Factors affecting the attraction and retention of Generation Y at a petroleum company – what role does Corporate Social Responsibility play?

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Declaration

This report is not confidential and may be used freely by the Graduate School of Business.

I certify that this is my own work and that to the best of my knowledge all references are accurately reported.
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Abstract

This study examines factors that attract and retain Generation Y, the youngest generation entering the workforce, to an employer and whether a company’s Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) stance plays a role. The research also looks at what Generation Y expects of employers in terms of CSR.

The research followed a mixed method approach. A survey was used for the quantitative, exploratory segment of the study, to determine which aspects are important to Generation Y for attraction and retention. This was followed by an in-depth interview for the qualitative, explanatory segment of the study, to understand the reasons behind it.

Respondents ranked CSR stance as the least important attraction and retention factor. The findings showed even though most respondents felt that CSR is important, they did not see it as a direct driving force in their choice of employer. Implicit in the findings of the other attraction and retention factors which were tested, however, the importance of CSR as an indirect factor in attraction and retention emerged. This was determined based on aspects raised by respondents under other attraction and retention factors, which indirectly form part of the company’s overall CSR stance. There seemed to be a gap in the understanding of the principles of CSR among respondents, which limited its scope.

Other attraction and retention factors which were tested and reported on include: a chance to learn and develop, good job security, ethical record, good chances of promotion, opportunity to do work that excites me, an opportunity to use initiative, pleasant people to work with, known to pay well, and having a job aligned to my talents.

Key words: attraction, retention, Generation Y, Corporate Social Responsibility, CSR, work values, ethics, learn, develop, promotion, employee wellness, philanthropy, war for talent.
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1 Introduction

1.1 Background to the research

Generation Y are entering the workplace and bringing with them a different value-set to previous generations (Hurst & Good, 2009). Generation Y are growing up under different social, environmental and political conditions than their parents and, as these experiences create the paradigms through which the world is viewed and decisions are made (McCrindle & Hooper, n.d., p. 11), they view the world differently and are therefore motivated by different factors to workers before them, which in turn impacts their attraction and retention.

At the same time, companies are increasingly becoming aware of their impact on securing a sustainable future as economic growth is increasing consumption patterns which, given Earth’s finite resource, can lead to catastrophe if business carries on as usual (Eccles, Pillay & De Jongh, 2009, as cited in Ackers, 2009). Based on this increased focus on corporate morality and accountability, companies are “grappling with the challenge of ensuring that future generations are not burdened with the residual fallout of unethical, amoral or unsustainable business practices” (Ackers, 2009, p. 2). Companies are therefore becoming more socially responsible and “conscious of ethics and human rights as well as being economically, environmentally and socially active and responsible” (Kanji & Chopra, 2010, p. 119).

A number of terms have been used in describing an organisation’s role with regard to social and environmental matters. Corporate Social Responsibility, a term which came into common use during the 1980s and 1990s, has since been shortened to CSR (Terry, 2010). As CSR was plagued with a perception that it is only limited to philanthropy, Corporate Citizenship was coined during the 1990s to describe a higher level of responsibility, since companies were seen as citizens of a country and therefore holding the same rights and obligations as natural persons (Terry, 2010). Furthermore, the Brundtland Report (as cited in Terry, 2010) introduced the term ‘sustainable development’, of which CSR was seen as an integral part.

CSR, as defined by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (as cited in Terry, 2010, p. 18), is: “the continuing commitment by business to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and
their families as well as of the local community and society at large”. CSR will further be defined in the literature review, but it has evolved to broadly incorporate three different aspects: economic, environmental and social responsibility, as highlighted in Figure 1 below.

![Corporate Social Responsibility](image)

**Figure 1: Corporate Social Responsibility**

Source: (Terry, 2010, p. 18, modified from Niskala & Tarna, 2003)

Porter and Kramer (2006) identify CSR as increasingly important to business for competitive success. The benefits of CSR, as described by Kanji & Chopra (2010, p. 119), go beyond financial ones, and include:

- benefits such as improved perceptions of the company, proactive management of risk, building loyalty-based customers on account of distinctive ethical values, building a genuine culture of ‘doing the right thing’ within the organisation, following steps to implement issues related to labour standards and health and safety policies, and so on.
- Corporations are using CSR tactics to win the war for talent (Bhattacharya et al., 2008).

In 1997 McKinsey & Company coined the term “the war for talent” to describe the demand for highly skilled workers, which is currently outstripping the supply. In the current competitive knowledge-based world, the calibre of a company’s talent increasingly determines success in the marketplace. At the same time, attracting and retaining great talent is becoming more difficult. The war for talent is projected to persist for at least the next two decades (Axelrod, E., Handfield-Jones, H., & Welsh, 2001).

