


2018

# Strategies to Reduce Employee Turnover in the Durable Goods Industry

Mary Jane Burnett  
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# Walden University

College of Management and Technology

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Mary Burnett

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Walden University  
2018

Abstract

Strategies to Reduce Employee Turnover in the Durable Goods Industry

by

Mary Jane Burnett

MS, Florida Institute of Technology, 2007

BS, Tennessee State University, 2003

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

August 2018

## Abstract

Some durable goods industry leaders lack strategies needed to successfully reduce voluntary employee turnover, which is detrimental to organizational performance and decreases an organization's competitive advantage. The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore the strategies durable goods industry leaders used to reduce employee turnover in their organizations. The population consisted of 4 durable goods industry leaders in the southeastern region of the United States who had at least 3 years of managerial experience in reducing employee turnover. The conceptual framework was the transformational leadership theory of Bass. Methodological triangulation was used to increase the validity and reliability of the interpretation of the data and was accomplished by using multiple methods to gather data. Data were collected by conducting semistructured face-to-face interviews and analyzing organizational documentation. Three themes emerged from inductive coding of phrases, word frequency searches, and theme analysis: employee compensation, open and responsive communication, and training and career development opportunities. Employee compensation was the driving force to retain some employees. A comprehensive compensation and benefits package and the ability to provide intangible benefits are proven strategies to reduce turnover. By understanding what strategies reduce turnover and how to implement them, durable goods industry leaders could create positive social change through effective strategies to reduce voluntary employee turnover, decrease the unemployment rate, sustain organizational profitability, and contribute to the wealth of employees and the local economy.

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## Dedication

I dedicate this research study to my large family. First to my mother, Violet Lorraine (Jackson) Burnett, retired certified Drug and Alcohol Counselor, and my father, Clifford Leroy Burnett, Navy/Air Force Veteran, member of the Navy Seabees, and recipient of the Bronze Star and Purple Heart. My parents were my first teachers, role models, and they are my heroes. Mommy and Daddy, I love you and miss you dearly! Mom, I have finished what I started and I am the first within our family to wear the title Doctor! Next, to my son Madison Christopher Jared Burnett, my joy, and one of the reasons why I decided to take the doctoral journey. Madison, I thank you for your support, encouragement, patience, and being my sounding board along the way. I am so happy with the man that you are becoming! To my oldest brother, Richard Dean Pratt, my older sister, Penny (Burnett) Reidl, and my baby brother, Keith Duane Burnett, who are gone too soon, it is an honor to call you family and I miss you! To my older brother, Nathaniel Pratt and oldest sister, Joyce Nadine Burnett, Attorney at Law, I appreciate who you are and I love you. To my older sister, Bonnie Jean (Burnett) Smith, author and advocate for children with special needs, it is an honor to call you my sister! To my older brother Christopher Leroy Burnett, retired Army and the best jazz musician I know! I thank you for always encouraging me and knowing the right words to say. You have continually been the example of what Mom and Dad taught us! To my other baby brother, Donnie Ray Burnett, you are the most intelligent person I know and I am so glad we are family! Finally, to all of my nieces, nephews, and cousins, I hope you each dream big and become the best version of you! Thank you everyone for believing in me!

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## Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Organizational leaders must examine human capital and business practices to position themselves for stability and competitive advantage (Anitha & Begum, 2016; Kim & Park, 2014; Watty-Benjamin & Udechukwu, 2014). Because of the new global workforce environment, employers compete for employees with the same skills, capabilities, and experience levels for the organizations (Asch, Mattock, & Hosek, 2014; Elanain, 2014; Kim & Park, 2014). Therefore, managing turnover is imperative because it has negative organizational consequences such as reduced profitability and productivity, increased replacement costs, and the loss of institutional knowledge (Bester, Stander, & Van Zyl, 2015; Brewer & Kovner, 2014; Elanain, 2014; Hur, 2013; Ozturkoglu, Saygili, & Ozturkoglu, 2016). To obtain a competitive advantage, leaders must deliberately focus on managing turnover within the organization.

### **Background of the Problem**

Turnover has a negative influence on organizations and workers (Rothausen, Henderson, & Arnold, 2015). All organizations experience some level of turnover; however, the anticipated wave of baby-boomer retirements can result in a dramatic loss of capacity (Goodman, French, & Battaglio, 2015; Selden & Sowa, 2015). The global shift of businesses toward knowledge-based structures requires leaders to manage employee turnover strategically (Brymer & Sirmon, 2018; Salleh & Memon, 2015).

Kabungaidze, Mahlatshana, and Ngirande, (2013), Tnay, Othman, Siong, and Lim (2013) and Knapp, Smith, and Sprinkle (2017) found a significant relationship exists between job satisfaction and turnover intentions. Employee turnover is a problem for

organizational leaders because they incur high costs in replacement, hiring, training costs, and the loss of institutional knowledge (Jolly & Masetti\_Placci, 2016; Kurnat-thoma, Ganger, Peterson, & Channell, 2017; Ozturkoglu et al., 2016). In order for leaders to gain a competitive advantage, they must ensure job satisfaction to increase employee retention and decrease turnover (Ozturkoglu et al., 2016). Some leaders are unaware of the wide range of strategies available for successfully reducing employee turnover (Bryant & Allen, 2013). From the results of the proposed single case study, business leaders may obtain viable strategies to reduce employee turnover.

### **Problem Statement**

Employee turnover has detrimental consequences on organizational performance (Mamun & Hasan, 2017). An increase in collective turnover rates for a manufacturing firm result in a financial performance loss of \$441,259 at the unit level and \$57.8 million at the organizational level (Hancock, Allen, & Soelberg, 2017). The general business problem is some manufacturing managers lack strategies to manage employee turnover resulting in decrements in organizational financial performance. The specific business problem is that some durable goods industry leaders lack strategies to reduce employee turnover.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this proposed qualitative single case study was to explore the strategies durable goods industry leaders used to reduce employee turnover. The targeted population consisted of durable goods industry leaders within one company located in the southeastern region of the United States. These durable goods industry leaders had

experience with strategies to reduce employee turnover. The contribution to social change may be the reduction in voluntary employee turnover, decreased unemployment rate, sustained company profitability, and a positive impact on the prosperity of employees, communities, and the local economy.

### **Nature of the Study**

Studying strategies to reduce employee turnover within an organization required an in-depth analysis of the experiences of industry leaders. The exploration of strategies in this study aligned best with the qualitative research method. Qualitative researchers use in-depth interviews that align with the research question (Yin, 2017). By contrast, quantitative researchers numerically measure variables and test hypotheses (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). The quantitative method was not applicable to this study because I did not examine the relationship between an independent and dependent variable. Researchers using the mixed method approach are attempting to understand a phenomenon and test the established theory (Archibald, 2016; Syed & Nelson, 2015). The mixed method was not appropriate to this study because there was no need to test a theory.

A review of four of the qualitative design strategies, phenomenology, case study, narrative research, and ethnography resulted in a design selection of a single-case study. When conducting a case study, the researcher focuses on exploring a contemporary phenomenon in depth, using a single case as a representative or typical case (Bernard & Ryan, 2003, 2013; Glaser & Strauss, 1967, 2009; Yin, 2017). The phenomenological design consists of the collection of data about the human experience where the researcher

emphasizes subjectivity and discovery of essences of experience (Moustakas, 1994).

Narrative researchers focus on the structure of narratives, with the narrative itself being the object of interest, an ethnographic inquiry concentrates on a cultural description involving extensive fieldwork (Bernard & Ryan, 2003, 2013). Therefore, the designs of phenomenology, narrative research, and ethnography, were not congruent with the research question or the purpose of this study.

### **Research Question**

One central research question guided this study: What strategies do durable goods industry leaders use to reduce employee turnover?

### **Interview Questions**

1. What strategies do you use to reduce voluntary employee turnover?
2. How effective are these strategies in reducing voluntary employee turnover?
3. In your experience, what obstacles prohibit reducing voluntary employee turnover from being successful?
4. How do training and career opportunities reduce voluntary employee turnover?
5. What leadership behaviors or styles do you use that are beneficial to reduce voluntary employee turnover within your business?
6. How are these leadership behaviors or styles beneficial in reducing voluntary employee turnover?
7. In your experience, why do you think employees leave?
8. What other information would you like to provide that we have not addressed already?

## **Conceptual Framework**

The theory I used as the conceptual framework was the transformational leadership theory. As related to this study, using the propositions offered by the transformational leadership theory allowed participants to identify and share both their perceptions and experiences regarding leaders' transformational leadership behaviors as they pertain to employee turnover. Effective leaders motivated followers and mobilized resources to fulfill the organization's mission; leadership was crucial for organizational innovation, adaptation, and performance (Antonakis & House, 2014; Ariyabuddhiphongs & Kahn, 2017). In 1978, Burns' seminal work on leadership introduced transformational leadership theory as the shaping of private and public opinion through leadership reform and revolutionary movements (Burns, 1978). Expounding on Burns' seminal work, in 1985, Bass (1999) denoted a transformational leader moves the follower beyond immediate self-interests. Transformational leaders caused followers to focus on the concerns for achievement, self-actualization, and the well-being of others, the organization, and society (Bass, 1999). The four propositions were (a) idealized influence, (b) inspirational motivation, (c) intellectual stimulation, and (d) individualized consideration (Bass, 1999). By using the four propositions of this theory, I ascertained (a) how durable goods industry leaders implemented reduction strategies and (b) what strategies durable goods industry leaders used to manage employee turnover.

## **Operational Definitions**

*Idealized influence:* Transformational leadership attributes in which the leader earns employees' respect and trust while exhibiting confidence. The leadership behavior



in which the leader serves as a role model by demonstrating high standards of ethical conduct (Odumeru & Ifeanyi, 2013).

*Individualized consideration:* A transformational leadership behavior in which the leader has to focus on individuals' differences, individuals' development through feedback, and the qualitative transformation of building human interactions on self-interest to grounding them on the interests of the group and organization (Caillier, 2014a).

*Inspirational motivation:* A transformational leadership behavior in which the leader articulates a vision that inspires subordinates with confidence about the future goals and aligns current duties to the vision (Yao, Fan, Guo, & Li, 2014).

*Intellectual stimulation:* A transformational leadership behavior in which the leader challenges employees to resolve problems and encourage them to reconsider standard practice and ideas (Keskes, 2014).

*Millennial:* Individuals born between 1981 and 1997 are Generation Y or Millennials (Song, Cho, & Kim, 2017).

*Turnover:* Total separations that include quits, layoffs, and discharges, other separations (retirement, death, transfers to other locations with the firm, and disability) (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017)

### **Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations**

#### **Assumptions**

Leedy and Ormrod (2014) and Grant (2014) posited careful researchers provide a statement of assumptions as the fundamental bedrock. Two assumptions were relevant to

this single case study. Participants were knowledgeable about the strategies and leadership behaviors they used to reduce employee turnover. The participants provided truthful and unbiased answers to all interview questions.

### **Limitations**

Limitations refer to issues beyond the control of the researcher and can include potential weakness with the study (Helmich, Boerebach, Arah, & Lingard, 2015). The participants' knowledge of strategies used to reduce employee turnover limited the purposeful sampling selection. Although participants appeared comfortable during the interview and I did not detect any biased responses, the participants' responses to the interview questions were self-reported data and could contain biases (e.g., selective memory, telescoping, attribution, and exaggeration) (Stocia, 2015). The study location of the population was in the southern region of Tennessee; therefore, the results could not be generalizable to leaders in other geographical areas.

### **Delimitations**

Delimitations identify what the researcher does not intend to do and limits the scope, bounding the problem for the research effort as a tract of land is for a real estate transfer (Leedy & Ormrod, 2014). Limiting the study to the durable goods industry was a boundary in the research. Restricting the geographical location to the southeastern region of the United States was delimiting. The next delimitation was the participating business fell within the durable goods industry that develops and manufactures high-tech components. The findings are not generalizable to a broader population because the study was limited to a single case within the durable goods industry (Marshall & Rossman,

2016; Yin, 2017). The target population consisted of durable goods managers with a minimum of 3 years' experience implementing effective strategies to reduce employee turnover restricted the study.

### **Significance of the Study**

#### **Contribution to Business Practice**

This study is significant because employee turnover costs may often exceed 100% of the annual salary for the vacated position (Bryant & Allen, 2013). The results revealed the strategies durable goods industry leaders used to reduce employee turnover. These findings could be of value to all business leaders, but especially leaders within the durable goods industry. By understanding what strategies reduce turnover and how to implement them, durable goods industry leaders could improve the work environment, increasing job satisfaction, and decreasing job dissatisfaction. Within the literature, researchers drew relationships between leadership behaviors, job satisfaction, employee empowerment, and employee turnover (Javed, Jaffari, & Rahim, 2014; Kim, Tam, Kim & Rhee, 2017). These strategies could provide business leaders with a competitive advantage when competing for employees looking for alternative job opportunities in the global economy (Ali, 2014).

#### **Implications for Social Change**

The implications for positive social change included the potential for providing durable goods industry leaders with viable strategies that reduced employee turnover and help them decrease the high costs associated with turnover. The study of leadership strategies used to reduce employee turnover is critical because extant literature confirmed

that leaders' behaviors do affect job satisfaction and turnover (e.g. Caillier, 2016; Kerdnern & Thanitbenjasith, 2017). The implications for positive social change included the potential to (a) reduce voluntary employee turnover, (b) decrease the unemployment rate, (c) sustained organizational profitability, and (d) contribute to the wealth of employees and the local economy.

### **A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature**

The organization of the review contains 12 significant topic categories: (a) the literature search strategy, (b) critical analysis and syntheses of the literature, which includes a summary of percentages and publication dates of peer-reviewed articles, (c) application to the applied business problem, (d) transformational leadership, (e) transformational leadership and turnover, (f) rival theories of transformational leadership, (f) turnover research, (g) turnover, (h) voluntary and involuntary turnover, (i) cost of turnover, (j) retention, and (k) retention strategies. The summary of the sources identified is evidence ensuring 85% of the total sources are peer-reviewed, with a minimum of 60 different peer-reviewed articles within the literature review.

In the qualitative single case study study, I explored strategies used to reduce employee turnover. The content of the literature review consists of 147 peer-reviewed journals and five books for a total of 152 resources. Of the 147 journals I incorporated in this review, 135 (92%) were published between 2014 and 2018, which satisfies the 85% peer-reviewed within the last 5 years of my expected graduation date. Of the total 152 sources, 147 (89%) were peer-reviewed.

My investigation began with a review of the literature published between 2014 and 2018. Database searches resulted in numerous scholarly, peer-reviewed articles and other relevant publications from databases including (a) ABI/INFORM Complete, (b) Academic Search Complete, (c) Business Source Complete, (d) Emerald Management Journals, (e) Emerald Management 200, (f) EBSCO Primary, (g) EBSCO Open Access Journals, (h) Google Scholar, (i) Infotrac General Science eCollection, (j) ProQuest Central, (k) SAGE Premier, (l) PsycARTICLES (EBSCO), (m) ScienceDirect, (n) ScienceDirect Subject Collections – Business, Management and Accounting, (o) ScienceDirect Subject Collections – Health Sciences, (p) SAGE Premier 2017, (q) SocINDEX with Full Text, (r) Taylor and Francis Online, (s) Taylor & Francis Social Science and Humanities Library, (t) Walden's University Online Library, and (v) Wiley Online Library.

I used the following search terms: (a) *employee turnover*, (b) *turnover intention*, (c) *voluntary turnover*, (d) *involuntary turnover*, (e) *cost of turnover*, (f) *turnover*, (g) *turnover costs*, (h) *retention*, and (i) *retention strategies*. To expand the topic of the study, I searched other terms, such as *automotive industry*, *manufacturing industry*, *durable goods industry*, and *transformational leadership*. I searched on *transactional leadership* and *ethical leadership* terms in relationship to turnover.

The objective of this qualitative single case study was to explore the strategies used by durable goods industry leaders to reduce employee turnover. The conceptual framework for this study was the transformational leadership theory. Transformational leadership theory was the lens used to ascertain (a) how durable goods industry leaders

implemented reduction strategies and (b) what strategies durable goods industry leaders used to manage employee turnover. The research population consisted of durable goods industry leaders within one company located in the southern region of Tennessee. These durable goods industry leaders had a minimum of 3 years of leadership and management experience. The implications for positive social change included the potential to (a) reduce voluntary employee turnover, (b) decrease the unemployment rate, (c) sustained organizational profitability, and (d) contribute to the wealth of employees and the local economy.

### **Transformational Leadership Theory**

Automation, the need for skilled employees, and the demographic changes within the workforce required managers to use various leadership behaviors. The end of the Cold War led to the automation of some jobs for the less skilled or exportation through globalization of these occupations to Third World countries (Bass, 1999). The jobs that remained in the United States required educated professionals and well-trained employees (Bass, 1999). Changes in the United States workforce caused leaders to use more transformational behaviors than transactional behaviors to keep the organizations sustainable (Bass, 1999). Leaders used different leadership styles because of the changes in job requirement the new workforce.

Leadership consists of two types of leadership styles. Burns (1978) conceptualized leadership into two categories: (a) transactional leadership and (b) transformational leadership. According to Burns (1978), transactional leaders lead through social change. For example, politicians exchanged one thing for another when

running for office: employment for votes or subsidies for campaign contributions (Burns, 1978). Transformational leaders stimulated and inspired followers through (a) charisma or idealized influence, (b) inspiration or inspirational motivation, (c) intellectual stimulation, and (d) individualized consideration (Bass, 1985, 1990, 1999; Kerdngern & Thanitbenjasith, 2017). Leaders who used transactional leadership placed emphasis on social change, while leaders who used transformational leadership sought to motivate and inspire employees.

Transformational leadership was limited in its initial use. In early research, transformational leadership was restricted to military settings and proved to be a powerful tool (Bass, 1985). More recent studies established that transformational leadership was just as important in public and private sectors outside of the military environment (Belias & Koustelios, 2014a, 2014b; Fischer, 2016). Transformational leadership was a powerful tool in the military, public, and private sectors. Also, transformational leadership did not replace transactional leadership, but augmented it (Bass & Riggo, 2006; Oberfield, 2014). Transactional leaders provided colleagues and followers with what was required, specified the conditions, and the rewards for meeting the requirements (Bass & Riggo, 2006). In contrast, transformational leaders inspired followers through shared organizational vision and goals, empowered employees to become innovative problem solvers, and developed followers' leadership capacity (Bass & Riggo, 2006; Chen, Wang, & Lee, 2018; Ennis, Gong, & Okpozo, 2018). Leaders enhanced transactional leadership with transformational leadership.

