

Millennials in Corrections: Recommendations for Hiring a New Generation of Workforce

Approve: Dr. Cody Gaines Date: 12.09.2020

Millennials in Corrections: Recommendations for Hiring a New Generation of Workforce

A Seminar Paper

Presented to the Graduate Faculty
University of Wisconsin – Platteville

In Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science in Criminal Justice

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Acknowledgements

When the time was right to embark on this journey to continue my education, I understood the strain that it would put on not only my free time but also those around me. For this reason, there are multiple people I would like to thank not only for helping me complete this journey, but for continuing to contribute their efforts in my drive to learn.

My fiancé, Shannan, who has continually supported the long nights and days spent over the last two years. Without her understanding and weekly check-ups, I would have fallen off task.

My University of Wisconsin – Superior professor, Dr. Maria Cuzzo who guided me for the last two years in the completion of my B.S degree and into my transition into master's course expectations.

My colleagues and current employment at a correctional facility has allowed me the opportunity to experience firsthand the struggles that institutions face. The knowledge gained while working as an officer through observation and fellow tenure is invaluable.

My professors at UW Platteville. Continued group activity allows for sharing of past experiences and current ideas within the realm of criminal justice. A special thanks is given to Dr. Gaines for his continued support and understanding on this important topic.

Abstract

The hiring practices of jails and prisons have remained largely unchanged as agencies continue to struggle to find high quality applicants (Russo, 2019). Unlike law enforcement, corrections are slow to adapt new strategies to fill vacancies. An innovating approach to this problem is identifying the characteristics of the incoming generation of workers and acknowledging the changes in the correctional rehabilitation approach. The millennial generation has taken over a significant portion of the workforce as they continue to enter after completing long schooling endeavors. With them, new ideology comes into the workforce as millennials offer a higher educational background, an ethical driven working mentality, and the ability to communicate.

Focusing on millennial work ideology will be an important part of this paper as it defines the drivers behind what many in this generation want in a work environment. Work ideology can be classified as an employee's needs, desires, wants, and determination in which they perceive themselves. Unlike previous generations, millennials desire the ability to maintain a work life balance, have enough financial freedom to enjoy leisure activities, and be with a job that offers purpose.

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Section I: Introduction

Millennials in Corrections: Recommendations for Hiring a New Generation of Workforce

Statement of Problem

The correction occupation is among the most important careers within the criminal justice system. The workers within this branch of the criminal justice system are the men and women referred to as corrections officers. Corrections officers play a significant role in the rehabilitation, treatment, and housing of convicted criminals (Toch, 1981). Just as in policing, jails and prisons require line staff workers for multiple shifts covering all hours of the day. Complex situations arise as officers must often fulfill both a security and human service role to individuals who are incarcerated (King, 2009). Innovations in rehabilitative ideology, a continuing high recidivism rate among prisoners, societal pressures, and a high turnover rate has led correctional leaders to search for answers on how to hire a new generation of workforce (Russo, Woods, Drake & Jackson, 2018).

Maintaining a high-quality correctional workforce has been a priority of correctional departments over the last few decades (Stinchcomb, McCampbell & Leip, 2009; Russo, Woods, Drake & Jackson, 2018). The correctional field continues to lose valuable, experienced, older employees to retirement and other occupations faster than correctional administrators can fill these positions. States such as West Virginia, New Mexico, Alabama, and others struggle to find employees as starting wages are minimal compared to other private sector jobs (Fifield, 2016). The shortage is even felt in higher wage facilities such as on the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP), which recently was under investigation for substituting untrained staff such as nurses or administration personnel to assist with daily functions in a facility performed by corrections officers (Johnson, 2018).

While other criminal justice occupations have changed to encompass new workforce ideology, corrections lags in adopting new strategies for hiring and retaining quality officers. According to Russo et al., (2018) hiring practices for corrections have changed little and fail to incorporate new ideology in the evolving workplace. As new generations enter the workforce, adaptations to agencies hiring processes is necessary as needs and expectations have changed since previous generations (Morison, 2017). A streamlined, efficient, and strategic recruitment strategy is important to consider when effectively recruiting new employees as it fills the void between finding a “warm body” and a qualified candidate (Stinchcomb et al., 2009). A key point often overlooked is that the correctional occupation is a customer service industry as it relies on officers with strong communication, problem solving, and people skills to achieve the mission of the facility. Educational standards are also important as the new generation of workers is staying in school longer and receiving a more well-rounded education.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to provide recommendations to correctional agencies for hiring and maintaining a new generation of workforce. The oncoming workforce of the millennial generation holds different work values and emphasizes the creation of positive work-life balance more so than previous generations (Gursoy, Maier & Chi, 2008; Mihelič & Aleksić, 2017; Sahni, 2019). As corrections continues to see higher than normal turnover rates, an analysis of hiring and subsequent retention practices should be analyzed to provide a department with the best qualified candidates. Correctional hiring practices have changed little and often fail to account for the changes in both societal and workforce ideological shifts (Russo, 2019). Research in correctional hiring practices is minimal when compared to other CJUS systems such as probation, parole, or policing (Russo et al., 2018). This study will analyze research available

