to earn a significant return on your hiring investment. You don't want Gen Y simply showing up *at* work; you want us showing up ready *to* work and keeping that focus throughout the day. Engagement is all about having us do the right things at the right time to move you and your company ahead.

Chapter 10: Develop Gen Y Talent by Making "Good Enough" Unacceptable

Gen Y has tremendous talent (just ask, we'll tell you!), but that talent is only raw potential until you draw it out of us. In this chapter I will show you where Gen Y needs the most help developing our workplace talent, and specific ways to get us to put it to use for you. By taking these actions to develop our workplace mindset and skills, you make us more valuable to you and your company from the inside out. You also prepare us to take on greater leadership roles as we build a track record of success. Your goal: transform our latent talent into action.

Chapter 11: Professionalism Is More Than Bling

Okay, so some of us Gen Yers (myself included) don't always understand what you mean by "corporate attire." We really thought our leather sandals counted. After all, the price tag said "Dress Sandals."

No worries. All the professionalism you think we need can be learned—from a good handshake to speaking in front of an audience—if you take a moment to teach us. Don't fall victim to the mistake that many managers make when they assume that Gen Y is unprofessional. It's simply that many of us lack instruction. I will show you how to accomplish this necessary instruction in 30 minutes or less, and do so only once. "OK Grasshopper, here is how you shake hands correctly. Notice how we're not hugging or bumping chests."

Chapter 12: Motivate Gen Y by NOT Giving Us a Trophy

Discretionary effort, going above and beyond the minimum required, is the sign of a motivated employee. To create discretionary effort, and to keep us motivated to produce results after we get into the groove of a new job, business leaders must build a logical and emotional connection with Gen Y employees. This type of connection doesn't cost more money. In fact, it will save you *a lot* of money and keep you from handing out all those gift cards we don't actually use (Great, a free car wash. I don't own a car.). All it takes to more effectively motivate us is an approach more in sync with our life priorities. The end goal is to make Gen Y feel so dissatisfied doing the minimum at work that doing our best is all that feels normal.

Chapter 13: Retain Gen Y—and Our Enthusiasm

To maximize the payoff from the *Y-Size* process, you want your best Gen Y employees to stay with your company for a long period of time. In this chapter, you will learn how to keep Gen Y excited about our career with your company and have us demonstrate this enthusiasm through increased average tenure. This chapter will prove that your *Y-Size* efforts are paying off because you will be able to measure your tenure results, year after year. Now *that* is Gen Y ROI!

Chapter 14: Lead Me to Loyalty

As Gen Y moves forward within an organization, we look for reasons to continue giving our best, even when the going gets tough (or, worse, the Internet slows down). The best loyalty-building

connections are between us and senior leaders, as well as our colleagues. These connections can develop and evolve in both professional meetings and in less formal settings. Contrary to some expert opinions, Gen Y does not need tons of in-depth communication (i.e., keep your multi-page memo to yourself; we only read the bullet points anyway). However, we do want to know what our leaders are thinking (in 140 characters or less—preferably without vowels) and how we can help. In this chapter you will see how to make Gen Y feel included and appreciated, whether that is with a “touch-in” text message, or by making a Values Video with our boss and coworkers.

Chapter 15: Build a Talent Pipeline Like American Idol

Once you’ve Y-Sized your Gen Y employee life cycle, and your company is seeing the benefits of a new generation building momentum toward your strategic goals, it’s time to lock in your advantage by developing a Talent Pipeline. Your Talent Pipeline attracts the best and the brightest *before* we start our careers so that we literally build our future with you from the ground up (and possibly before we start shaving). This is how you solidify your advantage and really peeve your competition. This is also where you start to see the ripple effects of your leadership changing your business, and at the same time changing entire lives.

WHERE TO START?