Leaders who used transformational leadership had a set of proficiencies that improved the organization. Transformational leadership could make a positive difference in the organization's performance at all levels; enhance its image, and improve its success in recruitment, selection, and promotion (Barrick, Thurgood, Smith, & Courtright, 2015; Bass, 1990; Chen et al., 2018; Ennis et al., 2018; Fischer, 2016). Organizational leadership training programs should include transformational leadership because it consists of a set of teachable competencies (Fischer, 2016). Aligning with Fischer, Aga, Noorderhaven, and Vallejo (2016) suggested the leadership development programs contain transformational leadership. Leaders who implemented transformational leadership competencies improved their organization at all levels.

Transformational leaders must adopt behaviors to handle various issues within the organization. When leaders faced problems, rapid changes, and uncertainties, transformational leadership could help them motivate employees to achieve organizational goals (Bass, 1990; Ennis et al., 2018). Managers who adopted transformational leadership through strategies of recruitment, selection, promotion, training, and development might see positive results in the health, well-being, and effective performance of the organization (Bass, 1990). Transformational leadership helped leaders handle difficulties, motivate employees, and improve the overall performance of the organization.

**Idealized influence.** Idealized influence encompassed some leadership characteristics and behaviors. Leaders who used idealized influence gained followers' respect and trust through actions while emphasizing purpose and commitment



(Ariyabuddhiphongs & Kahn, 2017; Breevaart et al., 2014; Eberly, Bluhm, Guarana, Avolio, & Hannah, 2017; Gottfredson & Aguinis, 2017; Ng, 2017). Transformational leaders who used idealized influence increased employees' performance by providing workers clear and challenging mission-related goals (Caillier, 2014a). Saboe, Taing, Way, and Johnson (2014) identified individualized support and emphasized group goals as transformational leader characteristics related to lower turnover intentions through influencing followers' commitment to the supervisor and organization. Managers using idealized influence reduced turnover intentions by increasing employees' performance and their commitment to the organization.

Leaders acted as role models and exploited their employees' contributions to maintain a competitive advantage. In contrast, Waldman, Carter, and Hom (2015) emphasized transformational leaders maintained the organization's competitive advantage through maximizing individuals' contributions while retaining employees' skills and capabilities. Organizational leaders could invest in transformational leadership training that links specific behaviors to desired organizational goals through personal, relational, and group-based outcomes (Duan, Li, Xu, & Wu, 2017; Saboe et al., 2014). Managers influenced followers through exhibiting high moral and ethical standards while using resources to meet organizational goals.

**Inspirational motivation.** Leaders who used inspirational motivation provided benefits to the organization. Inspirational motivation involves transformational leaders articulated a vision that inspired subordinates with confidence about the future goals and aligned current duties to the vision (Li et al., 2014; Ng, 2017; Odumeru & Ifeanyi, 2013;

Yao et al., 2014). Managers who exhibited inspirational motivation could link the fulfillment of employees' self-interests to the organizational goals (Caillier, 2014a; Ritz, Giauque, Varone, & Anderfuhren-biget, 2014). By inspirational motivation, leaders influenced employees by leading by personal example; they communicated the shared vision, they had genuine care and concern, and they provided followers methods to achieve ambitious goals (Bangari, 2014; H. Kim & Kim, 2017). Managers using inspirational motivation transformed followers into leaders and encouraged personal sacrifice for the benefit of many (Belias & Koustelios, 2014b; Ritz et al., 2014). By using inspirational motivation, leaders inspired followers concerning future goals, fulfilled employees' self-interests, and created leaders from followers.

Leaders used successful communication to motivate followers. Through inspirational motivation, supervisors praised employees in public, encouraged followers to take ownership of jobs, and gave tangible-intangible rewards to challenge subordinates to work harder (Aldatmaz, Ouimet, & Van Wesep, 2018; Eberly et al., 2017). Motivation takes place when managers communicated positive statements about the organization and these messages aroused followers' emotions (Keskes, 2014). Transformational leadership was an organizational factor linked to increased employee motivation, individual and team performance, and commitment (Moynihan, Pandey, & Wright, 2015). Leaders who praised, encouraged, and provided tangible-intangible rewards to their followers increased employees' commitment, organizational performance, and motivation.

**Intellectual stimulation.** Leaders used intellectual stimulation to inspire followers to scrutinize and correct problems. Intellectual stimulation is the manager's

ability to challenge employees to resolve problems and encourage them to reconsider the standard practice and ideas (Eberly et al., 2017; Jolly & Masetti-Placci, 2016; Keskes, 2014). By intellectual stimulation, transformational leaders provided employees with job autonomy and empowerment, and while encouraging followers to examine problems from various perspectives using different assumptions (Wang, Zhao, & Thornhill, 2015). Through examining old problems from different viewpoints, employees were stimulated to be creative, developed innovative strategies, took intellectual risks, and fostered rational decision making (Ali, Jan, & Tariq, 2014; Belias & Koustelios, 2014a). Using intellectual stimulation, leaders provided job autonomy and empowerment through challenging employees to use innovative measures to resolve problems through diverse assumptions.

Leaders should provide an environment that allows their followers to grow and increase their performance. Transformational leaders fostered an environment that encouraged employees to excel and improved both the work and performance (Li et al., 2014; Ng, 2017; Top, Akdere, & Tarcan, 2014). Transformational leaders broadened and elevated the interests of the followers through promoting intelligence, rationality, and systematic problem solving (Kara, Uysal, Sirgy, & Lee, 2013; Ng, 2017).

Transformational leaders solicited followers' suggestions and stimulated them to challenge existing conventional practice and thinking (Negussie & Demissie, 2013).

Transformational leaders promoted a workplace that challenges employees to maximize their skills in problem solving and improved both work and organizational performance.

**Individualized consideration.** Individualized consideration helped leaders view their workforce as individuals and used these differences to improve performance and employee loyalty and trust. Transformational leaders used individualized consideration to focus on individuals' differences, individuals' development through feedback, and the qualitative transformation of building human interactions on self-interest to grounding them on the interests of the group and organization (Avolio & Bass, 1995; Caillier, 2015, 2016; Duan, Li, Xu, & Wu, 2017). Transformational leaders recognized the followers' differences in needs, elevated them, provided equitable treatment, and developed the potential to achieve increasingly higher levels of performance (Avolio & Bass, 1995; Belias & Koustelios, 2014b; Saboe et al., 2014). Using these strategies, leaders increased followers' trust and loyalty to the leaders and organizations (Waldman, Carter, & Hom, 2015). Leaders used individualized consideration to increase employees' trust and loyalty through treating subordinates as individual that resulted in higher levels of performance.

Understanding the relationships between the precursors and turnover helped managers attract and retain employees. A significant and positive relationship existed between turnover and job satisfaction, job performance, organizational commitment, person-organization value congruence, and trust in leadership (Kerdngern & Thanitbenjasith, 2017). Top, Akdere, and Tarcan (2014) explored the relationships between transformational leadership and the precursors (organizational trust, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment) to turnover by public servants and private sector employees within healthcare organizations. The findings were consistent with previous similar studies showing a positive relationship and could help leaders

comprehend the employees' relevant issues and develop programs that attract and retain workforces where high levels of turnover are standard (Top et al., 2014). It is important for managers to understand the relationship between turnover and the precursors.

Leaders must build effective relationships with their employees. By individualized consideration, leaders developed one-to-one relationships with followers through personal respect, provided teaching, and coaching because they recognized employees have unique abilities and expectations (Duan et al., 2017; Hannah, Schaubroeck, & Peng, 2016; Keskes, 2014; Kim et al., 2017). Building individual relationships allowed leaders to identify where followers will be the most productive and which tasks employees will be successful (Harris, Li, & Kirkman, 2014). In a quantitative study, Harris, Li, and Kirkman (2014) concluded it is not always feasible for leaders to develop one-to-one relationships with employees because of limited time and resources. Leaders who developed effective relationships could mentor employees, gain their respect, and identify to whom tasks should be assigned.

Leaders used individualized consideration to reduce turnover intentions. Belias and Koustelios' (2014) confirmed transformational leaders using individualized consideration had a positive influence on employees' performance, job satisfaction, and job commitment. Personal-job fit, shared vision, and integrated values helped to reduce turnover intentions within family businesses (Khanin, 2013). According to Rittschof and Fortunato (2015), transformational leaders used individualized consideration when acting as mentors or coaches to obtain higher levels of performance. Leaders who adopted the transformational leadership style empowered employees leading to a higher level of

organizational commitment and transformational leadership had a significant direct negative effect on turnover intentions (Mittal, 2016). Effective leadership-development strategies through individual and organizational-level interventions would reduce psychological strain and turnover intentions (Biggs, Brough, & Barbour, 2014). Leaders used individualized consideration that reduced turnover intentions through empowerment and positive influence on job performance, job commitment, and job satisfaction of their employees.

Transformational leadership is an important strategy some leaders used within the organization. In the beginning, researchers studied transformational leadership within the military environment. Researchers discovered transformational leadership was applicable to public and private organizations. Researchers determined leaders who used transformational leadership inspired followers through (a) charisma or idealized influence, (b) inspiration or inspirational motivation, (c) intellectual stimulation, and (d) individualized consideration (Ali et al., 2014; Bangari, 2014; Breevaart et al., 2014; Caillier, 2015; H. Kim & Kim, 2017; Li et al., 2014; Li, Kim, & Zhao, 2017; Mittal, 2016; Rittschof & Fortunato, 2015; Top et al., 2014; Waldman et al., 2015; Wang et al., 2015). Researchers concluded transformational leaders improved organizational performance, increased employees job satisfaction, and organizational commitment, while reducing employee turnover.

### **Transformational Leadership Theory and Turnover**

Managers used transformational leadership and reduced employee turnover. Waldman et al. (2015) examined the connection between leadership and follower

turnover. Employees are less likely to leave an organization when they had transformational leaders (Walden et al., 2015). Agreeing with Waldman et al., Maulding, Peters, Roberts, Leonard, and Sparkman (2012) found transformational leaders reduced employees' desire to leave because they inspired followers to prioritize organizational objectives because they embraced the interests of the organization. Turnover intentions mediated the group-level effects of transformational leadership on actual individual turnover (Walden et al., 2015). Managers who used transformational leadership might directly decrease turnover intentions since they gave employees individualized consideration (Caillier, 2014b). Leaders could be an important link that embedded employees by using transformational leadership to reinforce employee retention (Waldman et al., 2015). Transformational leaders inspired employees in a manner that reduced turnover.

Researchers identified several predictors of turnover and turnover intentions. Peachey, Burton, and Wells (2014) did not find organizational commitment mediated the negative relationship between transformational leadership and job search behaviors. This finding did not imply there is no relationship between organizational commitment, transformational leadership, job search behaviors, and turnover, but used the athletic director as the focal point may have affected the result (Peachey, Burton, & Wells, 2014). In contrast, Subramony, Segers, Chadwick, and Shyamsunder (2018) identified job autonomy, fair reward, social support, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, tenure, and demographic variables as the most commonly found predictors of turnover intention. Transformational leadership had a significant direct adverse effect on turnover

intentions (Ennis et al., 2018). Organizations should use transformational leadership traits to select supervisors with these psychological qualities and train managers on how to practice transformational leadership behaviors (Ennis et al., 2018). Researchers identified job autonomy, fair reward, social support, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, tenure, and demographic variables as predictors of turnover and turnover intentions.

Leaders' managerial behaviors affected employee turnover. In contrast, Reina, Rogers, Peterson, Byron, and Hom (2018) investigated how managerial influence tactics affected turnover and identified a relationship between specific leaders' behaviors and employee turnover. Leaders' use of pressure (demands or threats) and inspirational appeals (e.g. appeals to employees' values and aspirations) had opposite effects on employee voluntary turnover (Reina, Rogers, Peterson, Byron, & Hom, 2018). Managers' use of pressure tactics was positively associated with voluntary turnover ( Lee, Hom, Eberly, Li, & Mitchell, 2017; Reina et al., 2018). Managerial use of inspirational appeals was negatively associated with employee turnover (Reina et al., 2018). Leaders influenced followers through transformational leadership traits to decrease turnover intentions.

Leaders empowered subordinates through transformational leadership behaviors. Aligning with Chang and Wang (2013) and Reina et al. (2018), Berkovich and Eyal (2017) purported leaders using the transformational leadership style created personal identification with employees, resulting in followers' innovativeness, autonomous motivation, affective organizational commitment, and decreased turnover intentions. Managers who adopted the transformational leadership style empowered employees



leading to a higher level of organizational commitment that may reduce turnover intentions (Mittal, 2016). Transformational leadership was important because it helped leaders analyze employee understanding and behavior (Mittal, 2016). Leaders influenced followers through transformational leadership traits to decrease turnover intentions.

Effective leadership-development strategies improved the workplace and reduced turnover. Cheng, Bartram, Karimi, Leggat, and Cheng (2016) posited transformational leadership was crucial in the development of a healthy work environment and nurse retention. Nursing leaders who used the transformational leadership style could facilitate nurses' team climate, well-being, and retention while reducing burnout and turnover intentions (Cheng et al., 2016). Effective leadership-development strategies through individual and organizational-level interventions would reduce psychological strain and turnover intentions (Biggs et al., 2014). By addressing poor morale, high turnover, and high psychological strain through organization-level interventions, leaders improved work engagement and job satisfaction, while reducing psychological strain and turnover intentions (Biggs et al., 2014; Ennis et al., 2018; Lim, Loo, & Lee, 2017). Effective leadership-development strategies created a positive work environment, increased morale, and reduced turnover.

Leaders used intrinsic motivation to provide employees with independence and increase their performance. Kuvaas, Dysvik, and Buch (2014) identified a positive relationship between transformational leadership and employees' intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation aligned with one of Bass' (1985, 1990) underlying proposition intellectual stimulation. Transformational leaders used intrinsic motivation to provide

employees with job autonomy and empowerment to increase employees' performance (Belias & Koustelios, 2014b; Kuvaas et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2015). Both transformational and transactional leadership had a significant relationship with turnover intentions and are strong predictors of turnover intentions (Ali et al., 2014). Managers motivated employees through job empowerment and autonomy.

Transformational leadership was a viable strategy leaders used to decrease employee turnover. Tse, Huang, and Lam (2013) identified a negative relationship between transformational leadership and both turnover intention and turnover behavior. Transformational leaders motivated employees to stay because they articulated an inspiring vision that caused employees to align individual interests with the collective interests of the organization (Tse et al., 2013). Managerial practices could play an important role in reducing turnover and reducing role ambiguity increases satisfaction and retention of employees (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014). Leaders used transformational leadership to increase followers' job satisfaction and reduce turnover.

Researchers determined leaders who used transformational leadership could create a healthy work environment, increased job satisfaction, employee empowerment, organizational commitment, and innovation. Researchers concluded there was a significant negative relationship between transformational leadership and both turnover and turnover intentions. Transformational leadership was not the only leadership strategy leaders have available to address employee turnover. Transactional leadership and ethical leadership were rival theories.

## **Rival Theories of Transformational Leadership**

There was not a one-size fits all leadership style for businesses. Leadership was a vital aspect of management and one important factor that contributed to the general well-being of organizations and nations (Odumeru & Ifeanyi, 2013). Transformational leadership and transactional leadership were two of the most prominent leadership theories used to explain leadership effectiveness (Odumeru & Ifeanyi, 2013). Within this study, transformational leadership theory was the lens used to determine how leaders implement strategies to reduce employee turnover. Transactional leadership and ethical leadership were rival theories examined as possible lenses to view strategies to decrease employee turnover.

**Transactional leadership.** Transactional leadership was one of the foundational leadership styles. As stated earlier, Burns (1978) classified leadership into two categories: (a) transactional leadership or (b) transformational leadership. Transactional leadership took place when leaders and followers are engaged in the exchange relationship to meet self-benefits (Burns, 1978). Transactional leaders provided colleagues and subordinates with what was required, specified the conditions, and the rewards for meeting the requirements (Bass & Riggo, 2006). Bass (1990) defined transactional leadership using four dimensions: Contingent reward, Management by exception (MBE) (active), Management by exception (passive), and Laissez-faire. Leaders used transactional leadership when there is a need for an interchange between them.

Leaders provided contingent rewards to improve employee performance and job autonomy. Negussie and Demissie (2013) stated transactional leaders provided

employees with tangible and intangible contingent rewards. Contingent reward was the contractual exchange of rewards between leaders and employees for effort, good performance, and accomplishments (Bass, 1990). Leaders developed monetary rewards related to performance (Aguinis & O'Boyle, 2014). While the financial reward system helped attract, retain, and motivate the best, leaders did not live up to expectations because of the science-practice gap. Leaders and other organizational decision-makers had not examined the extensive empirical research on how monetary rewards could and could not improve individual performance (Aguinis & O'Boyle, 2014; Kornelakis, 2018). In the quantitative study, Negussie and Demissie (2013) found nurses considered a contingent reward as one of the features of transformational leadership style and not transactional leadership because, unlike industrial leaders, it is unusual for a nurse to receive special recognition or a financial reward for outstanding performance. Leaders who used contingent rewards contributed to higher employee autonomy and social support, while management by exception actively negatively affected the work environment (Breevaart et al., 2014). Employees received tangible and intangible contingent rewards for effort, good performance, and accomplishments.

Management by exception contained two components: active and passive.

Leaders who used MBE allowed subordinates to continue upon an agreed performance path until there was a problem or a standard missed, and then the leader would intervene to make corrections (Bass, 1990; H. Kim & Kim, 2017; Negussie & Demissie, 2013). Using MBE, transactional leaders stepped in only when the employee's performance fell below standard or the employee did not meet the agreed-upon contract standards (Bass,

1990; H. Kim & Kim, 2017; Negussie & Demissie, 2013). Negussie and Demissie (2013) found both management by exception (active and passive) and laissez-faire components of transactional leadership had few or adverse effects on performance and job satisfaction. Passive and active are the two components of management by exception.

Managers who used transactional leadership are focused on explicit tasks. In a quantitative study, Kara, Uysal, Sirgy, and Lee (2013) tested whether transformational leadership style was more effective transactional leadership style in increasing organizational commitment and employee burnout. Kara, et al. argued the focus of transactional leadership was to articulate role expectations clearly and support role performance to complete these expectations. Odumeru and Ifeanyi (2013) found transactional leaders were not forward thinkers but are concerned with getting specific tasks completed within existing systems to meet organizational goals. Leaders who used this leadership style applied an exchange model with rewards or punishments and did not think outside the box to solve problems (Odumeru & Ifeanyi, 2013). Leaders focused on specific assignments used transactional leadership.