throughout corrections and law enforcement to provide recommendations for hiring workers of the millennial generation.

Significance of Study

The significance of this research is two-fold. Firstly, it will provide correctional organizations recommendations on hiring practices. Arguments for adaptations to current hiring models will include utilizing a more streamlined application process, guided interview panels, background checks, and keeping applicants aware of the process more consistently. Arguments will also address the multitude of research dedicated to “millennial” work force ideology and how correctional hiring practices are counterintuitive to the current market applicants.

Secondly, it will provide information bridging the gap between hiring practices in corrections to the current workforce ideology. While much research is dedicated to topics such as turnover or officer roles within the correctional system, little attention is paid to hiring practices when accounting for a new generation of workforce ideology. Policing for example have acknowledged this generational ideology gap by utilizing models provided from the Department of Justice (DOJ) and Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) to target the best possible candidates. As such, correctional institutions would greatly benefit from the incorporation of such ideology when attempting to fill vacancies (Morrison, 2017).

Methods of Approach

Several procedures were followed to ensure quality information regarding the topic of correctional officer hiring for millennial generation workforce. First, research will involve comprehensive literature review across both correctional and law enforcement hiring practices. Second, information will be gathered through Karmann Library, the National Institute of Justice,

peer-reviewed journals, and other governmental (state, local, and federal) websites. Four databases were searched including EBSCOhost, Sagepub, JSTOR, Google Scholar. Key words included millennial and work, millennial ideology, millennial working ideology, correctional ideology, correctional hiring, and law enforcement hiring. Education, datasets, and turnover by field were also used. Millennial working ideology search yielded a total of 14 results, whereas correctional ideology and correctional hiring yielded 18 usable results. The term “generation y” or “gen y” was searched but yielded minimal (1) results as most articles focused on the most common term of millennial. The information gathered will be used to support the argument that updating hiring practices in corrections for the new generation of workers will prove beneficial for the organization as oncoming workforce desires more from work than previous generations.

Section II: Literature Review

The literature review is divided into four sections. The first section provides a historical overview of the use of prisons, organizational goals, and varying mindsets of rehabilitative efforts for incarcerated individuals. This section is important as it offers insight into both the second and third section as it describes the ideological shift of punishment and rehabilitation over time. The second section directly focuses on the correctional officer and their prescribed duties. The third approaches institutional level issues and their effect on staffing and retaining employees. The last section focuses on the change in workforce ideology of the millennial generation when compared to previous generations and the influences in a correctional environment.

History of Corrections in the United States

The term corrections in the American justice system is used to describe prisons, jails, and community supervision (probation or parole). Corrections is a societal mechanism that attempts to control both the poor and deviant members of society by enacting supervision over them once caught and convicted (Encyclopedia.com, 2005). Four main goals exist in correctional ideology which includes retribution, deterrence, incapacitation, and rehabilitation (Kifer, Hemmens, & Stohr, 2003). These goals are not a constant, often varying by institutions and states alike. They are the result of societal ideology on offenders and are often indicative of legislature and state budgets in current era politics.

Terms within corrections are often misused to describe the status of an offender. It is important to know the correct terminology as it describes more than where an offender is located.

A jail is a facility in which houses individuals sentenced to less than a year or are awaiting trial. Prisons are facilities run by state or private companies and house convicted prisoners that have been sentenced to over a year and a day. Community corrections or probation and parole departments are tasked with overseeing offenders once they are released into the community. These agents attend to offenders' conditions of release by enforcing rules such as curfews, work requirements, or surprised check-ins at designated times. Each facility operates under the same set of guidelines; however, the services and populations are drastically different. This paper will focus on jails and prisons.