Before implementing the Y-Size process, it’s important to figure out what’s working and what’s not with your current Gen Y employees. Most of my clients are able to identify at least one or two priority employment areas where they would like to focus their efforts before they spread the Y-Size process throughout their entire organization. For example, if you’re having problems keeping Gen Y employees for more than six months, start with the Retention part of the Y-Size process, Chapter 13. If you’re not attracting quality candidates, then start with the Attracting part of the Y-Size process, Chapter 5. In an ideal consulting situation, I would want you to start at the beginning of the employee life cycle and finish with the end. But since we operate in the real world and not the ideal world (meaning you

already have employees and need results *now*), you should start where you see smoke: Put out the fires first and plant the trees later.

Whether you begin with Attracting Gen Y or Retaining Gen Y, you have the benefit of knowing that most of the time-consuming trial and error has been done for you. *I've found what works to make the most of Gen Y employees.* I've also found out how to implement these strategies and tactics in a way that can easily be adjusted to fit your culture, business model, and measurable objectives—all while building on the strengths of the other generations already in your workplace. While the actual implementation may vary, the underlying problems and solutions are the same. The long-term benefit from the *Y-Size* process is a structure and system that Gen Y can rely on to move forward within your organization every day, starting at Day One.

WHO LEADS THE WAY?

When it comes to implementing the *Y-Size* Process, the right person to lead the way depends on your urgency to gain more value from your Gen Y employees. If you see Gen Y's emergence as a potential strategic advantage (as I do), then your senior leadership needs to understand the problem, recognize the opportunity, and champion your efforts. If, however, you are directly responsible for Gen Y employees and need better results right away, then start where you are with whatever resources and support you have. The vast majority of the tactics in the *Y-Size* process are free or inexpensive, and the more outcomes you create and document, the faster you will build support and momentum for bigger initiatives.

Regardless of where you choose to start, one thing is for certain: *The sooner you act, the more you and your company will benefit.* Gen Y is not going away; we are entering the workforce in record numbers and have the potential and desire to make a difference. Be the leader who wisely sees the opportunity and embraces our strengths and weaknesses, as well as the opportunity we represent. Lead us to the type of performance and loyalty we can deliver by implementing the *Y-Size* process. We want to make an impact from Day One. Let us.

Y-SIZE QUESTIONS

1. What percentage of your workforce is in Gen Y (born between 1977 and 1995)?
2. Do you have any recruiting, training, or talent development processes especially designed for Gen Y?
3. Do you believe you could achieve better results employing Gen Y?

A CALL TO ACTION: WHY REACH OUT TO GEN Y—YOUR LEGACY AND OPPORTUNITY

All around you is an incredible opportunity. We are an opportunity that's texting, typing, talking, and walking—and probably all at the same time. We are your opportunity to make *an entire generation* of 79.8 million people a competitive advantage for your company *and your career*.

Gen Y, my own generation, is entering the workforce in droves (and sometimes driven by our parents). Along with a few characteristics you probably find annoying (such as writing in parentheses in a compound sentence), we also bring many valuable skills and talents to your workplace—as well as a strong desire to make a difference for you, our employer.

The *Y-Size* strategies and actions shared in this book will help you to make the most of everything positive we bring to the workforce and address the areas where we can most benefit from your help. All that is missing now is for *you* to champion the belief that Gen Y employees can add value to your company and its culture, now and in the future.

We want, maybe even need, for you to take the *Y-Size* steps described in this book so that you can influence how other leaders at your company think about and manage us. We're not asking for a ribbon or a handout; *we're just asking for a chance*—a chance to prove that we can make a difference in the workplace and to demonstrate our potential to ourselves and to our families, not to mention our 4,637 friends on Facebook.

The catalyst for reaping the rewards of the *Y-Size* process is having at least *one person* within a company recognize the huge upside

potential for better employing us and acting accordingly. I think the risk/reward is obvious, and I hope by now you do, too. I hope you will be that catalyst.

The right place to start *Y-Sizing* at your company is the step in your employee life cycle that demands your most urgent attention. Once you see results from *Y-Sizing* that step, then you can circle back and focus on the remaining steps. Taking this approach will give you an immediate, tangible return on your efforts. It will also win you support and momentum for more ambitious *Y-Size* steps. The key is to start wherever you are *now* and with whatever resources you can allocate so that you can begin systemically moving your Gen Y employees toward the performance you need to win in our challenging, global economy.