Managers used transactional leadership and transformational leadership to reduce turnover. Transactional and transformational leadership had a significant relationship with job satisfaction, organizational commitment, perceived performance, and turnover intention (Ali, Jan, & Tariq, 2014). From a theoretical viewpoint, transformational leadership practices had a significant predictive effect on the employee's perceived quality of workplace life (Kara et al., 2013). Leaders utilized transformational leadership to improve employees' perceived quality of work life, enhance stronger organizational

commitment, and reduce employee turnover (Kara et al., 2013). Leaders used both transactional leadership and transformational leadership to reduce employee turnover.

Successful leaders augmented the transformational behaviors with transactional strategies (Bass & Bass, 2008). Employees responded to transactional leadership by focusing on the individual performance to obtain personal rewards (Bass & Bass, 2008). However, transactional leadership was not the appropriate approach to explore strategies that manage employee turnover within the hospitality sector (Kara et al., 2013). Transactional leadership was not a viable lens to determine what strategies leaders used to reduce employee turnover because leaders were limited to using the exchange model of tangible and intangible rewards and punishments.

**Ethical leadership.** There were a number of definitions of ethical leadership. Brown, Treviño, and Harrison (2005) developed the construct of ethical leadership by laying the necessary conceptual and empirical groundwork. Ethical leadership emphasized that leaders demonstrate normatively appropriate behavior and they promoted the moral conduct to the followers (Walumbwa, Hartnell, and Misati, 2017). In contrast, van Gils, Van Quaquebeke, van Knippenberg, van Dijke, and De Cremer (2015) found Brown's et al. definition of ethical leadership vague because it did not specify any particular ethical norms. Ethical leadership was a component within the nexus of leader behaviors found in transformational and charismatic leadership (Palanski, Avey, & Jiraporn, 2013). These definitions of ethical leadership focused on the moral behavior of the leader and its effect on employees. The definitions of ethical leadership were vague and did not identify any particular ethical norms.

Ethical leadership had a positive or negative impact on employees and consisted of several facets. The ethical aspect of leadership focuses on moral conduct such as leader honesty, trustworthy, interactional fairness, and perceived leadership effectiveness (Brown & Treviño, 2006; Eisenbeiss & Knippenberg, 2015; Fehr, Yam, & Dang, 2015; Gorard, 2014; van Gils et al., 2015; Walumbwa et al., 2017). The relationship between ethical leaders and the subordinates and the leader-member exchange (LMX) resulted in a positive or negative impact on employees (Ko, Ma, Bartnik, Haney, & Kang, 2017). Brown and Treviño (2006) and Palanski et al. (2013) found leaders used standard setting, performance appraisal, and rewards and punishments as ethical processes as proactive efforts to influence the ethical and unethical behavior of employees. Ethical leaders affected the employees through positive leader-member exchange (LMX) and job autonomy, which resulted in innovative service behavior (Dhar, 2016). Leaders used the ethical aspect of leadership had a positive or negative impact on followers.

Ethical leadership overlapped with other leadership styles. van Gils et al. (2015) identified four central ethical orientations: humane orientation, justice orientation, responsibility and sustainability orientation, and moderation orientation. These orientations overlapped with transformational, authentic, spiritual, and servant leadership and referred to the leadership components of setting goals and interpersonal influence (Brown & Treviño, 2006; Brown et al., 2005; van Gils et al., 2015). The leadership component associated with humane and justice orientations was to influence others (van Gils et al., 2015). The leadership components related to responsibility and sustainability orientation and used for moderation orientation were a cross-sectional dimension of

setting goals and making strategic decisions (van Gils et al., 2015). Ethical leadership four central orientations overlapped with other leadership styles.

Ethical leadership was limited to the ethical behavior of the leader and its effect on employees. Although, DeConinck (2014) found ethical leaders had a direct influence on salespersons' turnover intentions, the only strategy provided to retain employees was to have sales managers adhere to high ethical values. Lu and Guy (2014) and Babalola, Stouten, and Euwema (2016) concluded organizations provide supervisors with ethical leadership training to enhance skills. Prottas (2013) proposed moral distress mediated the relationship between behavioral integrity and the employee outcomes. DeConinck and Prottas stated the employee's perception of the leader's behavioral integrity influenced the employee's behavior and attitude. Ethical leadership and firm performance were not mutually exclusive (Eisenbeiss & Knippenberg, 2015). Ethical leadership was an essential virtue that leaders across different industries (Eisenbeiss & Knippenberg, 2015). Ethical leadership was not appropriate as the lens to view strategies to decrease employee turnover because it included leaders' moral conduct used to mitigate employees' unethical behavior.

Transactional leadership and ethical leadership were the two rival theories of transformational leadership. Researchers determined transactional leadership was an exchange relationship between the leader and the employees wherein the leader provided tangible and intangible rewards and punishments. Researchers concluded because transactional leadership did not allowing the leader to think outside the exchange model (Odumeru & Ifeanyi, 2013), this theory was not suitable for examining strategies to



reduce employee turnover. Similar to transactional leadership, leaders used ethical leadership to influence the ethical and unethical behavior of employees through rewards and punishments. Researchers found ethical leadership connected to transformational and charismatic leadership and its four ethical orientations overlapped transformational, authentic, spiritual, and servant leadership. Researchers concluded the only strategy to reduce employee turnover using ethical leadership was for the leaders to adhere to high ethical values. Therefore, ethical leadership was not the appropriate lens to view different strategies to reduce employee turnover.

### **Turnover Research**

Researchers studying turnover used the quantitative method more than qualitative method. Allen, Hancock, Vardaman, and McKee (2014) studied 447 empirical turnover studies over the past 52 years on the mindset influencing employee turnover scholarship. The majority of turnover research was quantitative with a heavy reliance on survey measures and regression-based methods (Allen, Hancock, Vardaman, & McKee, 2014). The preponderance of turnover quantitative studies was the result of a dominant analytical mindset (DAM) caused by the management field behavior research and the turnover methods used are far more constrained and homogenous (Allen et al., 2014). Allen et al. concluded turnover scholarship would benefit from a greater emphasis on qualitative studies that might provide richer, deeper accounts of turnover, and uncover nuances in the turnover process not found in quantitative research. Qualitative research and the new perspectives they reveal may assist in breaking the DAM, resulting in greater diversity in future quantitative research designs (Allen et al., 2014). Although there is

more quantitative research on turnover, turnover scholarship will benefit from more qualitative research studies.

Researchers used personal factors to identify turnover intentions. In studying turnover intentions, Hongvichit (2015) found most researchers adopted the Mobley, Futrell, Parasuraman or Sager measurement scales. Hongvichit analyzed the progress and prospect of research of employee turnover intention through the review of personal factors identified in 24 empirical turnover intention studies. Hongvichit identified turnover intention could be predicted based on employee turnover behaviors using the most direct antecedents. Leaders should use personal factors on employee behaviors to predict turnover intentions.

A decrease in collective turnover rates will increase profits and performance. Hancock et al. (2014) analyzed 48 independent studies to develop the first meta-analysis that addressed the relationship between turnover rates and organizational performance. Hancock et al. identified a significant negative relationship between turnover and organizational performance. Hancock's et al. calculated a one standard deviation decrease in collective turnover rates would increase profits at the unit level and organizational level by \$189,111 and \$24.8 million respectively. Using 2009 publicly available data for the top 1,000 Fortune companies, Hancock et al. calculated a decrease in collective turnover rates would provide \$151 million increase in profits. , the industry type, job level, and the type of work were more negative for managerial employees (Hancock et al., 2014). Hancock et al. found firm-specific human capital losses were more costly than

general human capital losses. Organizational profits and performance increased when collective turnover rates decrease.

The majority of turnover studies were quantitative. Researchers concluded qualitative studies provided viable information not gleaned from quantitative research. Researchers argued turnover scholarship would benefit from more qualitative research.

New hires and retirement eligible employees were prone to voluntary turnover. Cho and Lewis (2012) and Burke, Koyuncu, Wolpin, Yirik, and Kadife (2015) found turnover intentions were a reasonable proxy for an actual turnover. Cho and Lewis stated turnover rates vary sharply with age and experience. The turnovers were among relatively new hires and those eligible to retire (Cho & Lewis, 2012). The extrinsic rewards (salary, performance appraisals, and fairness) mattered for newly hired employees, but they were less important for seasoned employees (Cho & Lewis, 2012). Although, turnover rates vary with age and experience, employees eligible to retire and new hires leave their organization.

Researchers found extrinsic rewards decreased turnover intentions. In congruence with Cho and Lewis (2012), Burke et al. (2015) found turnover intention had a positive and a substantively meaningful effect on turnover behavior. Job satisfaction, creativity, professional development, and good workgroup as extrinsic rewards and other predictors had a significant impact on turnover intentions regardless of age (Camara, Dulewicz, & Higgs, 2015; Ertas, 2015). While the Millennial employees had higher levels of turnover, the turnover intentions did not differ considerably between older and younger employees (Ertas, 2015). Turnover intentions were decreased by extrinsic rewards.

The most important antecedent to turnover intention was job satisfaction. Javed, Balouch, and Hassan (2014) identified job satisfaction as being the most important antecedent to turnover because it contributed more than 32% to turnover intentions. Agreeing with Javed et al., Caillier (2015), and Anvari, JianFu, and Chermahini (2014) proposed job satisfaction still appeared as the most significant predictor of turnover intentions. Aligning with the above scholars, in a quantitative study, Tnay et al. (2013) identified a significant relationship between both satisfaction with pay and organizational support with employee turnover intention. Job satisfaction was the most important antecedent to turnover intention.

Researcher identified turnover intentions had a negative relationship with organizational commitment and performance. In contrast, Zopiatis, Constanti, and Theocharous (2014) identified, in quantitative studies, organizational commitment was the dominant factor in predicting turnover. Affective organizational commitment led to job satisfaction and decreased turnover intentions (Zopiatis, Constanti, & Theocharous, 2014). Organizational performance (self-rated and manager-rated) was negatively related to turnover intentions (Para-González, Jiménez-Jiménez, & Martínez-Lorente, 2018). The relationship was stronger between manager-rated performance and turnover intentions under conditions of high leader-member exchange (Li, Kim, & Zhao, 2017). In addition, Hancock et al. (2014) and Park and Shaw (2013) observed evidence of a significant negative relationship between organizational performance and turnover. Organizational commitment and performance had a negative relationship with turnover intentions.

There were numerous factors that influence turnover intention. In addition to Hancock's et al. (2014) purported turnover rates as predictors, Pang, Kuckusta, and Chan (2014) stressed general job satisfaction, job hopping, job security, training opportunity, and promotion opportunity were the five independent variables significantly related to turnover intention. Huffman, Casper, and Payne (2014) identified nonwork factors (e.g. spousal support) for careers reduced turnover for Army officers. Without spousal support, work interfering with Family (WIF) was related to greater odds of turnover conceptualized cost prioritization and its consequences on sales force turnover (Huffman, Casper, & Payne, 2014). Skiba, Saini, and Friend (2015) had three findings: (a) managerial cost prioritization increased turnover, (b) micromanagement exacerbated turnover, and (c) cost prioritization influenced functional and dysfunctional turnover differently. There were several independent variables that effect turnover intention.

Ascertaining precursors to turnover was important because turnover resulted in disruptive consequences for organizations. Bryant and Allen (2013) identified three primary categories of predictors of turnover: (a) the withdrawal process, (b) critical job attitudes, and (c) the work environment. Heavey, Holwerda, and Hausknecht (2013) provided the first comprehensive meta-analysis summary of the many various antecedents of turnover. Instead of examining predictors, Heavey's et al. research extended knowledge of antecedent-turnover relationships through the analysis of pertinent moderators. The primary attention given to the precursors of turnover was likely based on the supposition that turnover resulted in significant consequences for

organizations (Allen et al., 2014). Determining precursors to turnover was significant as turnover resulted in organizational detriments.

Organizational performance, specific training, and internal promotions lowered turnover rates. Park and Shaw (2013) supported the proposition that increased turnover rates damaged organizational performance and validated the need for conceptualization and operationalization of turnover rates. Heavey et al. (2013) argued firm-specific training and internal promotion levels lowered turnover rates. Tariq, Ramzan, and Riaz (2013) confirmed organizational performance was negatively and significantly related to employee turnover. Organizational performance, specific training, and internal promotions decreased turnover rates.

Researchers identified several of antecedents to turnover intentions. Some researchers concluded job satisfaction was the most important precursor to turnover intentions (Anvari et al., 2014; Caillier, 2015; Javed et al., 2014; Tnay et al., 2013). Other researchers argued extrinsic rewards and organizational commitment were major antecedents to turnover intentions.

### **Voluntary and Involuntary Turnover**

Within the United States, the total separations continued to increase with the voluntary separations being higher than involuntary separations. The private and government total monthly separations were 5.2 million in December 2017 resulting in a turnover rate of 3.6% (U.S. Department of Labor, 2018). This was a .2 million increase from the 5.0 million total separations in December 2016 (U.S. Department of Labor, 2018). Of the 5.2 million separations, 63.46% or 3.3 million were voluntary (U.S.

Department of Labor, 2018). In December 2017, the involuntary turnovers or layoffs and discharges were 1.6 million (U.S. Department of Labor, 2018). When the recession ended in 2009, total turnover increased by 21.3% from June 2009 to December 2016, (U.S. Department of Labor, 2017). In 2016, at the industry level, the largest increases in annual total separations between 2015 and 2016 were in nondurable goods manufacturing at 7.5% and construction at 7.1% (U.S. Department of Labor, 2018). Within the government and private sectors, there were more voluntary separations than involuntary separations.

Voluntary and involuntary turnover had negative effects on the performance of an organization. Park and Shaw (2013) suggested the disruptive effects of turnover (mainly voluntary turnover) on organizational performance varied across industries (e.g. service or manufacturing, public or private). These variances were because of the individual roles within individualistic cultures; turnover might be more disruptive to organizational performance in individualistic cultures than collectivist cultures (Cohen, Blake, & Goodman, 2015; Park & Shaw, 2013). Some involuntary turnovers were detrimental to an organization and the corporate philosophies of preserving jobs at all costs were not always advantageous to employees or businesses (Manz, Fugate, Hom, & Millikin, 2014). Manz, Fugate, Hom, and Millikin (2014) provided practical guidance to help leaders achieve Positive Involuntary Turnover (PIT) that identified overlooked opportunities to help overcome common pitfalls and enables individuals and organizations to thrive. Disruptive effects on an organization were not limited to voluntary turnover because some involuntary turnover had negative effects on performance.

Overall turnover impacted many aspects of the organization. Pietersen and Oni (2014) used a cross-sectional mixed method design to examine the turnover rate of two local government agencies. High overall turnover rate had a severe impact on efficiency, productivity, and service (Pietersen & Oni, 2014). The replacement costs for employees in all categories were very high (Pietersen & Oni, 2014). Involuntary turnover and voluntary turnover could be dysfunctional for organizations (Pietersen & Oni, 2014). Overall turnover adversely affected replacement costs, efficiency, productivity, and service.

There were a number of precursors to voluntary turnover. Whitford and Lee (2015) assessed the context of voluntary exit for employees in the public workforce. Whitford and Lee identified exit, voice, and loyalty as precursors to respondents' using retirement or leave the agency for another position as exit options. Employees' satisfaction with the organization reduced the likelihood of leaving (Whitford & Lee, 2015). Leaders expanded the use of voice, which enhanced employees' loyalty and reduced the likelihood of exit because of retirement or leave the agency (Whitford & Lee, 2015). Exit, voice, and loyalty are three of the precursors to voluntary turnover.

Leaders invested in their employees to reduce voluntary turnover. In a quantitative study, Selden and Sowa, (2015) identified an association between lower voluntary turnover and certain high-performance work practices (HPWP). Within the human service nonprofit sector, compensation was a significant predictor of voluntary turnover (Selden & Sowa, 2015). To improve retention, leaders invested more time and resources in leadership development of employees and promoted a positive working



environment (Selden & Sowa, 2015; Subramony, Segers, Chadwick, & Shyamsunder, 2018). A positive work environment played a vital role in reducing voluntary turnover (Selden & Sowa, 2015). The organizational environment, compensation, and employee leadership development positively or negatively affect voluntary turnover.

A reasonable amount of fun within an organization reduced voluntary turnover. Tews, Michel, and Stafford (2013) proposed to have leader-supported fun within an organization had a direct negative impact on voluntary turnover. Employees valued a work climate where leaders adopted a relatively casual business attitude (Tews, Michel, & Stafford (2013). Too much fun had adverse effects on productivity, causing leaders to ensure there is sufficient commitment to mediate the relationship between fun activities and management support for fun and turnover (Tews et al., 2013). Leaders regulated the amount of fun in their organization to decrease voluntary turnover.

In August 2015, more than half of the turnover within the United States was voluntary. Researchers concluded both voluntary and involuntary turnover had detrimental effects on organizational efficiency, productivity, and service (e.g. Cohen et al., 2015; Manz, Fugate, Hom, and Millikin, 2014; Park & Shaw, 2013; Pietersen & Oni, 2014) Leaders must develop strategies to manage turnover.

### **Strategies to Manage Turnover**

Leaders adapted to the mobile workforce market and provided employee development programs. Rahman and Nas (2013) examined the pattern of behavior of turnover intentions in developing countries. Rahman and Nas found the prediction of an employee's turnover intention by the employee development perceptions. Leaders must

realize the mobile workforce market required the importance of human resources approaches that favored the employee's expectations (Rahman & Nas, 2013). To ensure a competitive advantage; leaders should create organizational cultures that sustained and supported employee development programs (Rahman & Nas, 2013). Leaders adapted to the mobile workforce, met employee's expectations, and provided employee development programs to reduced turnover intentions.

There were a number of strategies leaders used to manage employee turnover. Bryant and Allen (2013) synthesized the research on employee turnover and developed practical human resource strategies available to leaders. To successfully manage employee turnover, leaders used compensation and benefits-related approaches, knew and assessed the indicators of the withdrawal process, ensured job satisfaction and organizational commitment and promoted high-quality relationships between leaders and subordinates and between coworkers (Bryant & Allen, 2013). Kim and Park (2014) recommended the use of a set of diverse strategies tailored to individual causes of turnover intentions that mitigated employee turnover. Leaders used human resource strategies to reduce employee turnover.