Corrections is a deep-rooted societal function and often considered a necessity. Ancient civilizations to modern eras all have utilized a form of corrective action to control members of societies that are deemed deviant. As societies became more centralized, laws and punishments were formed to handle deviant behavior for select mores within a culture. The use of jails historically is a common practice for individuals awaiting trial or sentencing but were not often used as punishment. After an individual was found guilty, punishment would not be carried out in a cell but rather through a variety of other means (Encyclopedia.com, 2005). These punishments included indentured slavery, workhouses, fines, or even death.

As colonization of the United States began, punishment ideology travelled with immigrants. According to the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections (n.d) in 1682, Quaker William Penn saw the promise in rehabilitative efforts for those incarcerated. He established the first modern prison system in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania with the mindset of replacing torture and mutilation with hard labor. Later that year his efforts were repealed by the Commonwealth. It was not until 1773 that the first established penal system was enacted in the

newly forming United States. Early prison ideology adopted Penn's mindset of labor houses as a mean of rehabilitation while holding offenders accountable through incapacitation.

It is a known fact that the United States has one of the highest populations of individuals under the correctional system in the world (Walmsley, 2019). Prior to the 1980's, incarceration rates and community supervision populations remained relatively consistent from year to year. During the 1980's a reformatory era took place as tougher on crime models and three strike laws saw the number of incarcerated persons continue to drastically increase as years passed. As of 2016, it was estimated that over 6,600,000 individuals were incarcerated or under community corrections supervision. This number equates to 2,040 out of every 100,000 individuals (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018). While this number may seem high, since 2007 it has been steadily decreasing as yearly initiatives to rehabilitate offenders, determinate sentences, and early release all have gathered momentum throughout states legislature. Decriminalization of certain drugs has also contributed to lower arrest and conviction rates.

Since the beginning of the institutionalization of criminals, effective ways to reduce future criminality has changed (recidivism). Until the early 1900's most prisons were run as a private operation that offered both a means of "hard time" and a cheap source of labor for the revolution era (Takagi, 1974). This held true until around the 1960's when a progressive reform started to affect the way in which criminality was acknowledge. For a brief time, the US focused on a more rehabilitative approach in which offenders were offered services that were aimed at controlling criminal thinking. Rehabilitative services could include job training, educational obtainment, or mental health services. This gradually faded as states budgets began to decrease,

mental health reforms saw more institutionalized people being in the correctional system, and an increase overall in the total number of incarcerated individuals.

Lastly, recidivism has become a common talking point in current corrections and criminal justice forum. Recidivism is the term used to describe when a person reoffends for a new crime after previously having been sentenced. In a study conducted by the National Institute of Justice between 2005-2010, 76.6% of those released from prison were arrested within 5 years for a new crime (Derose, Cooper & Snyder, 2014). Indeterminate sentences, three-strike laws, and discretionary judiciary guidelines were often repelled and replaced. The idea of longer sentencing to deter career criminals was losing momentum in favor of spending money on rehabilitation. Pressure on law makers to control recidivism has led many to adopt new policy strategies aimed at rehabilitative services within communities and prisons. Today, more evidence-based practices, skill-building, job training, and other resources are being spent on prisoners to reinstitute a rehabilitative approach.

The Correctional Environment

Corrections operates on a large scale and relies on a variety of different mechanisms. It encompasses local, state, and federal facilities all in which attempt to help confined individuals succeed in breaking the cycle of recidivism. The goal of a correctional facility is directly set by the institution and subsequent state budgets that allocate money for programs offered, reentry services, and employment within institutions. Localities in which jails operate rely on local tax dollars and state funding. State prisons are operated by the state affected only by state tax dollars.

To understand the complex nature of hiring within a correctional setting it is important to analyze officer expectations. A corrections officer is responsible for a variety of tasks within an institution. Security, rehabilitation, and enforcement of facility rules are only a small part of daily activities required. Officers deal with violent and aggressive individuals and must be quick to respond appropriately whether through verbal de-escalation skills or by use of force (Renden, Koedijk, Oudejans, & Hutter, 2019; Skiba, 2020). These factors are exacerbated as low rate of pay, role conflict, long hours, job safety, and increased demands on overtime are all common issues faced at many institutions. Corrections is often regarded as an undesirable job by the public and thus also plays heavily on those employees seeking employment in corrections.