You will know *Y-Sizing* has taken root in your company's culture when you naturally attract and hire more quality Gen Y applicants with less effort, achieve better workplace performance from us faster, and keep us around longer to fill more job openings internally. By acting now, you gain an important head start on your competition in advance of a changing economic and labor landscape. You can also expect to position yourself for at least a five-year advantage, and possibly more, since the generation after us will have many similarities to Gen Y (plus an even shorter attention span and, yes, more confusing clothing and worse music).

When I think of the impact you can have on your company by taking the *Y-Size* steps outlined in this book, I can't help but recall my first "real" job. I had just turned 18 and moved to a new city where I didn't know anyone but my dad (on whose 1980's living room couch I was crashing). Upon my arrival, he told me I had 48 hours to get a job if I was going to continue staying with him, so I drove my \$500 car to the closest well-lit restaurant I could find, Macaroni Grill, and applied for a job. Even though I'd had several jobs before, I'd never formally applied for one. My other jobs were "interview only," so this was the first one where I went through every step of the employee life cycle (including the fear of rejection).

My most vivid memory from the experience was the restaurant manager congratulating me on having landed a job as a busboy and then telling me that I would have to wear a tie *every* day. I couldn't believe people still wore ties to work—and to clear other people's

dirty dishes! My reaction must not have been a surprise, because the manager promptly handed me a paper diagram showing how to tie a tie, and then he explained each step involved. Sure, previous generations learned how to tie a tie with their dad in front of a big mirror. Me, I learned as a busboy practicing in the parking lot of a restaurant along a major highway. (But my dad was so impressed with my new-found skill that he had me tie all his ties and hang them in his closet for future use.)

Last year, I returned to that same Macaroni Grill. The smell of fresh-baked bread still hung in the air. Sitting at one of their butcher paper-covered tables 13 years later, eating alone (at least that hadn't changed), I couldn't help but recall the excitement, fear, and sense of uncharted responsibility I felt when I first wandered inside the heavy wood doors looking for a job at age 18. *That first real job changed my life.* While I can't tell you my old manager's name, I can tell you that the skills I learned under his supervision were as meaningful to me as any I went on to learn completing case study after case study in business school.

At my first real job, I learned to deal with difficult people (coworkers and customers), to work under pressure with a diverse team, to be held accountable for the outcomes I created (which were more than one broken plate), and of course to tie a tie while sitting in an overheating car. Without a doubt, that first manager changed my life. Not only did he give me a job when I desperately needed one, he also gave me a chance to start learning what it takes to be successful in the real world.

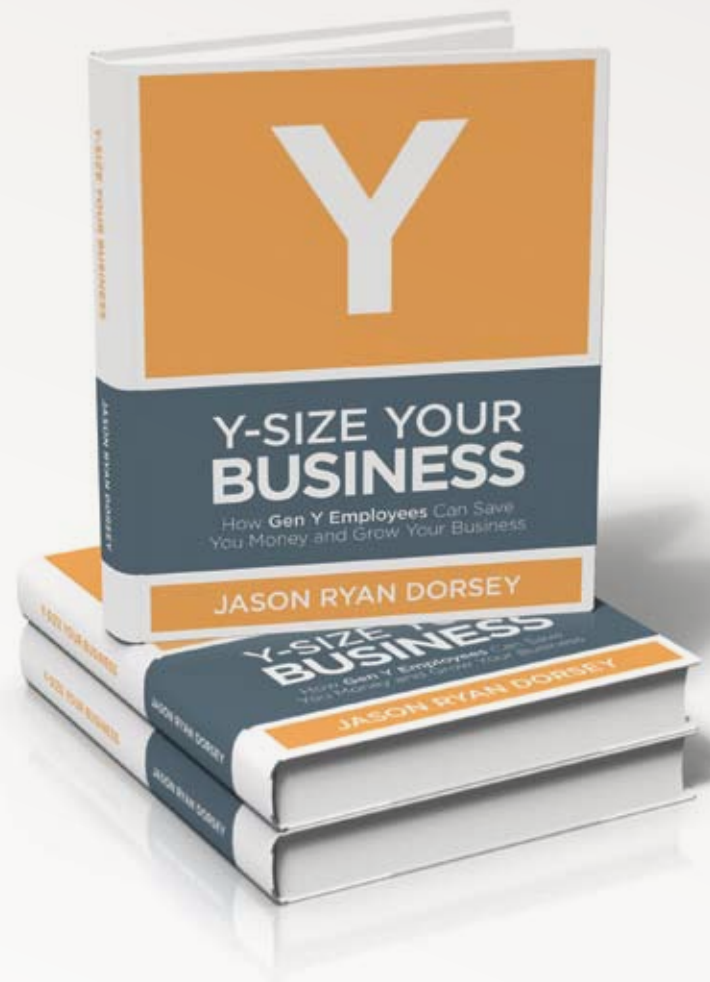
You have the same opportunity to have a lasting impact on your Gen Y employees, whether we are just finishing high school or five years out of graduate school. *We all* have something to learn, and I hope you see that as a strategic opportunity for your company and a potential legacy for yourself.