Leaders concentrated on their relationship with their employees and provided a positive work environment to reduce turnover. Leaders promoted high-quality relationships between managers and subordinates to retain the high performers (Ariyabuddhiphongs & Kahn, 2017). Cho and Lewis (2012) proposed leaders focused retention efforts on newly hired and employees near retirement. While extrinsic rewards matter for newly hired employees, leaders must challenge seasoned workers by increased

meaningfulness of the work performed (Cho & Lewis, 2012). Managers strived for work environments that offered meaningful rewards and recognition, opportunities for challenge and training, friendly and flexible workplace relations, and assignments that make significant contributions to society (Ertas, 2015). Leaders provided employees with an encouraging work environment to decrease turnover.

Leaders who used management systems to track turnover can focus on employee job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Managers regularly monitored turnover rates because rising rates forecast numerous performance deficiencies and signal throughout workforce health and functionality (Heavey et al., 2013). Leaders targeted unit-level aggregates and focused on the entire workforce instead of giving bonuses for individual accomplishments (Heavey et al., 2013). Kanwar, Singh, and Kodwani (2012) recommended organizations ensured enhancement of job satisfaction and organizational commitment to retain the employees. Leaders enhanced job satisfaction and organizational commitment through the development of management systems to monitor the satisfaction and dedication of workers (e.g. satisfaction index, climate survey, and exit interview) (Kanwar, Singh, & Kodwani, 2012). Leaders used management systems to retain dedicated employees.

Innovative management was the vehicle used by leaders to address turnover. Innovative management in Texas school districts affected teacher turnover (Ryu & Lee, 2013). Ryu and Lee (2013) recommended leaders used innovative management to control turnover rates. Controlling turnover was contingent upon the leaders finding the optimal level of turnover through the adjustment of its innovation strategies based on the current

level of organizational performance to improve the future performance (Ryu & Lee, 2013). Senior leaders who used innovative management promoted turnover in low-performance circumstances and retention in high-performance conditions (Ryu & Lee, 2013). Some leaders used innovative management to manage turnover.

Leadership styles and the workplace environment are factors that influence turnover. In a quantitative study, Tews, Stafford, and Michel (2014) found employees were less likely to leave an organization because of critical life events and attachment to others. Constituent attachments had a direct effect on turnover and were essential to supporting retention through friendship and emotional support (Tews et al., 2014). Leaders who promoted cohesion and supportive interpersonal relationships reduced turnover and improved retention (Tews et al., 2014). Johansen (2013) concluded that quality middle managers exert a significant and adverse effect on organizational turnover; upper-level managers did not. Organizations with high-quality middle managers experience lowered turnover than organizations with lower middle management quality (Johansen, 2013). Managers' leadership styles and the work environment can adversely affect turnover.

Turnover within the organizational context helped leaders to identify the correct investment strategy for functional and dysfunctional turnover. Allen, Bryant, and Vardaman (2010) suggested leaders view turnover through the lens of the organizational context to develop both data based system-wide goals and targeted retention goals. Using the criteria of turnover costs, rates, and functionality, leaders identified the appropriate strategic investment (Allen, Bryant, & Vardaman, 2010). For example, functional

turnover existed when costs were acceptable, turnover rates were adequate after employees leave, and there was no need for management action (Allen et al., 2010). Dysfunctional turnover resulted when costs were allowable, but the employees leaving added value to the organization, and management employed low investment strategies to retain these employees (Allen et al., 2010). Leaders should use both targeted and systemic strategies when turnover costs were acceptable, but both the turnover rate and who was leaving were problematic or when turnover costs were too high (Allen et al., 2010). Leaders viewed turnover within the organizational context identifying the appropriate investment strategy to manage turnover.

Leaders developed strategies to manage functional and dysfunctional turnover. Researchers ascertained the focus must be on development of human resource strategies to retain high performers, management systems to monitor employees' satisfaction, and the building of high-quality relationships (e.g. Bryant and Allen, 2013; Ertas, 2015; Heavey et al., 2013; Kim & Park, 2014; Rahman & Nas, 2013; Ryu & Lee, 2013; Tews, Stafford, & Michel, 2014). Leaders who used effective strategies to manage turnover reduced turnover costs.

### **Cost of Turnover**

Turnover costs varied between industries and services and within the public and private sectors. Hancock et al. (2013) stated the costs of human and social capital losses associated with turnover outweighed the potential functional effects of replacing departing employees with better or less expensive employees. Firm-specific (knowledge-base) human capital losses rather than general human capital losses were particularly

costly (Hancock et al., 2014). Lartey, Cummings, and Profetto-Mcgrath (2014) argued the immediate need for quantification of human capital and productivity costs and benefits. Knowledge-based human capital losses cost organizations more than the loss of general human capital.

Opportunity costs and turnover incidence rates were damaging to organizations. Ali (2014) and Weaver (2015) agreed that along with the monetary costs, loss of productivity, public trust, and morale were example of opportunity costs that were more damaging to an organization's reputation. Within the healthcare industry, Brewer et al. (2016) used the turnover incidence rate of 18.1% and estimated organizational turnover costs of \$856 million for newly licensed Registered Nurses (NLRNs). Using 2006 salary figures, Brewer et al. (2016) estimated that within three years of RNs starting the first job, 43.4% had left, costing the U.S. healthcare system between \$1.4 and \$2.1 billion. Organizations lose billions in the high cost of turnover incidence rates and opportunity costs.

Turnover and replacement costs are high for private and public organizations. The financial cost of employee turnover and replacement ranges from 50% to 200% of the salary depending on the employee's seniority, specialization, performance level, and on-the-job training received (Boozman, Allen, & Hamilton, 2011). These financial costs were similar to those of the public sector (Boozman, Allen, & Hamilton, 2011). Aligning with Boozman et al., Cascio (2015) purported the cost associated with losing employees and the recruitment, selection, and training of new hires often exceeded 100% of the annual compensation for the position. Turnover costs were exorbitant because of the

expense of hiring (recruitment), replacement training, and the disruption caused to the work environment (Newman, Ye, & Leep, 2014). Industry leaders realized the cost of turnover goes well beyond the administrative costs of recruitment and hiring (Milman & Dickson, 2014). Loss of productivity and loss of institutional knowledge were other expenses associated with turnover (Milman & Dickson, 2014). Public and private organizations have high turnover and replacement costs.

Boushey and Jane (2013) agreed with Newman et al. (2014) by asserting that regardless of the salary paid to the departing or new employee, the cost of employee turnover for companies was high. It cost companies approximately one-fifth of a worker's salary to replace that employee and ranged from 5.8% up to 213% (Boushey & Jane, 2013). Excluding executives and physicians, Boushey and Jane found the remaining positions median cost of turnover was 21% of an employee's annual salary.

Within the sales industry, the costs of recruitment, interviews, and hiring range between \$75,000 and \$300,000 per employee (DeConinck, 2014). In another example, Roche, Duffield, Homer, Buchan, and Dimitrelis (2014) stated high rates of nurses turnover place significant demands on hospital budgets and varied considerably between countries and studies. Recruitment, hiring, and temporary replacement costs were direct costs, while orientation, termination, and decreased productivity were indirect costs (Kurnat-thoma et al., 2017; Roche, Duffield, Homer, Buchan, & Dimitrelis, 2014). Roche et al. compared turnover replacement costs using the United States dollars format and found Australian costs of \$48,790 were the highest, Canada costs of \$26,652 were next, New Zealand costs were \$23,711, and U.S. costs were \$20,561, respectively. Roche et al.

found temporary replacement costs were close to 90% of the direct costs. Public and private organizations turnover costs increased because of replacement costs.

Researchers identified different strategies to reduce employee turnover. Cloutier and Felusiak (2015) recommended organizations use four strategies to address turnover: effective communication, a diverse workforce, hire appropriately skilled personnel, and offer development and training programs. Using these strategies allowed leaders to achieve both short- and long-term goals (Cloutier & Felusiak, 2015). Guilding, Lamminmaki, and McManus (2014) suggested the allocation of turnover costs to operating departments enhanced staff turnover accountability. Guilding et al. speculated by allocating turnover costs at the department-level, leaders were motivated to reduce turnover and human resource management (HRM) became more accountable to the leadership for incurred recruitment and training costs. Allocation to departments removed the silo management causing leaders to share the incurred recruitment costs (Guilding, Lamminmaki, & McManus, 2014). Without staff recruitment allocations to the operating level, leaders wasted resources because of the large pool of under-used casual staff (Guilding et al., 2014). Researchers proposed several strategies to decrease employee turnover.

By customizing their leadership styles, leaders kept their employees who possess institutional knowledge and high performing new hires. Because of the pending baby boomers retirement, leaders must retain highly qualified new hires and retirement eligible employees (Cho & Lewis, 2012). Leaders hiring Millennial employees realized the entrepreneurial nature, the inconsistency of this generation of workers, and the



significantly higher likelihood of turnover of Millennials as compared to baby boomers (Ertas, 2015; Nolan, 2015). Nolan (2015) purported leaders customized their leadership style to the desires of the Millennial employees who will comprise half of the workforce in five years. Leaders adapted their leadership style to manage their diverse workforce.

The effect of turnover on organizations consisted of tangible and intangible costs. Although turnover costs varied between industries, researchers concluded the cost to organizations was high (Boushey & Jane, 2013; Brewer et al., 2016; Cascio, 2015; Newman et al., 2014; Roche et al., 2014). Leaders who retained high performing employees reduced turnover costs.

### **Retention**

Business plans should contain strategies to retain and hire employees. Potential employees were an integral part of an organization's strategic business plan (Balakrishnan & Vijayalakshmi, 2014). Retention was a significant challenge for all agencies (Balakrishnan & Vijayalakshmi, 2014; Hofaidhllaoui & Chhinzer, 2014). Leaders increased organizational performance through recruitment and retention of highly productive employees to increase organizational performance (Balakrishnan & Vijayalakshmi, 2014; Ryu & Lee, 2013). Watty-Benjamin and Udechukwu, (2014) found practices within the key areas of recruitment, training, career development, compensation, performance management, and employee relations effected and defined whether organizations failed or succeeded.

Leaders used many factors to increase employee retention. Robinson, Kralj, Solnet, Goh, and Callan (2014) found employees stayed with the organization based on

the combination of on-the-job and off-the-job factors. Within the service sector, Robinson et al. proposed hotel leaders managed retention by operationalizing the organizational on-the-job (internal) and off-the-job (external) factors. Kalidass and Bahron (2015) and Madden, Mathias, and Madden (2014) suggested a significant relationship exists between perceived supervisor support, perceived organizational support, organizational commitment, and turnover intentions. Leaders positively affected employees' turnover intentions by improved organizational support, encouraged positive interpersonal relationships, provided commensurate rewards and growth opportunities, and participated in decision-making (Madden et al., 2014). There were a number of strategies available for leaders to increase retention.

Organizational commitment, employee satisfaction, and customer satisfaction affect retention. Robinson et al. (2014) found only corporate sacrifice on organizational commitment was significant in employee retention. In contrast, Tews et al. (2014) proposed hospitality workers had some of the personal social needs (on-the-job factor) met through integration with other employees. This constituent attachment through friendship and emotional support promoted retention (Tews, Stafford, & Michel, 2014). In contrast, Rothausen et al. (2015) proposed the results of the employees' identity and well-being assessment sense-making cycles determined retention or turnover decisions. The sense-making cycles occurred periodically or when employees perceived a threat to fundamental elements of identity and well-being across life domains (Rothausen et al., 2015). When there is a lack of threat to, or facilitation of, identity and well-being, along with successful coping resulted in retention and lower turnover domains (Rothausen et

al., 2015). To maintain a high retention rate, leaders focused on organizational service orientation, employee satisfaction, and customer satisfaction.

Work environment, pay, and advancement opportunities affected retention.

Vasquez (2014) posited leaders who created a healthy working environment that includes management support, appropriate rewards, and incentive programs lead to retention in the hospitality industry. Within the federal government, Asch et al. (2014) argued the effects on retention during the first few years of the 1% pay freeze were largest among employees beginning new careers and smaller for those nearing 30 years of public service. In U.S. theme parks and attractions, Milman and Dickson's (2014) findings highlighted the highest importance-performance gaps were in the area of hourly employees' pay level and advancement opportunities. Leaders made the advancement opportunities more transparent and communicated better to the employees so these workers could pursue long-term careers within the organizations (Milman & Dickson, 2014). Employees remained with an organization, which had a positive work environment, equitable pay, and opportunities for growth.

Successful retention strategies increased job satisfaction, stabilized organizations, and added to growth and profits. From a managerial viewpoint and because of a series of trends (e.g. globalization, technological advances, approaching retirement of baby boomers, fiscal constraints), leaders acquired and retained high-quality employees for sustained competitive advantage and increased organizational performance (Bryant & Allen, 2013; Hofaidhllaoui & Chhinzer, 2014; Pietersen & Oni, 2014; Ryu & Lee, 2013; Vasquez, 2014). Leaders must support and reinforce retention strategies that increase

employees' job satisfaction and minimize dissatisfaction (Tschopp, Grote, & Köppel, 2015). Effective employee retention was a factor that influenced organization's stability, growth, and profits (Milman & Dickson, 2014). Leaders used functional retention strategies because of technology advances, globalization, fiscal constraints, and approaching retirement of baby boomers.

To sustain a competitive advantage and increase organizational performance, leaders retained high-quality workers. Researchers concluded employees stay with an organization because leaders provided a healthy work environment, which included identity and well-being, perceived supervisor and organization support, and increased organizational performance (Fadairo et al., 2013; Kalidass & Bahron, 2015; Madden et al., 2014; Robinson, Kralj, Solnet, Goh, & Callan, 2014; Ryu & Lee, 2013; Vasquez, 2014). Leaders used retention strategies to reduce employee turnover.

### **Retention Strategies**

Managers must have viable retention strategies to compete for skilled employees in the labor market. Leaders included retention strategies as part of the organization's vision, mission, and core values to ensure the retention of high performers (Cloutier & Felusiak, 2015). The global business environment required leaders to have a diverse workforce because knowledgeable, skilled workers affected the bottom line and the firms' competitive advantage (Cloutier & Felusiak, 2015). The labor market environment is highly competitive and forces leaders to develop an organizational culture that fostered positive relationships and allowed employees to see their value and advancement opportunities (Bryant & Allen, 2013; Cloutier & Felusiak, 2015; Dahiya, Mann, &

Gupta, 2014; Oladapo, 2014). Organizational leaders used four strategies to achieve employee retention: effective communication, a diverse workforce and transparency, ensure person-job fit and person-organization fit, and offered employee development and training programs (Cloutier & Felusiak, 2015). In contrast, leaders build a supportive organizational climate through career building exercises, training, information sharing practices, recognition, and social activities. (Ertürk & Vurgun, 2014). Managers used sustainable retention strategies to attract and keep a diverse workforce.

There are numerous leadership behaviors that affect retention. Hellowell (2012) identified eight behaviors leaders used that engaged employees, increased job satisfaction, and supported employee retention. These leadership behaviors included keeping employees informed, two-way communication, recognition program, upward mobility, training, organizational team culture, innovation, and detail oriented (Hellowell, 2012). Supporting Hellowell, Dahiya et al. (2014) proposed many problems arose from leaders not paying attention to the employees' needs and reaction. Leaders must ensure their behaviors increase employee retention.

Agreeing with Hellowell (2012), Cloutier and Felusiak (2015) purported the need for leaders to have a standard process of communication that showed employees how they fit into the organization. Retention strategies must be a part of the mission, vision, core values, and operations (Cloutier & Felusiak, 2015; Gould-Williams, Mostafa, & Bottomley, 2015). Cloutier and Felusiak and Heavey et al. (2013) suggested a diverse workforce of cross-generational, culture, and gender employees was beneficial for

companies and increased retention because employees saw fewer barriers and more advancement opportunities.

**Compensation.** Compensation systems included various forms of direct and indirect compensation (Husin et al., 2012). Bryant and Allen (2013) stated there were five compensation and benefits-related approaches to strategic management of employee retention. First, wide gaps in pay dispersion between employees (lowest paid to highest pay) across organizational levels increased the likelihood that employees will voluntarily leave the business (Bryant & Allen, 2013; Dahiya et al., 2014). Leaders clearly communicated procedures used for pay decisions, go beyond pay raises, and cash bonuses (Bryant & Allen, 2013). Bryant and Allen, Dahiya et al. (2014), and Chang and Wang (2013) argued compensation and benefits must be fairly and equitably determined and administered.

The benefits and compensation should include reasonably long-term vesting schedules (Bryant & Allen, 2013). Bryant and Allen (2013) refuted the widespread belief that pay was an important driver of turnover and identified pay level and pay satisfaction as relatively weak predictors of individual turnover intentions. Agreeing with Bryant and Allen, Oladapo (2014) found talent management programs' could not be competitive based solely on compensation because there exist more important retention factors (e.g. advancement opportunity and job security).

In contrast, Agarwal, Campbell, Franco, and Ganco (2016) found within knowledge-intensive settings, employees with lower salaries left to create a new venture instead of joining another organization. Agarwal et al. (2016) suggested leaders tailor

compensation packages to minimize the adverse impact of employee entrepreneurship. Aligning with Agarwal et al., Aguinis and O'Boyle (2014) developed research-based general principles and implementation guidelines to assist leaders in providing a compensation system for employee motivation, improve firm-level performance, and employee retention. The five general principles were define and measure performance accurately, make rewards contingent on performance, reward employees promptly, maintain justice in the reward system, and use monetary and nonmonetary rewards (Aguinis & O'Boyle, 2014).

**Reward and recognition.** Dahiya et al. (2014) stated leaders implemented each of the three Rs of respect, recognition, and rewards to keep employees' satisfaction high and increase employee retention. Dahiya et al. identified respect as the most important aspect of retention strategy because, without it, rewards and recognition had little effect. Terera and Ngirande (2014) suggested employers provided both monetary and nonmonetary rewards. Aligning with Terera and Ngirande, Aguinis and O'Boyle (2014) recommended the use of nonmonetary rewards to augment a monetary rewards system. Some examples of non-monetary rewards included promotions, childcare facilities, maternity leave, recreation facilities, flexible work schedule, formal commendations and awards, and paid sabbaticals (Idris, 2014; Pietersen & Oni, 2014; Terera & Ngirande, 2014).