Like other high stress occupations, corrections officers must possess a certain skill set when dealing with the job duties listed above. While effective on-the-job training is crucial to the success of officers, emotional intelligence and strong interpersonal communication skills are thought to be among the most successful traits an officer can possess both before and during employment (Skiba 2020). Problem solving techniques and decisiveness only add to the requirements for a successful candidate as situations often arise in which no clear answer exists (Fox, 2018).

Correctional facilities never close. State law and facility layout dictate the number of officers needed to successfully run a facility. This varies by state and is generally a high number in the range of 40-60 inmates per one officer. As of 2018, it was estimated that 453,900 employees work within some facet of the correctional system. The estimated median income of \$45,300. The lowest wages are around \$23,000 all the way to around \$85,000 for staff not including supervisory or above (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020). As inmate populations have

steadily declined over the last decade, the need for officers is expected to decline as well by 7% between 2018-2028.

In most cases states set minimum standards required to be a correctional employee. Institutions may abide by the minimum standards or raise standards, as seen fit by that institution. Unlike policing, correction officers in most states do not obtain licensure. Across the United States the general acceptable minimum standards for corrections include being at least 18 years of age; having a high school diploma or GED, no violent misdemeanors, and no felonies; and having a driver's license. In higher populated areas these minimums are often raised as the applicant pool is much greater than in rural areas. For example, the New York Department of Corrections (n.d) requires an applicant to be 21 years of age, complete a civil service exam, attend 8 weeks of academy style training, and perform 12 months on-the-job training to suffice its institutional standards. Another example from Louisiana Department of Corrections (2020) requires applicants to be 18 years of age, either have 1 year of continuous work experience or a high school or GED diploma, and attend an academy. These examples only represent a small portion of variation that occur within each institution and state.

Correctional Hiring Practices

Hiring a high-quality workforce is crucial to continuing to see incarceration rates decline as a correctional officer play a vital role in an inmate's ability to stop recidivistic behavior (Stinchcomb et al., 2009; Abdel-Salam & Sunde, 2018). Practices on hiring for correction agencies have changed little when compared to policing or other service-based industry jobs (Russo 2018). Like policing, hiring for a correctional officer is generally a long process. For example, the Washington State Department of Corrections (2020) utilizes a phase system model.

The first phase is an initial pre-screening and invitation to hiring event if the candidate meets initial requirements, which are determined by a pre-screened application. The next phase includes the hiring event, professional reference checks if a top candidate, and a criminal history check. The third phase is a conditional job offer and a psychological exam. Lastly, a drug screen and psychological interview is conducted and if passed, employment is offered. Many agencies follow a similar hiring process as it offers a segmented way in which candidates can be screened and processed semi-efficiently.

Institutional Level Issues

While the number of inmates may be continuing to decrease, adherent problems with the way correctional institutions handle the complexities of its workforce and hiring are evident. Internal and external pressures placed on an officer by both inmates and management often cause officers to feel disenfranchised and dissatisfied with the job they are doing. It is a dangerous job that has one of the highest worker related injury and fatality rate across all US industry (Konda, Reichard & Tiesman, 2012). Risk of injury and injury itself only play a short portion of the stressors involved within the correctional occupation. Continued exposure to crisis situations, secondary trauma, work overload, role conflict, and overtime demands all factor into the wellbeing of an officer (Russo 2019).

In a report conducted for the RAND corporation, Russo, Woods, Drake & Jackson (2018) explain how challenges faced within an institution directly affect employee satisfaction and turnover rates. Recommendations for improvement included standards to control excessive workloads, assess inadequate funding for training, competency standards, and a shift from punishment and surveillance to a human-services approach to recruit new talent. Russo et al.,

(2018) also explains how greater importance should be placed on management training and development to ensure effective managers meet with changing workforce needs. These implications show promise for facilities but are often overlooked due to lack of funding or ability to maintain correct staffing ratios.

Hiring new employees is very costly for an institution. Costs can include but are not limited to; current staff overtime for training new hires, per diem if required to travel for mandated trainings, allowances for uniform, and wages while training. As noted above with the Washington State model, many departments spend thousands of dollars on hiring and training new employees using in-service training or academy style regimes even before an officer can work independently (Leip & Stinchcomb, 2013). These costs directly affect jail operations, propensity for wage increases, and inmate funding allocated for services and programs.