JASON RYAN DORSEY

Y-SIZE YOUR BUSINESS

shows you creative ways to:

- Attract quality Gen Y employees faster than free pizza at 2AM
- Keep Gen Y engaged at work from day one
- Develop Gen Y talent fast by making “good enough” unacceptable
- Motivate Gen Y by *not* giving us a trophy
- Retain Gen Y—and our enthusiasm
- Build a talent pipeline like *American Idol*
- And much more...



GENERATION Y—sometimes called Millennials—are the fastest growing segment in America’s workforce. Almost 80 million strong, they already comprise the entire 18-to-32 demographic. Along with their ever-present cell phones and new definition of “business casual,” they bring tremendous potential to the workplace (just ask, they’ll tell you). However, Generation Y’s approach to employment can make them a challenge for managers and executives to attract, retain, motivate, and develop.

In *Y-Size Your Business*, Jason Ryan Dorsey—The Gen Y Guy®—shows you why embracing Gen Y employees gives you an immediate competitive advantage and positions your business for long-term growth. **In today’s economy, the opportunity Gen Y presents has never been more attractive.** Gen Y is cost-effective to employ, brings a timely skill set to the workplace, and wants to make a difference from their first day of employment.

A member of Gen Y himself, Dorsey gives you an insider’s perspective on how these career starters and young professionals think and act. He then reveals a step-by-step methodology for **attracting, retaining, and motivating productive, high-performing Gen Y employees**—and how to do so without investing a lot of time or money. To make the methodology easy to implement, Dorsey includes more than fifty inexpensive, ready-to-use strategies that deliver fast, measurable results.

Based on Dorsey’s frontline work with business leaders around the world—as a keynote speaker, consultant, and generational expert—*Y-Size Your Business* presents precisely the solutions you need to make the most of a generation growing in importance and ready to make an impact on your bottom line right away (and blog about it!).

PRAISE FOR Y-SIZE YOUR BUSINESS

“Jason’s insights into the Gen Y employee are both original and eye-opening. His engaging and timely book will help employers from every industry better understand their Gen Y employees, and more importantly, make a powerful connection with them that can reap huge rewards for all.”

KATHLEEN TAYLOR,
President and COO, Four Seasons Hotels & Resorts

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Available November 2009

“Jason brings a valuable new perspective to the Gen Y employment conversation. He shows you how to make the most of his generation’s strengths while building on the talents of employees of all ages.”

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President, Cold Stone Creamery & International

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Executive VP of Sales, Ceridian Canada

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FAITH TAYLOR
Worldwide VP of Sustainability & Innovation,
Wyndham Worldwide

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jason Ryan Dorsey, The Gen Y Guy®, is an acclaimed keynote speaker, corporate consultant, and award-winning entrepreneur. He teaches business leaders step-by-step actions and front-line tested strategies that maximize Gen Y employee performance while increasing the value of all four generations in the workplace. Jason has been featured as a Gen Y expert on *60 Minutes*, *20/20*, *The Today Show*, and *The View*, as well as in *Fortune* magazine.

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