Dahiya et al. (2014) purported leaders who implemented the three Rs reduced turnover, increased productivity, reduced absenteeism, and improved profits. Also, leaders created a hard-to-leave workplace that had a reputation of offering more than

other employers with a waiting list of applicants for any position (Dahiya et al., 2014). In the quantitative study, Terera and Ngirande (2014) showed employee rewards resulted in employee retention, yet, they did not equate to job satisfaction. Agreeing with Dahiya et al., Terera and Ngirande found the more compensation employees received, the more likely they remained in the same business.

Intrinsic and extrinsic rewards are necessary motivation for employees (Weaver, 2015). Intrinsic rewards come from within the employee, extrinsic rewards come from an external source (Weaver, 2015). In a quantitative study, Weaver found employees had a tendency to be motivated by intrinsic rewards than extrinsic rewards. In contrast, Mosadeghrad and Ferdosi (2013) found hospital employees were moderately satisfied with the job and committed to the hospital. The employees were not satisfied with salaries, benefits, rewards, work conditions, and communication (Hom, Lee, Shaw, & Hausknecht, 2017; Kwiakowski, 2017; Mosadeghrad & Ferdosi, 2013). Organizations that provided significant rewards and recognition assisted businesses in attracting new employees and retaining high performers (Ertas, 2015).

**Development and training.** As the global economy recovered from years of recession, labor markets and organizational environments were experiencing major changes (Cascio, 2014). The apparent shift in organizations searching for talent had moved from buyers to sellers, especially among sellers with expertise in critical fields such as accounting, business analytics, regulatory compliance, and Information Technology (IT) (Cascio, 2014). To retain these employees, leaders customized retention strategies to meet the employees' expectations (Deery & Jago, 2015; Yang, Wan, & Fu,



2012). The benefits of effective talent management outweighed costs to retain knowledgeable employees (Oladapo, 2014). Leaders realized that keeping these employees affected the organization's health, profitability, and ability to maintain a competitive advantage (Oladapo, 2014).

Leaders engaged employees in organizational career development programs and supported career-planning efforts that increased employee retention (Schulz & Enslin, 2014). Within the hospitality industry, leaders used both reactive and proactive retention strategies (Yang et al., 2012). Reactive retention strategies consisted of compensation policies and training programs, while proactive strategies included career development (Yang et al., 2012).

Encouragement and guidance from mentors and advocates played a significant role in employee advancement (Schulz & Enslin, 2014). Leaders who developed appropriate career development programs to address career planning and advancement increased the potential for hiring and promoting the best person for the job (Schulz & Enslin, 2014). Yang et al. (2012) identified a disconnection between the employees' expectations and the strategies. Leaders could not use the one-size-fits-all approach to retention because of the employees' differences in personalities, individual behaviors, and work values (Yang et al., 2012).

**Leadership.** Leaders had a critical role in reducing turnover and retaining high performers. Reviewing nursing turnover literature, Lartey et al. (2014) found turnover remains a serious problem for leaders at all levels of health care, and the research had inconsistent methodological and research focused challenges. Transformational leaders

used the socially oriented mission of public agencies to lower turnover intentions (Caillier, 2014b). Leaders created a positive work environment to reduce turnover and retain existing employees (Lartey et al., 2014).

Given workforce trends, Oladapo (2014) proposed organizational leaders managed turnover and retention as a diversity issue by creating an employment plan that attracted the full range of potential candidates (e.g. Baby Boomers, Gen X, and Gen Y). In contrast, leaders focused on retaining new hires using extrinsic rewards and seasoned employees through empowerment and participation (Cho & Lewis, 2012). Aligning with Lartey et al. (2014), Hofaidhllaoui and Chhinzer's (2014) found retention a major challenge for all organization, especially knowledge workers whose replacement talent scarcities exist.

Transformational leaders reduced turnover intentions by providing individualized attention and consideration to the employees (Caillier, 2014b). Doboga (2013) recommended leaders developed strategies to reverse this downward trend and provided five key steps to success: Focus on effective leadership, improve internal communication, ensure accountability, integrate goals into strategic planning, and be transparent and follow through. Agreeing with Doboga, Pietersen and Oni (2014) attributed high turnover rate to employees' job dissatisfaction and suggested leaders adopted a people-oriented leadership style, managed working conditions effectively, enhanced the transparent interpersonal communication, and engaged in relationship building.

Within the global business environment, leaders need effective retention strategies to remain competitive. Researchers concluded compensation, reward and recognition,

development and training, and leadership effected the bottom line and the firms' competitive advantage (Bryant & Allen, 2013; Cascio, 2014; Dahiya et al., 2014; Ertas, 2015; Husin et al., 2012; Oladapo, 2014; Schulz & Enslin, 2014; Terera & Ngirande, 2014; Weaver, 2015; Yang et al., 2012). By adopting these retention strategies, leaders reduced employee turnover.

### **Transition**

This section of the study included the background of the problem, the problem and purpose statements, and the nature of the study. This section contained the research and interview questions, conceptual framework, operational definitions, assumptions, limitations, delimitations, and significance of the study. In Section 1, I discussed a review of the academic and professional literature along with the conceptual framework. Bass' (1990) transformational leadership provided the conceptual foundation for this study.

Section 2 included the purpose statement, the role of the researcher, participants, research method and design, population and sampling, ethical research, data collection technique, data organization techniques, data analysis, and reliability and validity. In Section 3, I presented and discussed the findings, application to professional practice, and implication for social change, recommendations for action, and future research, reflections, and a conclusion to the study.

## Section 2: The Project

In this section, I provided a discussion of the method and design I used to complete this qualitative single case study. I interviewed durable goods industry leaders who met the selection criteria to determine the strategies used to reduce employee turnover. This section begins with the purpose statement, the role of the researcher, and the criteria of the participants. The research method, research design, and the description of the population and sampling follow the participants. Next is the ethical research, then the techniques for data collection and data organization, and data analysis process. The section closes with the examination of reliability and validity followed by the transition and summary.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this proposed qualitative single case study was to explore the strategies durable goods industry leaders used to reduce employee turnover. The targeted population consisted of durable goods industry leaders within one company located in the southeastern region of the United States. These durable goods industry leaders had experience with strategies to reduce employee turnover. The contribution to social change could be the reduction in voluntary employee turnover, decreased unemployment rate, sustained company profitability, and a positive impact on the prosperity of employees, communities, and the local economy.

### **Role of the Researcher**

Haahr, Norlyk, and Hall (2014) stated the researcher is the instrument when using semistructured or unstructured interviews to collect data. Elo et al. (2014) stated the

researcher mitigates bias during a semistructured interview by using standardized open-ended questions to obtain rich textural data to answer the proposed research question. Doody and Noonan (2013) and Roberts et al. (2014) purported the purpose of the standardized open-ended questions is to limit the interviewer's bias by asking each participant the same questions in the same order and the same manner to increase the reliability of the data collection instrument. Garbarski, Schaeffer, and Dykema (2016) stated the interviewer's responsiveness must align with the rules of standardization. To avoid any ethical problems, I followed the 1979 Belmont Report protocol of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice. Bristol and Hicks (2014) recommended the researcher obtain written cooperation of the participants and protect the privacy of participants. I did not have a relationship with the participants, the research area, or the research topic.

I used the interview protocol in Appendix A to conduct interviews. Mikesell, Bromley, and Khodyakov (2013) noted the purpose of the interview protocol is to ensure participants privacy. Fassinger and Morrow (2013) stated the purpose of in-depth interview protocol is to mitigate the potential of bias and subjectivity within the interview setting and each individual interview. Fassinger and Morrow and Koch, Niesz, and McCarthy (2013) indicated to avoid steering interviewees in the direction to support the researchers' assumptions, interview questions must be open-ended. Ibrahim and Edgley (2015), Ivankova (2014), and Schulz and Enslin (2014) proposed researchers use open-ended interview questions to guide the interview process and gather data that may be helpful to answer the research questions.

## **Participants**

Marshall, Cardon, Poddar, and Fontenot (2013) stated the proper selection of participants and an adequate sample are foundational in creating credible research. Palinkas et al. (2015) proposed researchers use purposeful sampling strategies for identification and selection of participants within qualitative research. The selection criteria for this study consisted of participants (a) who were durable goods industry leaders and (b) who had a minimum of 3 years' experience in using successful strategies to reduce employee turnover. Agreeing with Palinkas et al. (2015), Cleary, Horsfall, and Hayter (2014) suggested researchers have a clear rationale for participant selection, fulfilling a specific purpose related to the research question.

To obtain access to eligible participants, I sent an email using the email script to the company point of contact to request authorization to conduct research and provided the copy of the letter of cooperation. Once I received the signed copy of the letter of cooperation, I contacted the Human Resource manager and requested the names and email addresses of potential research participants. De Massis and Kotlar (2014), Karatepe and Karadas (2014), and Marshall et al. (2013) stated researchers must have senior leadership support and cooperation to gain access to potential participants.

Bristol and Hicks (2014) and Mikesell et al. (2013) posited individual participants should have all of the information necessary to make an informed and voluntary choice whether to participate or not. Sampson (2012) proposed establishing an empathic, accepting, and collaborative relationship increased the chances participants will be truthful and appropriately self-disclosing in individual interviews. I used the email system

as the first process for communication and built a working relationship with participants. I answered questions by email and telephone contact during the research. The Belmont Report is the gold standard used to protect the rights of participants, and the three ethical principles of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice are the guide for the study (Mikesell et al., 2013).

## **Research Method and Design**

### **Research Method**

Qualitative research was the appropriate method for this study because the exploration of strategies used to reduce employee turnover required an in-depth analysis of the experiences of leaders. Gergen (2014), Gergen, Freeman, and Kenneth (2015), and Morrison (2014) posited qualitative inquiry allowed researchers to describe and analyze how participants interpret processes, practices, phenomena, and consequences in the contexts of their experiences within social environments. By understanding the lived experiences of the participants, Koch et al. (2013) found qualitative researchers provided a unique perspective that could be crucial to addressing social issues and problems more objectively and efficiently. Yilmaz (2013) stated the researcher's intent was to capture, describe, and understand the phenomenon through the words of the participants.

In contrast to the qualitative approach, Cairney and Denny (2015) proposed the quality of the raw data was more important, and the hypotheses dictated in advance what the researcher was looking for in quantitative research. In the quantitative inquiry, Bryman (1984) stated the researcher analyzed the aggregates of populations rather than the distinctiveness of individual experiences. Therefore, the quantitative approach did not

allow me to address the study's research question. Bronstein and Kovacs (2013) stated the quantitative research approach allowed researchers to examine the relationship between independent and dependent variables and was not suitable for this study.

Ivankova (2014) posited the mixed method inquiry combined qualitative and quantitative data collection and data analysis using three primary forms: qualitative dominant, equal status, or quantitative dominant. Molina-Azorin and Feters (2016) suggested mixed method research was useful when there was a need to explore and explain a phenomenon or when the purpose of the research dictated it. The cost, complexity of data collection, time demands for analysis, and when to stop analyzing, comparing, and contrasting the data were some of the challenges Fakis, Hilliam, Stoneley, and Townend (2013) suggested were associated with this combined research methodology. Consequently, the mixed method approach was not applicable because the purpose of the study was to explore what strategies participants use to manage employee turnover.

### **Research Design**

I considered four research designs: phenomenology, narrative research, ethnography, and case study. Researchers used the phenomenological design to explore, describe, and analyze how individuals' make meaning of their life experiences surrounding specific phenomena (Chan, Walker, & Gleaves, 2015; Moustakas, 1994; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012). The phenomenological design was not suited for this study because the phenomenological focus was on the meaning of individual experiences instead of identifying strategies; whereas, researchers commonly used the narrative



approach to focus on detailed stories from one or two individuals and analyzed the narratives looking for consistencies in how people within and across cultures tell stories (Gergen et al., 2015; Robert & Shenhav, 2014; Suarez-Ortega, 2013). The narrative research design was not applicable to this study because the purpose was not to analyze stories but to gather strategies used to reduce employee turnover. Traditionally, ethnographic studies involved researchers' immersion in a local single community and, through extensive fieldwork, to develop a cultural description (Fisher, Murphy, Jerolmack, Hoang, & Parrenas, 2016; Fusch P., Fusch, & Ness, 2017; Jarzabkowski, Bednarek, & Cabantous, 2015; Moustakas, 1994). Consequently, the ethnographic design was not congruent with the purpose or research question of this study.

Given the nature of this study, I chose the single-case study design. Fassinger and Morrow (2013) and Harland (2014) proposed a case study was an approach in which the researcher examined a case or cases through detailed, in-depth data collection from multiple sources of information. Yin (2017) stated the research design encompassed the study of a problem explored through one or more cases within a bounded system. Agreeing with Fassinger and Morrow (2013) and Harland (2014), Yin (2017) purported the case study design allowed the use of multiple data resources that focus on the phenomenon within the context of interest. Yin (2017) identified six potential sources of evidence: (a) archival records, (b) direct observation, (c) documentation, (d) interviews, (e) participant observations, and (f) physical artifacts. I used the semistructured interview technique and organizational documentation.

To reach data saturation, I used semistructured interviews. Within the general qualitative methods literature about sampling (e.g. Gentles, Charles, Ploeg, & Mckibbon, 2015; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Morse, 1995, 2007; Richards & Morse, 2012), saturation was widely discussed because of its importance. Ando, Cousins, and Young (2014), Fusch and Ness (2015), and Gentles, Charles, Ploeg, and Mckibbon (2015) found reaching data saturation or theoretical saturation occurred when the researcher gathered data to the point where further data collection contributed little to nothing new to the study. Morse (2015) suggested the purpose of saturating data ensured replication in categories; verifies redundancy, and ensured comprehension and completeness.

### **Population and Sampling**

The population for this study consisted of the people within the durable goods industry identified through the purposive sampling technique of criterion sampling. I interviewed four leaders within the participating company. The target population criteria included durable goods industry leaders (a) over 18 years of age, (b) with a minimum of 3 year experience in a leadership role, and (c) have experience in employee turnover. I provided the target population criteria to the Human Resource Manager and obtained the email addresses of those individual who qualified. Cleary et al. (2014), Griffith (2013), and Palinkas et al. (2015) purported the criterion sampling required the deliberate selection of participants with a clear rational understanding of the research problem. Cleary et al. (2014) stated the participants fulfilled a particular purpose related to the research question and provided information that could not be obtained as readily as well from other choices.

Elo et al. (2014), Marshall et al. (2013), and Yin (2013) purported sample size depended on a number of variables: purpose of the study, the research question, stakeholder interests, credibility, and available time and resources. Marshall et al. (2013), Patton (2014), and Yin (2017) recognized the lack of concrete guidelines existed for sample size in qualitative. Leech and Onwuegbuzie (2007) recommended qualitative researchers defended sample size through precedent of interpretive studies that used the same design and used data saturation. Aligning with Leech and Onwuegbuzie (2007), I examined qualitative case studies about employee turnover to determine the number of participants. These case studies provided the range for this study of 4-59 participants. The number of participants interviewed ranged from four upper-level managers (Arendt et al., 2012), five family members (Khanin, 2013), eight human resource managers (Idris, 2014), 12 interviewees (Mishra & Grubb, 2015; Vasquez, 2014), 29 participants (Yang et al., 2012), and 59 participants (Rothausen et al., 2015).

In qualitative research, Palinkas et al. (2015) and Suri (2011) found there existed no formula to determine sample size, just the requirement for data saturation. Glaser and Strauss (1967, 2009) stated reaching data saturation or theoretical saturation is the point of data satiety where data ceases to achieve original insights, developing new themes, and no arising issues regarding a category of data. Given, Winkler, and Willson (2014) and Morse (2015) proposed the purpose of saturating data ensures replication in categories; redundancy verifies and ensures comprehension and completeness.

Edwards and Holland (2013), Given et al. (2014), and Josselson (2013) stated most qualitative researchers grounded themselves in hermeneutics: the science of

meaning making, which is an approach to knowledge production. Alby and Fatigante (2014) and Noble and Smith (2014) proposed in order to gather knowledge, the scholar must begin with sound data of experience collected from a well-conducted interview. Edwards and Holland (2013) recommended researchers provide each participant with the option to contribute in a face-to-face interview held in a secure location and with a quiet atmosphere or a telephone interview. I used a recording device for each face-to-face interview held in the private conference room provided by the research site. Doody and Noonan (2013) suggested the researcher use good quality equipment and be familiar with the recording device.

### **Ethical Research**

Judkins-Cohn, Kielwasser-Withrow, Owen, and Ward (2014) and Vitak, Shilton, and Ashktorab (2016) posited informed consent is the procedure that protects participants and ensures voluntary and autonomous permission by competent individuals who are aware of the risks and benefits of their participation in a research project. Nusbaum, Douglas, Damus, Paasche-Orlow, and Estrella-luna (2017) stressed the importance of communicating the risks and benefits to the participants and encouraged the use of educational aids and graphics. Aligning with the Belmont Report protocol of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice (Bristol & Hicks, 2014; US Department of Health and Human Services, 1979), I used the consent form to provide each participant with the research purpose, procedures, risks, benefits, how I maintained confidentiality before, during, and after the research, and reiterated participation was voluntary. Øye and Sørensen (2015) and Wolf, Patel, and Williams (2013) purposed researchers obtain

written consent from each participant because it protected the participants' sensitive identifiable research data and facilitated research. To document informed consent, I obtained each participant's signature on the Walden University's consent.

Judkins-Cohn et al. (2014) and Tam et al. (2015) stated informed consent supports free and unforced participation while allowing participants the option verbal or written dissent or refusal to participate without penalty. I ensured participants had sufficient opportunity to consider whether they wanted to participate and minimized the possibility of coercion or undue influence. I went over the section on the consent form with each participant that stated the participant could withdraw, without prejudice, from the study at any time. Participants had the choice of verbally or emailing me at any time during the study to withdraw from the research project.

Bernstein and Feldman (2015) identified researchers used noncash or cash, debit cards, and gift cards as incentives paid participants. I informed each participant I was not providing any type of incentives for participation in the research. To ensure confidentiality, Allen and Wiles (2016), Dawson (2014), and Roberts (2015) recommended the use of pseudonyms for participants. I used pseudonyms to mask and protect the identities of participants and the business.

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) staff provides the ethical parameters for research and is the global system of institutional ethical oversight (Cross, Pickering, & Hickey, 2015). The study conformed to the policies and procedures related to ethical standards in research. For universities that have an IRB, performing research before IRB

approval is a violation of federal law (Mitchell & Jolley, 2013). The Walden University's approval number for this study is 05-06-18-0290986 and it expires on February 5, 2019.