Another issue is within the most common management style of corrections. Practices have remained consistent and promote a paramilitary style approach that posits a captain or sheriff and subordinates through a chain of command. An inherent flaw in this scheme is the inability for communication to flow effectively from top to bottom (Cruickshank, 2013). Information is often slow to pass to the bottom workers that make up most of any institution are located. It can inhibit the sharing of ideas as top-level managers delegate tasks and communication to lower level managers but may not often be present or available to hear line staff complaints or suggestions. It also relies on mid-level managers to effectively transmit the expectations of the facility to their subordinates. The use of technology has helped with this issue somewhat as email and text message notifications allow for better communication from the top to the bottom.

Changing Workforce: Millennial Ideology

The workforce is a dynamic place. As new generations enter, ideas follow into the working environment and the work that is conducted is shaped by the belief system brought by the new workforce. The current generation that makes up a large part of this system is the millennial birth cohort. As almost all of this collective group have or will enter the market within the next few years it is important to understand the characteristics that define some of the key points in which this generation values for work.

Scholars often disagree on a definition for millennials as birth year is the main characteristic of this cohort. Variations exist in scholarly research and it relies on the researcher conducting the study to define the age range. A consensus of research for this paper defines individuals born between 1980 to around the year 2000 fall within the range of the acceptable definition. Millennials or sometimes referred to as “Gen Y” account for over 70 million of the available workforces in the United States and represents almost one in three workers in the workforce as of 2016 (Fry, 2018). With the continued retirement of older generations, the number of employable millennials continue to rise and will eventually make up most of the workforce by 2030 (Fry, 2018).

Over the last decade, much research has been devoted on what shapes millennial ideology and the way it influences the current generation’s conceptualization of work. The ideas brought into the workforce are much different from the previous generations and are seen throughout as businesses adjust to the desires of oncoming workers (Campione, 2015). One of the most prevalent differentiations occurs in working behaviors. Just as with any generation before, ideas are shaped by social, economic, and technological factors that drive the rationale behind a

worker's mentality towards work. At no other time have these factors played into such a role as in the millennial ideology on shaping working habits and ethics than the current era. These ideas shape the needs, wants, and expectations of this new workforce entering the labor market.

Millennial ideology is not a static set of traits or belief, but rather a dynamic belief-system intertwined into a multidimensional way of life. The philosophy behind what drives this generation in the working environment has been a long-studied topic and draws close attention in businesses recruiting and retainment strategy. This generation wants more out of work than just a paycheck but rather work for a purpose (Ng, Schweitzer, & Lyons, 2010; Henstra. & McGowan, 2016; Sánchez-Hernández, González-López, Buenadicha-Mateos, & Tato-Jiménez, 2019). Expectations of what work should be are the forefront and often cause millennial workers to be labeled as self-centered and entitled as they often challenge company normative in a search for hierarchy of needs as described by Maslow (Harrington, Van Deusen, Fraone & Morelock, 2015).

The millennial generation is often labeled for certain characteristics that some members share collectively. It is important to note that generalizations of a large group are not fully representative of that entire group, but rather common themes shared by many within. These labels are brought on by older generations that may not fully understand the complexities of thought within the new generation and as such label certain behaviors they deem different from their own. Such labels as self-centered, lazy, and entitled are often used to describe the work ethic of the millennial worker (Harrington et al., 2015). Other labels included self-starter, ambitious, creative, the "me generation" or entitled play into the perceptions of other generations thoughts of millennials. These contradictory labels given to a large group are misleading as when

identifying a whole group, as some may fall into this category whereas most do not (Harrington et al., 2015).

In corrections, older officers tend to shy away from field training due to these labels. Seasoned officers do not want to invest time and effort into training individuals who are statistically likely to leave a career faster than previous generations (Calk & Patrick, 2017). Labeling is often indicative of a broader generational gap in which companies must acknowledge currently present in the workforce. Take for example the label of self-centered. While this is used to describe someone, who is egotistical and does not work well in a team environment, the same can be said for someone that cares about their work.

In no other generation has technology played such a greater role than shaping the belief system than in that of the millennial generation (Foreman, 2007). Millennials have embraced technology far greater than previous generations. Technological advances have allowed for the rapid exchange of ideas and beliefs effortlessly throughout the world using cell phones, social media, and the internet. Unlike previous generations, millennials have consistently been exposed to an everchanging environment of progressively better technological advancements. These exposures have played a major impact into the way in which millennials formed belief systems through globalization (Milkman, 2017). This also has had negative impacts as world events are shared much quicker than in previous generations. Shortly after the first of the cohort entered the market, a global recession impacted millions of workers pay and job cuts were prevalent across most industries. Acts such as the World Trade Center bombings and subsequent September 11th attacks on the same buildings have led many of this generation to be enamored by overseas wars in foreign countries in the name of “freedom”. Along with the financial burden of war, the

continued cost of living only clashes with the idea of obtaining higher education to obtain jobs which do not sustain a suitable lifestyle.