I followed ethical procedures for all data collection and storage. All the data from the interviews are kept in a password-encrypted folder on my computer and will be kept for 5 years from the completion date of the study. I disseminated the findings of the study to the participants of the business to increase the awareness of what strategies senior leaders use to manage employee turnover strategically.

### **Data Collection Instruments**

I was the primary instrument to collect and analyze data gathered for this study. Koch et al. (2013), Kral (2014), and Yin (2013) identified the researcher as the primary instrument used in the data collection process. For the single-case study design, I conducted and recorded face-to-face semistructured interviews and followed the interview protocol (see Appendix A) to explore business leaders' strategies used to reduce employee turnover. Within case studies, Guilding et al. (2014), Marshall et al. (2013), and Poulis, Poulis, and Plakoyiannaki (2013) identified the interviews as the primary data source.

To improve the reliability and validity of the semistructured interviews, I used transcript review and member checking. De Massis and Kotlar (2014), Erlingsson and Brysiewicz (2013), and Mayoh and Onwuegbuzie (2013) purposed the researcher integrate transcript review and member checking to help reduce the role of subjectivity and enhance construct validity. Morse (2015) and Trainor and Graue (2014) identified both member checking and triangulation as ways to increase the validity and reliability of

qualitative research. While, Reilly (2013) posited qualitative researchers use member checking of data interpretation and transcript review to provide participants opportunities to correct errors, challenge interpretations, and assess results.

The second source of data was the organizational documents obtained from the business under study. I used the organizational documentation and the interviews to validate the data through methodological triangulation. Yin (2017) stated the purpose of triangulation is the use of multiple sources of data that will develop the converging lines of inquiry through multiple measures of the same phenomenon. Cronin (2014) posited triangulation can decrease, negate, or counterbalance the deficiencies of a single strategy and increase the scope for interpreting the results. De Massis and Kotlar (2014) and Morse (2015) stated triangulation will strengthen the validity while member checking of interview transcripts will improve the consistency, accuracy, credibility, validity, and transferability of a study.

### **Data Collection Technique**

Semistructured interviews and organizational documentation were the two sources of data collection for this study. The primary data collection method for this study was semistructured interviews. Ayaß (2015), Bernard and Ryan (2013), and Cronin (2014) stated the principal data collection technique for qualitative research is semistructured interviews. Using the letter of cooperation as a guide, I contacted the Human Resource Manager (HRM) by phone and followed up with an email request to obtain the employees' names and email addresses for those who met the selection criteria. Attached to the email, I provided the HRM with a copy of the signed letter of cooperation, which

detailed the criteria for the selection of participants. Based on the selection criteria, the HRM sent me seven employees' names and email addresses. I obtained their phone numbers from the telephone system. Four participants agreed to take part in the study. I conducted semistructured interviews following the interview protocol checklist (see Appendix A). I confirmed the date, time, and location for face-to-face interviews. I made sure I was familiar with the recording devices used for the face-to-face interview. I used a digital voice recorder for the face-to-face interviews and I used my iPhone 7 Plus mobile phone's Apple audio recorder application as a backup audio recorder.

I collected the primary data through face-to-face semistructured interviews. Once I obtained the dates and times the participants were available to be interviewed, I contacted the HRM and scheduled the private conference room located at the research site. At the beginning of each interview, I went over the consent form pointing out that I would not be providing any type of incentive for participation. Some advantages of interviews are cost effectiveness, convenience, acceptability, fewer limitations, and interviewers have more control over sessions (Doody & Noonan, 2013; Edwards & Holland, 2013; Morgan, Ataie, Carder, & Hoffman, 2013). The participants validate the accuracy of the researcher's interpretations and the investigator authenticates the accuracy of the data collected through member checking (Andrasik et al., 2014; Marshall & Rossman, 2016).

There are disadvantages to interviews. One major disadvantage to interviews is they are time-consuming from the preparation, traveling to the venue, conducting the interview, post-interview transcription, and analysis of the data (De Massis & Kotlar,



2014; Doody & Noonan, 2013; Saunders, Kitzinger, & Kitzinger, 2014; Tessier, 2012).

Interviews are susceptible to bias and the lack of face-to-face contact removes the information concerning the participants' appearance, non-verbal communication, and the physical context (Doody & Noonan, 2013; Edwards & Holland, 2013).

After I received the employees' names and email addresses from the Human Resource Department, I established rapport through sending the email script. The email contained my telephone number so the participant could contact me with questions or concerns. I established rapport through email and the initial telephone contact with participants. Arsel (2017), Deakin and Wakefield (2014), Drabble, Trocki, Salcedo, Walker, and Korcha (2016), and Weller (2017) acknowledged the importance of establishing rapport between the researcher and participant. The resulting research partnership is central to attaining a successful, detailed qualitative interview (Deakin & Wakefield, 2014). On the day of the face-to-face interviews, at the beginning of the interview, I reviewed the consent form going over the purpose of the study, the procedures, risks and benefits of study participation, nonpayment for participation, and the participant's option to withdraw from the study. If the participant still wanted to be a part of the study, I asked the participant to sign and return the consent form prior to beginning the interview.

Erlingsson and Brysiewicz (2013), Morse (2015), and Yilmaz (2013) proposed member checking is the process designed to enhance rigor, ensure reliability, and guarantee validity through participants' review of transcribed interviews. I created three transcripts per interview: (a) a verbatim transcript using Microsoft Word, (b) an edited

transcript with the removal of repeated and filler words, and (c) a synthesis transcript. For readability, I removed all repeated or filler words (a filler word is an apparently meaningless word, idiom, or sound that marks a pause or hesitation in speech) from the verbatim transcripts. Then, I reviewed and interpreted the edited interview transcript and provided a concise synthesis of the participant's answer to each question.

I sent an email with a copy of the synthesized transcript to each participant to ask if the findings I derived from the interview data represented the answer or a need for additional information. Each participant was given four days to review the synthesized transcript. There were no changes to the transcripts. I continued the process until I collected no new data. I saved and assigned any returned transcripts under the *Returned Synthesis Transcript* title to the appropriate participant. The secondary data collection source was the organizational documents. I worked with the human resource manager and obtained the employee handbook and ethical policy from the HRM. I retrieved the mission statement, the vision statement, and the five star leadership principles from the company website. I used the organizational documents and the synthesized transcripts to triangulate the data associated with employee turnover. The organizational documents validated the data from the interviews. When conducting a case study, Yin (2017) recommended researchers collect data from two independent sources. Fusch and Ness (2015) and Yin (2017) posited qualitative researchers review documents as a method of data collection. De Massis and Kotlar (2014), Cronin (2014), Gunn (2013), Kratochvíl (2016), and Patak, Naim, and Hidayat (2016) stated Mendeley is a software tool and Tse

et al. (2013) reviewed documents from their participating organizations to gather data on employee turnover.

### **Data Organization Technique**

To organize the data, I used Mendeley Desktop to keep track of reference documents (e.g. organizational documents, peer-reviewed journal articles, books, dissertations, and conference papers) and used Word Add-in for the APA format for citations and bibliographies and add notes to documents. I created an Excel workbook that contains the citation information (i.e., citation, date, type) used to ensure 85% of the resources are peer-reviewed and within the 5 years of the anticipated date of graduation from Walden University for both the literature review and the entire proposed study.

Kim and Lee (2015), Liu, Hu, and Wei (2015), and Sanjari, Bahramnezhad, Fomani, Shoghi, and Cheraghi (2014) suggested the following strategies to protect participants: (a) secure data storage methods whether password protected computers or cloud computing environments, (b) remove identifier components, and (c) use pseudonyms for individuals, places, and organizations. To protect the confidentiality of each participant, I created a file folder, within the password protected research paper folder titled *Employee Turnover*, titled *DBA Interview Raw Data* on my password-protected computer that only I access. The file folder contained separate folders for each participant and a specific generic code (e.g. P1, P2, P3) to identify each participant. The audiotaped interviews are stored in two places: the password accessed participant's folder and NVivo 12 Pro for Windows software.

Brandão (2013), Erlingsson and Brysiewicz (2013) and Zamawe (2015) purported NVivo is a Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) or a data management package researchers use that provides timesaving opportunities and does more than store and retrieve information. I used NVivo 12 Pro for Windows for advanced data management because I imported all of my research documentation (e.g. journal articles, transcribed interviews), interview audio files, Oral presentations, and annotated bibliographies into one location and save it within the *Employee Turnover* folder. All of the data is stored on my computer in a password-protected file and a backup file in a password-protected Dropbox folder. Additionally, data retention and storage are for 5 years from the date when the completed study has the University Chief Academic Officer's (CAO) approval.

### **Data Analysis**

The three themes identified during the data analysis have a connection to the study's conceptual framework of transformational leadership theory. The four propositions (idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration) were used by each of the durable goods leaders. Individualized consideration, inspirational motivation, and intellectual stimulation were addressed in the organizational documents. Patton (1999) and Yin (2017) stated triangulation is the use of multiple data sources or methods in qualitative case study research. Denzin (2012) and Patton (1999) identified four types of triangulation: (a) method triangulation, (b) investigator triangulation, (c) theory triangulation, and (d) data source triangulation. I used the method triangulation for this study Carter, Bryant-

Lukosius, Dicenso, Blythe, and Neville (2014) posited most qualitative researchers use data collection through individuals or group interviews when studying human phenomena. Aligning with Carter et al.'s (2014), Patton's (1999), and Yin's (2017) supposition, the data analysis process for this single case study design is method triangulation using semistructured interviews, organizational documents, and member checking. Yin (2017) suggested five steps of data analysis: (a) compile, (b) disassemble, (c) reassemble, (d) clarify, and (e) conclude. Ward et al. (2013) identified the three data analysis tools as framework analysis, constant comparison analysis, and word count that will improve the credibility of findings. I followed Yin's five steps of data analysis and Ward's three data analysis tools in this study. I collected and organized the data, disassembled the data via coding data descriptions using nodes, reassembled the data using organizational documentation to corroborate the phenomenon, interpreted data using thematic analysis and developed themes, and formed conclusions and recommendations from the interpreted data.

Qualitative researchers had a number of qualitative data analysis (QDA) computer software packages available. NVivo, MAXQDA, and Atlas.ti are the QDA computer software packages I examined. When researchers needed to analyze small or large volumes of very rich text-based data, they use NVivo (Fan, Zhu, Pei, Li, & Wu, 2015). Fan et al. (2015) used NVivo to organize the text and multimedia information related to a bridge accident in China. Fan et al. accessed 97 items of both text and multimedia information related to the Yangmingtan Bridge accident. Both the texts and multimedia information were input into NVivo and the original priority codes were reanalyzed and

new frame nodes were built (Fan et al., 2015). NVivo was the software chosen because of the different types of information sources for the accident (e.g. local government, media, victims or their families, and witnesses). Fan et al. used NVivo to facilitate an accurate and transparent data analysis process because NVivo cannot do the thinking for the researcher.

Researchers used Atlas.ti to uncover and systematically analyze complex phenomena hidden in unstructured data (Paulus & Bennett, 2017). Researchers used MAXQDA for computer-assisted qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods data, text, and multimedia analysis (Franzosi, Doyle, McClelland, Putnam Rankin, & Vicari, 2013). NVivo supported more data formats (e.g. audio files, videos, digital photos, Word, PDF, spreadsheets, rich text) than Atlas.ti and MAXQDA (Franzosi et al., 2013). NVivo allowed researchers to interchange data with more applications (e.g. Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Word, IBM SPSS Statistics, EndNote, Microsoft OneNote, Survey Monkey, and Evernote) and work with files that are internal or external to the project database (Franzosi et al., 2013). However, Atlas.ti and MAXQDA do not allow the researcher to edit files once assigned to a project (Franzosi et al., 2013). I used NVivo 12 as the QDA computer software package because it aligns with data analysis process for this study.

Yin (2017) identified five steps in data analysis: compiling, disassembling, reassembling, interpretation, and conclusion. Erlingsson and Brysiewicz (2013) and Woods, Paulus, Atkins, and Macklin (2015) stated researchers use NVivo to upload raw data, then code and cross-reference the data in ways to facilitate easy retrieval, and visually display analytical process or conclusions. In compiling the data, after each

semistructured interview, I uploaded within the NVivo 12 *Employee Turnover Project* database the *edited transcript* returned from the participant and audio MP3 interview file into the appropriate source folders (*Interviews* and *Audio Files*).

Zamawe (2015) proposed coding in NVivo software tool is not restricted to a specific research design or analytical approach. Because of this, during the disassembling and reassembling stages, Houghton, Casey, and Smyth (2017) and Zamawe (2015) posited coding using nodes provide a simple work structure for creating codes, discovering themes, and a comprehensive audit trail of research decisions. Gale, Heath, Cameron, Rashid, and Redwood (2013) posited the researcher uses NVivo to reduce the data and retain the original meanings of the interviewees' words through good charting. I used NVivo to help me manage, explore, and find patterns within the transcripts from the semistructured interviews and organizational documents. I triangulated the patterns from the transcripts with the organizational documents to develop themes. Each interview question had its own particular node and the organizational documentation had its own node to allow me to interpret the data through analysis for concepts, topics, or themes. Brandão (2013) stated the CAQDAS software does not perform the qualitative analysis, it is a tool used to facilitate data management, promote rigor, and reliability of qualitative research. During the conclusion stage, I compared the themes generated using NVivo with the categories that were derived from the literature review: (a) retention, (b) retention strategies, (c) voluntary turnover, (d) involuntary turnover, (d) strategies to manage turnover, and (e) transformational leadership.

The qualitative data analysis techniques for this study consisted of the NVivo framework analysis, constant comparison analysis (Onwuegbuzie & Weinbaum, 2017), and word count. Thórarinsdóttir and Kristjánsson (2014) and Ward, Furber, Tierney, and Swallow (2013) purported framework analysis involves an iterative analysis process consisting of the following five stages: familiarizing, identifying a thematic framework, indexing, charting and mapping, and interpretation. Gale et al. (2013) posited the framework analysis process consists of systematic reviewing data posteriori or inductively. I used framework analysis to iterative analyze the transcripts and organizational documents. Gale et al. and Syed and Nelson (2015) suggested constant comparison analysis is the standard technique used for analysis of qualitative data because it allows the researcher to reduce systematically the data gleaned from semistructured interviews and organizational documents to codes and then inductively develop themes. Gale et al. suggested word count detect patterns, maintain analytic integrity, and help to improve the rigor of the analysis. I used the constant comparison analysis to methodically reduce the data gleaned from the transcripts of the semistructured interviews, employee handbook, ethical policy, the mission, the vision, and the five star leadership principles to codes and inductively developed themes.

### **Reliability and Validity**

#### **Reliability**

As the key instrument, I ensured dependability through member checking of data interpretation and transcript review. I used the technique of member checking and had the participants review their particular interview transcription. Jarzabkowski et al. (2015),



Sanjari et al (2014), Trainor and Graue (2014) identified the researcher as the key instrument for reliability, who has an integral role in ensuring the accuracy of the data collected. Erlingsson and Brysiewicz (2013) and Lincoln and Guba (1985) posited dependability denotes how reliable the data are, that the findings are constant and could be replicated. Thomas (2016) found member checks useful for case studies where the main purpose of research is ensuring accurate description of participants' perspectives or experiences. De Massis and Kotlar (2014) purported researchers use member checking to ensure the supports the consistency, accuracy, credibility, validity, and transferability of a study.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) stated qualitative researchers assure data collection, analysis, and the interpretation is valid and reliable for meeting the classic criteria for rigor. Prion and Adamson (2014) posited unlike quantitative research that depends on statistical means to measure the reliability and validity of the data analysis, qualitative research requires more intricate and time-consuming analysis. Cope (2014), Lincoln and Guba (1985), and Morse (2015) posited researchers' support reliability through demonstrated engagement, methods of observation, and audit trails. I used NVivo to provide an audit trail because it will contain the literature review journals, interview transcripts, interview audio files, memos I created while analyzing the data, and organizational documents.

### **Validity**

In this study, I used methodological triangulation of data through interviews, organizational documentation, and member checking to establish credibility and validity.

Cronin (2014) stated triangulation is the use of at least two or more theoretical perspectives, methodological approaches, data sources, investigators, or data analysis methods in the study of the same phenomenon. Given et al.(2014) proposed researchers use triangulation to explore a phenomenon from multiple points of view. Additionally, Ward et al. (2013) identified the three data analysis tools as framework analysis, constant comparison analysis, and word count that will improve the credibility of findings. Farquhar and Michels (2015) suggested researchers' demonstrate credibility when they adopt the appropriate research method that forms the empirical aspect of the case.

Elo et al. (2014) stated confirmability denotes the neutrality or the potential for congruence between two or more independent people about the data's accuracy, relevance, or meaning. My Walden University DBA committee of three individuals reviewed my study for confirmability: the committee chair, second committee member, and the methodologist. Prion and Adamson (2014) proposed confirmability or neutrality means the absence of researcher bias. I used the semistructured interview to limit researcher's bias. Elo et al. (2014) stated through standardized open-ended questions, the researcher obtains rich data that answer the proposed research question and reduces recsearcher bias.

To show transferability, I provided detailed descriptions of the phenomenon under study. Houghton et al. (2017) advocated thick descriptions enhance the transferability of the study. Erlingsson and Brysiewicz (2013) posited the researcher provides these descriptions so the readers gain the appropriate understanding and can decide whether specific findings are transferable to another analogous context or situation. Lincoln and

Guba (1985) stated true transference means the researcher preserved the meaning and inferences from the original study.

Yang et al. (2012) suggested data saturation occurs when adding data from the limited sample size provides no new information. Agreeing with Yang et al. (2012), Bagnasco, Ghirotto, and Sasso (2014) and Marshall, Cardon, Poddar, and Fontenot (2013) purported within qualitative research, the researcher controls saturation through the sample size and reaches saturation when collected data contains no new information. Hennink, Kaiser, and Marconi (2017) noted code saturation may indicate when researchers have heard it all while meaning saturation is needed to understand it all. Fusch and Ness (2015) identified no new data, no new themes, no new coding, and the ability to replicate the study as characteristics of reaching data saturation. I reached data saturation when no new information exist from the collected data.

### **Transition and Summary**

This section of the study included information on my role as the researcher, participants, research method and design, population and sampling, ethical research, data collection technique, data organization techniques, data analysis, and reliability and validity. In Section 2, I included the justifications for using the qualitative single case study design, triangulation, purposive criterion sampling technique, and interviews with open-ended questions. In Section 3, I presented the findings, application to professional practice, implication for social change, recommendations for action and future research, reflections, and a conclusion to the study.

### Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore the strategies durable goods industry leaders used to reduce employee turnover. The results of the study revealed strategies durable goods industry leaders use to reduce voluntary employee turnover. The targeted population was four leaders in a manufacturing business in Middle Tennessee who had experience with employee turnover. The leaders in the durable goods industry signed consent forms after I received IRB approval from Walden University to conduct the research. I used methodological triangulation of the data collected from the semistructured interviews, employee information handbook, ethics policy, and five star leadership principles to promote validity and reliability. I used member checking to ensure the accuracy of data interpretation of the semistructured interviews. Data analysis included coding techniques and member checking. From the data analysis, I ascertained the leaders within this organization were able to reduce employee turnover through three major themes: (a) employee compensation, (b) open and responsive communication, and (c) employee training and career advancement opportunities.

#### **Presentation of the Findings**

The overarching research question for this study was: What strategies do durable goods industry leaders use to reduce employee turnover? I used semistructured interviews with open-ended questions and member checking to answer the research question and to gain an understanding of the strategies durable goods leaders used to reduce employee turnover. To reach data saturation, I compared all themes from all interviews with each

other and then reordered the sequence of interviews multiple times to recheck saturation again (Constantinou, Georgiou, & Perdikogianni, 2017). I used the employee information handbook, the ethics policy, and the five star leadership principles for triangulation and analysis of participants' semistructured interviews responses. During data analysis, the primary themes resulting from the four participants were (a) employee compensation, (b) open and responsive communication, and (c) opportunities for training and career advancement.

Bass' transformational leadership theory (1999) was the foundational theory for this research. I used the theory's four underlying propositions: (a) idealized influence, (b) inspirational motivation, (c) intellectual stimulation, and (d) individualized consideration (Bass, 1999) to ascertain (a) how durable goods industry leaders implemented reduction strategies and (b) what strategies durable goods industry leaders used to manage employee turnover. All of the participants used at least two of the underlying propositions to retain skilled employees. P1 used idealized influence to earn respect and trust of the employees while empowering them to learn without retribution for admitted mistakes. P2, P3, and P4 used idealized influence to earn respect and trust of the employees through open and responsive communication. P1 used inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation through the *Get Hit by a Bus Scenario* to inspire subordinates with the confidence to ensure the company would continue to work even if P1 was no longer available and solve potential problems. P2, P3, and P4 used individualized consideration to focus on individuals' differences, their needs to develop personalized

goals, and provide constructive feedback to help employees feel good about their contribution that results in job satisfaction.

Lim, Loo, and Lee (2017) noted transformational leadership indirectly influenced turnover intentions through job satisfaction. To accomplish their vision and mission statements, leaders used all facets of the four propositions of transformational leadership in the five star leadership principles. The five star leadership principles consist of (a) integrity/honesty, (b) effective communication/listening, (c) knowledge/competence, (d) flexibility/adaptability, and (e) highly motivated/high energy. Employee handbook included aspects of idealized influence and individualized consideration.

Transformational leadership can make a positive difference in the organization's performance at all levels by improving its success in recruitment, selection, promotion, and enhance its image (Barrick et al., 2015; Bass, 1990; Fischer, 2016). The ethics policy defined the purpose of business ethics, identified what unethical behaviors were unacceptable from owners, managers, supervisor, or employees, and provided a reporting mechanism for employees and nonemployees to inform the compliance officer of any violations. Ethical leadership is a component of the nexus of leader behaviors found in transformational and charismatic leadership (Palanski, Avey, & Jiraporn, 2013).

Bass' transformational leadership theory (1999) is consistent with other findings within this study. Tangible and intangible compensation, open and responsive communication, training programs, and career advancement are essential to job satisfaction, performance improvement, and voluntary employee turnover reduction. Leaders using transformational leadership encourage innovative behaviors in selection,

training, performance appraisal, and compensation to improve performance (Para-González, Jiménez-Jiménez, & Martínez-Lorente, 2018; Barrick, Thurgood, Smith, & Courtright, 2015). Leaders, through open and effective communication, use inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation to encourage communication among employees (Boies, Fiest, & Gill, 2015; Tepper, Dimotakis, Lambert, et al., in press). By advocating open, two-way, and responsive communication with employees, leaders boost mutual understanding and collaboration in the organization (Men, 2014; Kwiakowski, 2017). Leaders could use the results of this study to develop, implement, or modify strategies to decrease employee turnover for their organizations. The three themes identified during the data analysis have a connection to the study's conceptual framework of transformational leadership theory.

### **Emergent Theme 1: Employee Compensation**

Employee compensation is a theme that three of the four leaders confirmed were important during the interviews. The employee compensation theme emerged from Interview Questions 1, 3, 5, and 7. The employee information handbook lists compensation as pay, vacation, jury duty, holidays, educational assistance, workers' compensation, notice of injury, unemployment compensation and social security. Three participants believed employee compensation would inspire employees to improve job performance and reduce voluntary employee turnover. Para-González, Jiménez-Jiménez, & Martínez-Lorente (2018) and Ko and Hur (2014) confirmed the leaders' statements and determined compensation would increase employee retention and improve job performance. Bryant and Allen (2013), Chang and Wang (2013), Dahiya et al. (2014),

and Long and Perumal (2014) reaffirmed a fair and commensurate compensation system reduces employee turnover.

In this single case study, P1, P2, and P4 agreed the organization's employee turnover rate was high but P2, P3, and P4 ascertained pay was the reason employees left.

We noticed and it's like I said earlier, people some of the people we hire are not the best people in society so you know they are not going to stay here long. So if you looked at our overall turnover its high. (P1)

Dahiya, Mann, and Gupta (2014) and Idris (2014) confirmed P2, P3, and P4 statements by identifying monetary dissatisfaction as one of the major reasons for turnover.

However, P1 stated some employees did not like being held accountable, and they left the company.

They're held accountable. And I think a lot of people are not used to being held accountable and so when someone, we live in a society where everybody gets participation ribbons, and everybody's special and I will quote one of my kid's cartoons The Incredibles "*when everybody's special no one is.*" And so when you come here, and we have a liquidated damages job that somebody forgot to order a stainless steel bolts that take six weeks to deliver, and we needed them today there can't be a well it's so-and-so's fault its so-and-so's fault, you didn't order them you're on the spot it's your fault. And so people, a lot of people can't take that, and when they are put on the spot they feel that they were being belittled or they weren't their fault. (P1)



**Employee tangible benefits.** The employee information handbook lists compensation and benefits as pay, vacation, jury duty, holidays, educational assistance, voting, funeral leave, medical leave of absence, family and medical leave, the state's maternity/paternity leave, military service leave, military Reserves or National Guard training, social security, workers' compensation, notice of injury, and unemployment compensation. P1 indicated pay and employer payment of 100% of employees' health insurance as tangible benefits, but the employee information handbook does not address health insurance.

Pay is always important but pay gets people in the door, but it doesn't keep them here. And then benefits are the same way. You know with a lot of benefit packages and the way healthcare is going right now we pay 100% of the employees' health insurance. And it goes back to that we had the opportunity that if we were going to spend so much money do you break it over single family or employee and spouse or employee and children or employee and family. And we found out that most of our people with our workforce the demographics their children were grown they're gone or they weren't married or divorced or whatever it was so we had a better more single people so that is why we decided to put all those resources into paying for single coverage. And that seems to help and we've had multiple times when younger people who normally wouldn't have taken insurance get into a bind because of sick or a car accident or something and it pays off because it covers them realize that it not costing them anything but the benefits help. (P1)

P1 and P2 acknowledged pay is the driving force for some employees because of the low unemployment rate and current job market provides them with some choices.

I think the job market in the area with our unemployment is real low and it easy for anybody to find a job so as soon someone doesn't like something or they get offered a little bit more money then they'll move on to that position. And I understand that pay is not the only thing that holds keeps an employee but the field employees look at it. (P2)

Sarkar (2018) identified compensation as the means through which the organization shows commitment to its employees to obtain a reciprocal commitment from employees to achieve organizational goals, giving credence to P1's and P2's statements.

Jansen and Samuel (2014) and Oladapo (2014) confirmed salary, the work environment, and company policies as reasons for employee turnover. P1 identified the creation of the family work environment includes monthly meals, birthday luncheons, Halloween costume contest, Thanksgiving turkey shoot, Christmas baskets, and working with a productive employee through a difficult time as intangible benefits. P1 believes the intangible benefits seem to outweigh the tangible benefits, but both are important to retain employees.

We use multiple strategies, the with the way the current family houses is where people are coming from single family homes we've learned that team members kind of look at the place as a family, so we try to treat them like a family. (P1)  
We also started doing birthday lunches. So once a month everybody that has a birthday that month we buy their lunch. And again sit down with them talk to

them. An unwritten rule among management is if you're in a meeting you cannot talk business. (P1)

But the family atmosphere, the little things, occasionally somebody's working a lot of weekends I bring sausage biscuits in and just put them on the table. I never say anything to them I just set them on the table and I think I write thank you on it. And it is that type of thing that I think pays more or gives us more. (P1)

P4 stated the recurring theme received from departing employees is compensation and benefits. P1 and P2 confirmed the current compensation and benefits package is competitive within the durable goods industry. Long and Perumal (2014) affirmed salary and benefits are additional reasons for employee turnover.

I think the recurring theme I get from my employees who leave is simple its compensation and benefits. I don't have any control over that. So, I have some control over the compensation, not the benefits. And I have gotten that position (*receptionist*) upgraded to some degree since I started and its help a little bit. But that seems to be the thing it's a non-skilled position which I can't pay much for. So I'm always forced with turnover. (P4)

Well, I think one thing now is the pay, and I do understand that that is not the main reason. But I do think people look at pay. If they do get a little more money, I feel like they're going to take the job. (P1)

I feel that we offer a good benefits package here at [*company name removed*] for the construction business. I mean we do have quite a few benefits for the full time employees. I think that is a benefit to us. (P2)

**Reward and recognition.** Reward and recognition programs are necessary for employee motivation and retention. Dahiya et al. (2014) confirmed leaders must implement each of the three Rs of respect, recognition, and rewards to keep employees' satisfaction high and increase employee retention. As stated earlier, P1 identified the creation of the family work environment includes monthly meals, birthday luncheons, Halloween costume contest, Thanksgiving turkey shoot, Christmas baskets, and working with a productive employee through a difficult time as nonmonetary rewards.

We do things, we try to do things for holidays like Halloween, we have a costume contest, I dress up, and other owners dress up with everybody here. We have a chili cook-off. We have a turkey shoot. Since we are out of the city limits, we bring a shotgun and let the people shoot targets to win free turkeys. And it's that type of little things that seem to have better dividends. (P1)

Christmas, we don't pay Christmas bonuses, and I asked (name deleted), he started this before I came back and (name deleted) is my father, and I don't refer to him as (name deleted) in a personal or work setting. He said he had given people bonuses and then seen their wives out or girlfriends or significant others out around Christmas and they wouldn't have food, even though he knew he had given somebody a big bonus. And so now at Christmas, we give baskets full of basically it's a giant Christmas meal. (P1)

Terera and Ngirande (2014) and Aguinis and O'Boyle (2014) confirmed P1's statement by recommending the use of nonmonetary rewards to augment a monetary rewards system. Ertas (2015) suggested leaders who provided significant rewards and

recognition would assist their businesses in attracting new employees and retaining high performers. P2, P3, P4, and the employee information handbook did not address a rewards and recognition program for employees. Table 1 includes the list of subthemes related to employee compensation.

Table 1

*Employee Compensation*

| Subtheme                | Frequency of Occurrence |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Employee benefits       | 28                      |
| Rewards and recognition | 4                       |

When leaders use compensation to retain employees, they need to examine the tangible benefits and the rewards and recognition. Within the durable goods industry, salary is the driving force to retain some employees. However, some employees remain with the company because of the intangible benefits (e.g. family work environment, monthly birthday luncheons, Thanksgiving turkey shoot). Intangible benefits are as significant as tangible benefits in reducing employee turnover. A comprehensive compensation and benefits package and the ability to provide intangible benefits are proven strategies to reduce turnover.

**Emergent Theme 2: Open and Responsive Communication**

Communication emerged from Interview Questions 1, 5, 6, and 8. All participants acknowledge communication is the foundation of the company and the key to retaining employees. Kim et al. (2017) recognized the important role and utility of internal

communication and the organization-employee relationship in the context of turnover and retention. The business leaders identified communication as part of five star leadership principles under the heading of effective communication/listening. Leaders are “available and approachable to answer any questions, listen, and constantly communicate the why to make action meaningful” (Five Star Leadership Principles, 1999).

Aligning with the five star leadership effective communication/listening principle, P1 emphasized the family oriented and team-based work environment used to ensure employees are looking out for one another. P1 stated the purpose of the monthly meals is to foster open communication between employees and the management team.

And we have meals on average once a month for employees if they work and no one gets hurt. So it keeps it builds a family like a team like setting, so everybody is looking out for one another. Then not only are they looking out for one another, everybody is healthy, and everybody's safe, but also it gives everybody a time to sit down at a table and talk. (P1)

In contrast, the employee information handbook addresses the proper use of communication using emails (transmitted or received) and the restrictions. Effective communication is one of the strategies to address turnover (Cloutier & Felusiak, 2015; Hellawell, 2012; Hom, Lee, Shaw, & Hausknecht, 2017; Mosadeghrad & Ferdosi, 2013).

**Internal communication.** P4 elaborated on the importance of communication within the organization and stressed when hiring the employee the internal communication begins. Agreeing with P4, P2 sits down with every employee to explain the organizational expectations and obtain feedback on the employee’s expectations. All

participants have an open-door policy and provide their contact information to their employees.

Whenever I hire somebody the first day I call them in my office and we sit down and have a chat about first of all communication, second of all what their job duties are, and third I guess is expectations of their job. (P4)

But communications I think is when I hire somebody I try to explain to them exactly what we are looking for, what I need, what I expect out of them and then if they have any issues you know I am open available for them to come to me. We can discuss stuff and if they are having problems or something we try to work it out figure out what is a good solution to make them happy to keep them satisfied with the company so that we can keep them. (P2)

Kang and Sung (2017) and Men (2014) noted internal communication enhances supportive employee attitudinal and behaviors outcomes that reduce turnover. P3 identified the importance of engaging with each employee numerous times in the day. By showing interest in each employee, P3 promotes the importance of each employee input to meeting the organizational goals. P1 identified the need to know how to communicate with the different generations (e.g., Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials) within the workplace.

I try to engage one on one at least two or three times a day just to see how their day is going if they need anything or want anything. You know talk to them about what they are doing on the weekends and their free time. That's what I try to do. (P3)

Demographics play a big part. One thing I have learned is that with all the work the different generations in the workforce. What the Baby Boomers want, the Generation X want, the Generation Y want, and the Millennials want are all different. And since everybody is in the workforce, you have to create, and because of our litigious society, you have to create policy that treats them all equally, and you can't treat them all equally because they are not equal. (P1)

All participants confirmed open and responsive communication is a part of their leadership style and how they inform employees where they fit into the company.

I don't know if this is a strategy, but to me, communication is key in everything we do. (P4)

And try to do good communication with everybody. I give everybody my phone number, my cell phone number that I hire. You know if they have an issue anytime I tell them to give me a call, and we'll discuss it and try to communicate. So if they're having problems, I can find out what their problems are, and I can help them resolve their problems. (P2)

Leaders need to have a standard process of communication, so employees know the mission, vision, core values, operations, and their fit within the organization (Cloutier & Felusiak, 2015; Gould-Williams, Mostafa, & Bottomley, 2015). Kwiatkowski (2017) noted communication is a vital instrument of leader's success or failure based on their level of communicative skills. A good leader's communicative skills include steadiness and consistency, clarity of expression, using vivid language, and politeness and courtesy



(Kwiatkowski, 2017). Aligning with Kwiatkowski (2017), all participants practice the communicative skills identified for a good leader.

**Employee engagement:** Two of the five star leadership principles, flexibility/adaptability, and highly motivated/high energy require leaders to provide employees with the latest methods and technology along with a work environment that fosters enthusiasm and enjoyment. P4 stated the importance of mentoring employees.

I try to be, I guess a mentor to all my employees. And then what I want each of my employees to be able to do are any of the positions up there. Not only do they help me but it can help them in their future. If I've got an accounts payable clerk whose never done payroll I am going to expose her to payroll. So if she does leave me that give her something else that she can build on in her future. So cross-training to me is the big thing we are attempting to do right now. (P4)

Schulz and Enslin (2014) noted encouragement and guidance from mentors and advocates play a significant role in employee advancement. Leaders must engage employees in organizational career development programs and support career-planning efforts that could increase employee retention (Schulz & Enslin, 2014).

The growth of a company is dependent upon the growth of the employees who make up the company (McManus & Mosca, 2015). To ensure a competitive advantage; leaders should create organizational cultures that sustain and support employee development programs (Rahman & Nas, 2013). Gerards, de Grip, and Baudewijns (2018) noted a positive relationship between a freely accessible access open organization and

employee engagement is mediated by social interaction in the workplace and transformational leadership.

**Employee empowerment:** Leaders develop productive members of the organization through the five star leadership principles: (a) integrity/honesty, (b) effective communication/listening, (c) knowledge/competence, (d) flexibility/adaptability, and (e) highly motivated/high energy (Five Star Leadership Principles, 1999). Leaders use the five star leadership principles to support the mission of a positive, stable work environment of highly qualified team members. Ertürk and Vurgun (2014) stated the perceived organizational support and organizational trust reduced turnover intentions. P1 noted employees are empowered to identify and admit to mistakes quickly without the fear of retribution.

There are banners that say *Mistakes are accepted; cover-ups are not*. And to teach the people, we're imperfect creatures, and we know you are going to make mistakes. When you make a mistake fess up to it because it is cheaper to fix it now than to fix it after it leaves the site or after it goes out on a job site or whatever. (P1)

Bester et al. (2015) found leaders should foster a positive organization using empowering behavior of keeping employees accountable, self-directed decision-making, employee development, psychological empowerment (attitude and influence), and organizational citizenship behaviors (loyalty, deviant behavior, and participation) are instrumental in reducing turnover, thus supporting P1's comments. Through the ethics

policy, employees align with an organization with a positive ethical outlook and an avenue to report violations (Ethics Policy, n.d.).