Workers entering the workforce today are staying in school longer. They are the most highly educated of any generation. In a study conducted for Pew Research by Graf (2017), four in ten workers entering the workforce aged 25-29 had previously obtained a bachelor's degree. This is eight percent higher than previous generations (Graf, 2017). These high numbers are directly attributed to societal and economic pressures as some millennials entered the work force market during the United States recession in 2007 to 2009 (Council of Economic Advisers, 2014). Obtainment of a higher degree provides many positive benefits for the worker as well as an employer. These benefits include holders are more diversifiable in decision making process, a better team-player, and allows for the ability to provide constructive thinking skills applicable to a job setting. It provides more specialized information into the working environment and provides purpose for workers to be there. Having purpose in the work environment and providing feedback when dissatisfied are common themes among current millennial workers' attitudes. For corrections, this affects a readily available workforce as low pay can lead to workers choosing other private sector jobs with comparable salaries and less risk (Minor, Dawson-Edwards, Wells, Griffith & Angel, 2009; Stinchcomb et al., 2009).

Another influential factor of millennial working ideology is the concept of work-life balance. This idea is rooted in the belief that employers should offer more flexibility in schedules and promote stronger self-care options for its workers (Sánchez-Hernández et al., 2019). In the past, workers came to do a job, work hard, and "do their time" to receive promotions and pay raises. This perceived organizational value was the basis for previous generation's satisfaction

and obtainment of goals. Current employees tend to deviate from this model as literature suggests the current market values more free time and leisure activity (Freeman, 2019). This does not necessarily indicate less work is being achieved as companies that adopt pro-family work environment leads to higher worker creativity levels and potential happiness (Mihelič & Aleksić, 2017; Sahni, 2019). Instead, current workers strive to find careers that offer flexibility in scheduling and working environment that best suit family or private needs.

While it is hard to distinguish exact work-force motivators given the complexities of human nature, literature suggests multiple common themes are present for motivating factors considered to be important to millennials (Calk & Patrick, 2017). Studies suggest that in an ever-growing private sector market, pay plays the most significant factor in the current generation of workers choice in choosing a career path (Ng et al., 2010; Harrington et al., 2015). Pay ranks the highest among current generation job seekers, but it is only marginally important compared with other factors that determine long term employment potential and thus contributes to the stigma of “millennial job-hopping” (Campione, 2015). Pay is expected to rank high as most of the workforce have been through at least one recession since they began their working careers. Continued economic growth, job availability and private job sector wage increases have influenced

Lastly, millennials are receptive to utilizing a team approach to achieve organizational goals and value the teamwork mentality (Gursoy et al., 2008; Vanmeter, Grisaffe, Chonko, & Roberts, 2012). Contrary to other generation’s attitudes, valuation is placed on the communication process. Feedback is important as it provides an opportunity of open and frequent communication between supervisor and employee (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010).

Communication also allows for improvements within an organization to be brought by the employee.

Recommendations

Effective strategies for the recruitment of correctional employees have garnered more attention as agencies continue to struggle in finding a high-quality long-term workforce (Stinchcomb et al., 2009; Morison, 2017). In a field that has remained relatively stable in workforce numbers and outlook, turnover rates remain one of the highest of any industry. Many studies aimed at correctional turnover have provided insight on to why employees leave but agencies are slow to react, thus seeing continuing turnover rates remain steady (Minor et al., 2009; Leip, & Stinchcomb, 2013; Manzoor, Manzoor & Khan, 2020). What these studies often fail to incorporate is the generational differences between past and current/future workforces. They fail to account how educational obtainment and financial freedom affect an individual's decision when entering the correctional field. Studies also fail to incorporate a way in which correctional facilities can institute more positive work-life balances. The following sections will offer insight on changes that could be made on an institutional level to attract the millennial generation worker.