Organizations which have integrity and encouraging ethical practices as part of their culture are viewed with respect by their employees, community and corresponding industries. The positive ethical outlook of an organization results in a solid financial bottom line, the ability to retain and attract new and talented personnel, and the capacity to retain employees who are experienced and knowledgeable (Ethics Policy, n.d.).

Table 2 includes the list of subthemes related to open and responsive communication.

Table 2

*Open and Responsive Communication*

| Subtheme               | Frequency of Occurrence |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Internal communication | 4                       |
| Employee engagement    | 5                       |
| Employee empowerment   | 8                       |

Managers must ensure they are communicating effectively, providing challenges to engage employees, and empowering employees to improve their performance. Leaders should have standard processes for open and responsive communications because it is the foundation of the organization and is the key to retaining employees. Communication is a vital mechanism to gauge the leaders' success or failure based on their level of communicative abilities. Employees must know the mission, vision, core values,

operations, and where they fit within the company. Employees need the correct tools to do their job and a positive work environment. Leaders who used internal communications enhanced supportive employee attitudes and behaviors that reduced turnover.

### **Emergent Theme 3: Training and Career Advancement**

Opportunities for training and career advancement are themes from Interview Questions 1, 2, and 4. All participants conveyed the importance of growth and advancement for employees, but P1 and P2 expected the employee to initiate the desire to move upward in the organization.

It is like what I said earlier, we've had people start in lower positions and work their way up, and I think they will stay with the company forever. And at the same time my purchasing manager she started out cleaning bathrooms and she worked her way up. The person that's in our steel yard now he came in cleaning and showed drive and determination. (P1)

I do offer job training, job advancement, you know anybody that is looking to move up I try to work with them and give them the opportunity to do better and move up within the company. If somebody does well with the company and they're looking to stay with the company and want to move up, we can offer ways to help them advance in the company to increase their knowledge and abilities for us. (P2)

However, due to the small size of P4's department, career opportunities are limited.

Career opportunities, I had two people promoted out of my department, which to me is not bad. Only because there is not that much room for upward advancement

in this small company. That, the career opportunities I am somewhat limited on.

In that there is nowhere else in this company for them to go. (P4)

McManus and Mosca (2015) affirmed career planning and advancements are left up to the employee because organizations do not plan or prioritize employee career development. The employee information handbook contains guidance for leave for military training, reporting any additional education and special training courses, and educational assistance but does not address upward mobility. Cloutier and Felusiak (2015) recommended organizations invest more resources for employee training and development to increase advancement opportunities. All participants affirmed training and career advancement opportunities were vital for the growth and motivation of engaged employees to reduce employee turnover.

**Employee development.** The participants use on-the-job training, training videos, cross-training, certification programs, and educational assistance for their employees. The employee information handbook contains information concerning management's support of continuing education. P2 stated employees obtain increased job awareness and increase their knowledge and abilities through training and cross-training. Nolan (2015) substantiated P2 assertion and recommended leaders place attention on individuals' professional development to create an atmosphere of advancement.

Well on that I believe the training helps increase their job awareness, so they know exactly what they are supposed to be doing. Give them goals, so they know where we are looking at what they need to learn and as far as meeting goals for advancement opportunities. (P2)

The company encourages pursuits of continuing education and believes the employee and the company benefit from greater knowledge gained through courses of study. In order to lessen the financial burden associated with continuing education, the company shall reimburse employees the cost of tuition and books required for vocational classes at a rate of eighty percent (80%) (Employee Information Handbook, 2014).

P2 and P4 confirmed cross-training does add value to the company and provided employees with additional skills for advancement opportunities.

I have a guy that worked in the field that I brought up into the office, and now he is a Project Manager for me. You know he had a lot of potential, and talked to me about it so that's what I basically did. I said well you work on this and if you get to this we'll go onto the next, and he was a real hard worker, and he's worked his way up, and I'm very thankful to have him. He's been a good employee. (P2)

As far as training goes, our system that we use for the manufacturing side has a lot of training videos that I encourage all my new employees to sit and watch. A lot of it is on-the-job training with either myself or somebody who has been in that position before. (P4)

Slocum, Lei, and Buller (2014) affirmed cross-trained employees are valuable because they allow the company to adjust what employees do based on fluctuations in demand. To ensure a competitive advantage; leaders should create organizational cultures that sustain and support employee development programs (Rahman & Nas, 2013).

**Employee fit.** Transformational leadership theory is relevant to the training and career advancement themes because leaders using Bass' (1999) underlying propositions can ensure they have the right person in the right position while empowering employees to participate in training and career development programs. As mentioned earlier, these propositions are (a) idealized influence, (b) inspirational motivation, (c) intellectual stimulation, and (d) individualized consideration (Bass, 1999). P2 noted the use of the application process to find the right person for the job and the organization.

Well to start with, I try to hire correctly for whatever position I got that I've got opened. I'll look for my applicants try to pick the one that I think is the best fit for the company and the best fit for the position. So if I can get the right person hired, then they're more likely to enjoy the job, and stay with the job but that's the first thing. (P2)

Leaders who adopt transformational leadership through strategies of recruitment, selection, promotion, training, and development should see positive results in the health, well-being, and adequate performance of the organization (Bass, 1990).

P1 observed a potential employee willing to take a position beneath his capabilities because of his need to care for his family. P1 hired this individual because he met the person-organization fit and person-job fit.

We had a young gentleman come in that was a college degreed but it was nothing to do with our or anything to deal with our company, and I told him that all I got open is and he said I need a job to feed my family and I hear that story a lot. And I said, "the *only job I got is cleaning toilets.*" And he took his jacket and tie off and

said: "I'll take it." That's not the job I gave him, but it proved to me that if he was willing to do that and he's now a project manager for us. (P1)

Zhang, Yan, Wang, and Li (2017) found leaders who hire based on personal-organizational fit reduce turnover because of personal-organizational fit direct relationship with job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction, creativity, professional development, and good workgroup as extrinsic rewards and other predictors decrease turnover intentions (Camara et al., 2015; Ertas, 2015). Validating P1 and P2, Boon and Biron (2016) postulated person-organization fit and person-job fit are positively related but only in high-quality leader-member exchange relationships. Table 3 includes the list of subthemes related to training and career advancement.

Table 3

*Training and Career Advancement Opportunities*

| Subtheme             | Frequency of Occurrence |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Employee development | 14                      |
| Employee fit         | 5                       |

Managers must ensure the availability of employee development and that the employee is a good fit for the company. Business leaders must invest more resources in employee training and development to increase upward mobility of employees. Leaders who create organizational cultures that sustain and support employee development programs ensure the organization has a competitive advantage. Managers who hire based



on personal-organizational fit reduce turnover because of personal-organizational fit direct relationship with job satisfaction. Leaders should hire based on personal-organizational fit and provide on-the-job training, training videos, cross-training, certification programs, and educational assistance as training and career advancement opportunities for the growth and motivation of employees to reduce employee turnover.

### **Applications to Professional Practice**

I used Bass' transformational leadership theory (1999) to guide the direction of the research. The specific business problem was that some durable industry leaders lack strategies to reduce employee turnover. Managers need to acknowledge employee turnover is a problem and create a plan to solve the problem. The results of the study revealed (a) employee compensation, (b) open and responsive communication, and (c) opportunities for training and career advancement as strategies to enhance job satisfaction that will reduce employee turnover in the durable goods industry.

The findings of this study may be of value to all business leaders and expand on existing knowledge to leaders in other industries, but especially leaders within the durable goods industry. By understanding what strategies reduce turnover and how to implement them, durable goods industry leaders can improve the work environment, increasing job satisfaction, and decreasing job dissatisfaction.

### **Implications for Social Change**

The results from this study may help leaders within the durable goods industry to effect positive social change by implementing viable strategies that reduce employee turnover and help them decrease the high costs associated with turnover for their

organization. Durable goods industry employees will see their organization as the best place to work because of the organizational culture along with the monetary and nonmonetary benefits. Rampl (2014) recommended an organization become a first-choice brand to remain competitive and to attract potential employees.

The study of leadership strategies used to reduce employee turnover is essential because extant literature confirms that leaders' behaviors do affect job satisfaction and turnover (e.g., Caillier, 2016; Kerdnern & Thanitbejasith, 2017). Durable good leaders who use Cloutier and Felusiak (2015) four strategies of effective communication, a diverse workforce and transparency, ensure person-job fit, and person-organization fit, and offers employee development and training programs can reduce turnover.

Leaders who implement effective strategies may reduce employee turnover by the adoption of a people-oriented leadership style, managing working conditions effectively, enhancing the transparent interpersonal communication, and engaging in relationship building (Pietersen & Oni, 2014). The outcome of this study may create a positive social change by the potential to (a) reduce voluntary employee turnover, (b) decrease the unemployment rate, (c) sustained organizational profitability, and (d) contribute to the wealth of employees and the local economy. Durable goods leaders may influence their organization internally and enhance their external reputation by applying the results of this study to execute the strategies to decrease the high cost of employee turnover.

### **Recommendations for Action**

The results of this study are relevant to any business leader who needs to reduce voluntary employee turnover. Durable goods leaders may implement the results from this

study to become the employer of choice to retain institutional knowledge, reduce voluntary turnover, increase job satisfaction, and develop and maintain a competitive advantage. Individuals within leadership positions who may not have adequate strategies can use the results of this study to gain an understanding of employee retention.

Participants identified three themes: (a) employee compensation, (b) open and responsive communication, and (c) employee training and career advancement opportunities as strategies that may reduce employee turnover. A comprehensive compensation and benefits package and the ability to provide intangible benefits are proven strategies to reduce turnover. To foster open and responsive communications, leaders can create a family and team work environment using teaming events (e.g., monthly birthday luncheons, Christmas baskets, and Thanksgiving turkey shoot), provide their contact information during the employee's orientation meeting, and periodically checking with the employee. Leaders can provide on-the-job training, training videos, cross-training, certification programs, and educational assistance as training and career advancement opportunities for the growth and motivation of employees to reduce employee turnover. Adopting employee compensation, open and responsive communication, and employee training and career advancement opportunities will allow leaders to proactively approach voluntary turnover before it becomes disruptive to their business.

The results from this study are applicable for managers at all levels and across all industries. By implementing these strategies, leaders can retain skilled professional staff and focus on operating, growing, and sustaining their businesses. Leaders should exercise

and apply transformational leadership principles. Transformational leadership can make a positive difference in the organization's performance at all levels; enhance its image, and improve its success in recruitment, selection, and promotion (Barrick et al., 2015; Bass, 1990; Fischer, 2016).

To promote the distribution of the findings of this study, dissemination will include publication in ProQuest Dissertation and Theses Database for future scholars and other organizations. Distribution of the abstract will be sent to the participants to disseminate among peers and other business managers and leaders. I will seek opportunities to share the findings within business related forums, organizational training, and leadership conferences.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

This research intended to provide to provide durable goods leaders with strategies to successfully reduce employee turnover. I noted three study limitations in Section 1. Limitations refer to issues beyond the control of the researcher and can include potential weakness with the study (Helmich, Boerebach, Arah, & Lingard, 2015). First, the participants' knowledge of strategies used to reduce employee turnover limits the purposeful sampling selection. The second limitation was the participants' responses to the interview questions were self-reported data and can contain biases, e.g., selective memory, telescoping, attribution, and exaggeration (Stocia, 2015). Finally, the study location of the population was in the southeastern region of the United States; therefore, the results may not be generalizable to leaders in other geographical areas.

Extending the geography and demographics to a large durable goods manufacturer is a recommendation for future studies to gain a perspective of strategies used in that environment. Another recommendation is the use of a multiple case study design to compare two or more durable goods manufacturers could prove useful to business leaders to determine the differences and similarities in the strategies used. The third recommendation for future research can include strategies to reduce employee turnover based on the generational differences. Leaders need to understand how to manage the Baby Boomers (1946-1964) who are preparing to retire and extract the institutional knowledge to be passed down to the Generation X (1965-1976), Millennials or Gen Y (1977-1995), and Gen Z, Gen, or Centennials (1996 to present). Leaders must adopt strategies that align with each generation because what leaders use to retain the baby boomers may not retain the Millennials.

Next, doing mixed method research that looks at voluntary turnover from the employees' and the leaders' perspectives may be useful for leaders. Performing phenomenological research studying employee lived experiences and their perceptions of understanding and interpreting the phenomenon of employee retention may ascertain insightful information. Lastly, doing research studying how various industries and their attributes affect turnover.

### **Reflections**

When I began my journey of obtaining a Doctor of Business Administration (D.B.A.) degree specializing in leadership, I thought I knew what it would take to complete the program. When I compare the doctoral process to my military training,

civilian training, Bachelor's, and Master's programs, I find the commitment, dedication, and sacrifices required to earn a terminal degree in a league of its own. This arduous journey cannot be traveled alone, and I have garnered numerous new lifetime relationships through this doctoral experience. The support from my doctoral committee, classmates, and peers who have left the program were invaluable to keep me motivated to complete the process.

By completing this study, I gained insight on what managerial behaviors affect voluntary employee turnover and how leaders can implement them. Employees who receive adequate compensation (tangible and intangible), opportunities for advancement, and their leaders provide open and responsive communication will likely stay with the organization. I had thought the financial compensation would be the first thing on the employees' list of why they would stay or leave a company. To my surprise, salary is not the main reason why people stay with a company nor is it the principal reason why they leave.

During my first oral defense, my chair asked me if there was anything I thought would come out of the data analysis portion of my study. I told her I did not expect the participants to know anything about transformational leadership. I then stated as an analyst, "I knew I had to let the data speak for itself." To mitigate any personal bias, I ensured I followed the interview protocol for each participant. The results of the data analysis showed each participant used some aspect of transformational leadership. Furthermore, the owner was prior military and based the mission statement and the five star leadership principles on the tenets of transformational leadership.

## Conclusion

To obtain a competitive advantage, leaders must deliberately focus on managing turnover within the organization. Recruitment, training, career development, compensation, performance management, and employee relations practices affect and define whether organizations fail or succeed (Watty-Benjamin & Udechukwu, 2014). The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to identify strategies business leaders used to reduce employee turnover by answering the research question: What strategies do durable goods industry leaders use to reduce employee turnover?

Employee compensation, open and responsive communication, and training and career advancement opportunities were the three main themes that emerged from the data collection and interpretation for this study. Since employees stay with an organization because leaders provided a healthy work environment, which includes identity and well-being, perceived supervisor and organization support, and increased organizational performance, durable goods industry leaders could reduce voluntary turnover by adopting the transformational leadership style. Transformational leadership is an organizational factor linked to increased employee motivation, individual and team performance, and commitment (Moynihan, Pandey, & Wright, 2015). By implementing the findings of this study, leaders may retain institutional knowledge, reduce voluntary turnover, increase job satisfaction, and increase productivity that will increase profits. In the global economy, these strategies may provide durable goods industry leaders with a competitive advantage when competing for employees looking for alternative job opportunities.

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## Appendix A: Interview Protocol Checklist

|          | <b>Participant's Pseudonym:</b>  | <b>Participant's code:</b>   |                              |
|----------|--|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| #        | Interview Date:  | Total Interview Time:        |                              |
| <b>A</b> | Eligibility criteria met:  | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> |                              |
| <b>B</b> | Informed consent completed   | No <input type="checkbox"/>  | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>C</b> | Begin the interview with the review of the research:   |                              |                              |
|          | Purpose of study   | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> |                              |
|          | Risks  | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> |                              |
|          | Benefits   | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> |                              |
|          | Participant confidentiality  | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> |                              |
|          | Right to withdraw  | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> |                              |
| <b>D</b> | Ask Demographic questions  |                              |                              |
| <b>E</b> | Ask semi-structured open-ended interview questions:  |                              |                              |
| 1        | To reduce voluntary employee turnover within your business, what strategies do you use?                              | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> |                              |
| 2        | How effective are these strategies in reducing voluntary employee turnover?  | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> |                              |
| 3        | In your experience, what obstacles prohibit reducing voluntary employee turnover from being successful?              | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> |                              |
| 4        | How do training and career opportunities reduce voluntary employee turnover?   | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> |                              |
| 5        | What leadership behaviors do you use that are beneficial to reduce voluntary employee turnover within your business? | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> |                              |
| 6        | How are these leadership behaviors beneficial in reducing voluntary employee turnover?                               | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> |                              |
| 7        | In your experience, why do you think employees leave?  | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> |                              |
| 8        | What other information would you like to provide that we have not addressed already?                                 | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> |                              |
| <b>F</b> | End interview by providing the below information to participant  |                              |                              |
|          | Participant to provide member checking   | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> |                              |
|          | Participant to review draft transcript   | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> |                              |
|          | Estimated completion date of transcript  | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> |                              |
|          | How findings will be shared (through Abstract)   | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> |                              |
|          | Reiterate participant confidentiality  | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> |                              |
|          | Data storage for 5 years (password protected)  | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> |                              |
| <b>G</b> | Thank participant for support/participation  | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> |                              |

## Appendix A: Interview Protocol Checklist continued

| Post Interview Checklist (for researcher only) |  |                             |                              |
|--|--|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>H</b>                                       | Was member checking provided?<br>Received reply back from participant for synthesized transcript? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>I</b>                                       | Was edited transcript provided?<br>Received reply back from participant? Yes <input type="checkbox"/>                          | No <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> |
|  | Describe any changes:  |                             |                              |
| <b>J</b>                                       | Research abstract provided to participants (after final approval at Walden):   |                             | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> |

## Appendix A: Interview Protocol Checklist continued

| # | Demographic information                            |  |
|---|--|--|
| 1 | Participant's title                                |  |
| 2 | Participant's assigned pseudonym (e.g. P1, P2, P3) |  |
| 3 | Interview date                                     |  |
| 4 | Start time   |  |
| 5 | End time   |  |
| 6 | Years and months in current leadership position    |  |
| 7 | Years and months in overall leadership position    |  |
| 8 | Number of direct and indirect employees            |  |
| 9 | Total number of employees in organization          |  |

| # | Demographic questions  |  |
|---|--|--|
| 1 | How long have you been with the business?  |  |
| 2 | How many years have you been in senior leadership?   |  |
| 3 | In the last five years, how many employees have voluntarily left through promotion, retirement, or reassignment? |  |
| 4 | What is your background and area(s) of expertise?  |  |
| 5 | How many direct and indirect employees are you responsible for leading?  |  |
| 6 | What are the job categories for these employees?   |  |
| 7 | What is the average tenure of the employees in your organization/department?                                     |  |