Organizational Changes

Organizational changes within corrections may be required to facilitate incoming workers ideas and societal pressure shifts in the way corrections operates. Millennial workers hold more value in the work that is being done and want to feel that as if the work they are doing means something (Vanmeter et al., 2012). This mindset as mentioned above requires constant feedback

and the desire to stay involved with every facet of the job. Top down management or paramilitary style is generally the normative organizational structure of leadership with the criminal justice practicum. While this leadership was effective with previous generations, it is in direct contrast to what most of the oncoming workforce wants in terms of management styles. Instead of shying away and utilizing only the authoritative approach, leaders can invest time and energy into transformative or transactional models (Cruickshank, 2013). Addressing employee concerns and encouraging employment improvement through open-door policies allows for employees to feel welcomed when bringing about feedback (Hershatter & Epstein, 2010).

Management of all levels should be tasked with hearing concerns of the current employee. Effective communication, sharing of ideas, and the ability to receive constant feedback are all desires of generation Y (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010). As organizational support has been linked to job satisfaction, it only benefits an agency to adapt new strategies that influence its workers to feel commitment (Paoline III & Lambert, 2012). Adopting changes that influence sharing of this communication allows for agencies to better understand what employees want. One tool often used by most other business sectors are evaluations. Evaluations measure certain aspects of a job in a quantified metrics scheme (Grigoroudis & Zopounidis, 2012). When an evaluation is complete, management can go over the results with employees and utilize this time to address performance issues and concerns. Evaluations also may assist the company as employees can provide feedback on how to better operate under current conditions.

Hiring for corrections will always be difficult. Limitations in correctional hiring practices research have led many administrators to look towards the hiring practices within the other branches of the justice system. Law enforcement research is plentiful and offers many solutions

to hiring, training, and retention issues corrections faces. Generational ideology shift has been well documented in the law enforcement capacity and research supports the necessity for departments to adapt (Morison, 2017; Wood, 2017). Most jails in the United States are currently operated by a Sheriff's. Many corrections officers use correctional experience as a transitional opportunity, so it only benefits agencies to hire long-term quality candidates as they can move fluidly between one career to another (Russo 2019).

In a panelist survey comprising of correction and community supervision leaders, Russo et al., (2018) noted several ways a company can implement new procedures for hiring candidates. One of the biggest mistakes most agencies make is not having a streamlined hiring process. Streamlining a hiring process can take on many different forms. This includes accurately describing the job in detail, closing unnecessary meetings or face to face obstacles through the utilization of technology, or defining positive characteristics an agency is seeking. For large agencies, this can involve incorporating outside professional hiring firms that have shown to cut down hiring times. Streamlining the hiring process benefits these small departments the most as the individual best suited for the position can be hired rather than one that looks best on paper (Stinchcomb et al., 2009).

Utilizing Technology: Organization and Employee

When targeting the millennial generation, technology has shown as one of the best successors at targeting the biggest audience (Foreman, 2007). All parts of the hiring process can be done with the use of a computer and a telephone rather than paper applications and in-person interviews. Background checks should no longer require weeks to complete as information can be readily accessible by law enforcement, social media, and utilization of cell phone technology.

These tools allow for quicker turnaround times between employers to employee and when used correctly (Russo et al., 2018). With the use of dedicated websites, potential applicants can view the status of their employment. Technology has also allowed for organizations to attract individuals from outside the specific geographical region. Potential applicants can now search many organizations and comparison shop based on factors such as pay or location for their future employment if agencies actively promote open positions.

Furthermore, technology benefits an institution more so than just hiring employees. Advancements in items such as camera, internet capabilities, and basic institutional functions (mechanical) allow for facilities to explore vast new options when it comes to safety and security. As most jails and prisons were built in a time of mass incarceration eras, they are outdated in terms of technological standards seen in other sectors of society. Having top of the line technology may not be practical given the shrinking budgets of facilities but having technology that can protect safety and security should be a focal point for correctional institutions.

Acknowledging Employee Needs

Working in corrections is already a difficult profession with the uncertainty of day to day activities and forced overtime. Addressing employee needs is crucial for an organization to be successful in achieving organizational goals. One of the biggest criticisms of current corrections is the inability to achieve work-life balance (Leip & Stinchcomb, 2013; Russo et al., 2018; Russo, 2019). Millennial ideology focuses on having the ability to enjoy life while working as minimally as possible to achieve the desired results. This work to live mentality causes issues as agencies are often short-staffed which results in extended periods of overtime. While it is

impossible and sometimes impractical to fill every need and desires, agencies can strive to uphold policies that promote a positive work-life balance approach. Implementation of policies aimed at reduced overtime hours, mandatory days off, and more useable sick time days have all been discussed but often fail as they do not meet the organization's needs to deliver 24 hour a day staffing ratios (Russo et al., 2018; Sahni, 2019; Sánchez-Hernández et al., 2019).

Promotion of employee assistance programs such as financial or mental health resources should be explored further when adapting to employee needs. While corrections boast some of the highest worker related injuries of any job class, officers also have a high propensity to develop mental health related conditions (Finney, Stergiopoulos, Hensel, Bonato, & Dewa, 2013). While factors include work stress, overtime, or family strain, these issues are only compounded by the high amounts of incarcerated individuals with mental health issues (Gangemi 2019). Allowing access to confidential resources gives the employee the ability to get help for issues as they arise instead of losing employees to sick days or separation.

With the rise in educational obtainment and increased cost of living, applicants shy away from correctional occupations as they generally do not match what law enforcement officers or similar occupations pay. As jails and prison are inherently not-for-profit, they struggle due to lack of funding given to them by states and local agencies. In the current era of low unemployment applicants often seek other occupations with higher pay (Leip & Stinchcomb, 2013). Increasing the starting wage as well as earning potential comparable to other law enforcement capacities shows the willingness of agencies to understand the economic pressures and reward higher degree applicants (Stinchcomb et al., 2009). An agency matched retirement plan or 401k are always good options when attempting to recruit new applicants. Given the

uncertainty of the age of retirement and tangibility of millennial finance, building a solid foundation on which an agency can contribute to a retirement plan or pension allows for an employee to make corrections into a career.

Agencies should also explore the option of incorporating correctional officers into pension and retirement plans of public safety employees. Often this is inclusive of a state mandate and done so by state legislature passing law to define the job-class of correctional employees. Public safety employees for most states are law enforcement or firefighter occupations and fall under a protective occupation. In these specified protective retirement systems, guidelines under length of service and age at retirement are set to allow officers to retire much earlier than most other occupations (Snell, 2012). Most states also offer an early retirement option as long as officer meet criteria established through state guidelines. Currently only 10 states recognize correctional officers under a dedicated retirement system: Arizona, California, Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Nevada, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Wyoming.

Adopting Agency Goals

Organizations are in most cases responsible for employee conduct while working. Policies and goals measure employee job performance in relation to agency specified metrics. Vision and moral statements provide the goal of the organization to the employee to adhere to policies (Stinchcomb et al., 2009; Russo et al., 2018). Educational standards are important as well as it provides a basis for recruitment. There is no set minimum standard other than the requirement by state and federal laws for basic rights regarding organizational policies. Instead, organizations generally adapt what they think is best practice methods. While this is practical as

every institution is different, most policies do not get changed until incidents occur within a facility or laws change.

Adoption of organizational goals and policies specifically towards ethical behavior has become a trend as law enforcement and corrections attempt to attract a new generation of workers. Millennial studies suggest a high importance is placed on ethics within a workplace (Hershatler & Epstein, 2010). Millennials value ethical behavior not only from themselves but from the organization as well (Vanmeter et al., 2012). Organizational awareness on growing ethical concerns allows for a continuing update of new policies as well as information to be passed to employees. Having proper training standards also ensures employees are trained proficiently as well as mitigates risk for an organization.

Conclusion and Discussion

Shifts in correctional ideology have paved the way for a more rehabilitative approach in a confinement setting. This reemergence of once past practices and influences of current social ideology have made corrections a promising place in which a new generation of workers can start a career. Millennials offer correctional agencies a new approach in the way rehabilitative efforts are conducted. They are the most highly educated of any previous employable workforce (Graf, 2017). This educational standard allows employers to not only explore utilizing more evidence-based practices but tap into the potential of workers through diversity in educational backgrounds. Having a workforce that wants to make a difference rather than show up for a paycheck benefits an employer well beyond what most agencies can see.

As correctional hiring practices continue to remain unchanged, research must adapt and bridge the current workforce mentality to analyze the shortcomings of current recruitment and retention strategies. Unlike law enforcement where a plethora of information available has allowed for new tactics, corrections often lags. This disconnect between two similar yet different careers puzzles many as many correctional organizations are run by law enforcement entities. Unfortunately, until agencies consider the wants and desires of the oncoming workforce, they may struggle in finding and retaining high quality applicants.

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