While most of the developed world is experiencing an ageing workforce and low unemployment, competition for talent is increasing and organisations require greater focus to
effectively attract and recruit young people who, relative to the population, are less numerous (McCrindle & Hooper, n.d.). With capable people globally in short supply, there is “fierce competition between organizations to attract and retain these skilled resources” (Kaliprasad, 2006, p. 22). In South Africa this skills shortage is further amplified due to problems in the education system carried over from education policies prior to 1994, which limited access to education, skills development and training to a racial minority, a failure of subsequent policies to address it fully, as well as the outflux of skilled workers emigrating to various parts of the world or the so-called “brain-drain” phenomenon (Kaliprasad, 2006).

The skills shortage in South Africa is also impacting sustainable development, as the challenge in Africa is to increase economic prosperity which requires economic growth (Hamman, R., Woolman, & Sprague, 2008). To enable a growing economy, focus needs to be placed on replacing retiring workers, as well as filling the new positions created due to economic growth (Hamman et al., 2008). Companies therefore need to attract and retain a highly skilled, highly motivated and productive workforce to fill those gaps.

In order to attract and retain the right talent, stay relevant, survive and remain competitive, organisations have to take the changing values and attitudes of the new workforce into account, and adapt their people-management strategies (Smola & Sutton, 2002). As the challenge to human-resource professionals is to develop plans in order to recruit and retain the highest quality workers, understanding what the new generation finds attractive and important with regard to future employers can help organisational leaders make important decisions about human-resource policies and practices (Sullivan, Forret, Carraher, & Mainiero, 2009). The reward of successfully adjusting people-management practices is a highly motivated and productive workforce, along with the ability to attract and retain the best of the new talent pool (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008; Kaliprasad, 2006).

A company’s CSR initiatives have been found to be an increasingly important way to attract and retain the best employees (Bhattacharya, Sen, & Korschun, 2008). Former CEO of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu, Jim Copeland, Jr. stated: “The best professionals in the world want to work in organisations in which they can thrive, and they want to work for companies that exhibit good corporate citizenship” (cited in Bhattacharya et al., 2008, p. 37).

One approach to talent management, which includes the attraction and retention of talent, is to focus on the employee value proposition (Simmons, 2009). As the values of an
organisation are revealed through its CSR initiatives, they form part of the employee value proposition, establishing the link between CSR and employee attraction and retention (Bhattacharya et al., 2008). In their study on the use of CSR in winning the war for talent, the same authors (Bhattacharya et al., 2008, p. 37) also found the following aspects of CSR relevant to the attraction and retention of employees:

CSR humanizes the company in ways that other facets of the job cannot; it depicts the company as contributor to society rather than as an entity concerned solely with maximising profits. As other researchers explain it, ‘a paycheck may keep a person on the job physically, but it alone will not keep a person on the job emotionally.’ Moreover, because of the many forms it can take, CSR often serves as a genuine point of differentiation for the company.

It is important for business leaders to keep up with the trends and prepare for the future, but as McCrindle & Hooper (n.d.) point out, where the focus has traditionally been on keeping up with technological changes, the sociological and demographical changes will have a more profound impact on the future than technological changes have. The key to business success, therefore, is to “understand these human traits, attitude shifts, social trends, and the mindset of the ever-changing customer and employee” (McCrindle & Hooper, n.d., p. 5). In their study on Generation Y employees and their mindset, McCrindle & Hooper (n.d., p. 7) found that:

Generation Y truly want to help achieve profit outcomes, but environmental considerations, and socio-economic concerns mean that they are looking to make a difference to more than just the financial bottom line. By running a values-based organisation, making societal contributions, and empowering staff to actively support causes that they believe in, a company can become a corporate citizen. Increased commitment from Gen Y staff often comes directly by achieving congruency with the values and resonance with their causes.

Based on the discussion above, global trends are shifting towards a higher CSR awareness. This seems to be in line with Generation Y values, highlighting the potential role CSR can play in the attraction and retention of Generation Y employees.

1.2 Purpose of the research

Talent has been identified as one of the major competitive advantages to organisations. (Kaliprasad, 2006). Based on the current talent scarcity, companies are increasingly focusing on talent attraction and retention (D'Amato & Herzfeldt, 2008). The purpose of the research
is to identify what attracts and retains the youngest generation entering the workforce, Generation Y, to an employer and whether a company’s CSR stance plays a role. The research will also look at what Generation Y expects of employers in terms of CSR.

The potential significance of this research project is to aid the shaping of HR as well as CSR policies. By identifying what is important to Generation Y, companies’ understanding of the values and expectations this generation brings to the workplace will be enhanced, enabling them to adjust their HR strategies accordingly. The benefit of this, as Lowe & Schellenberg (2002 as cited in Hurst & Good, 2009, p.573) found, is that “employers that adjust their human resource strategies to be more flexible and potentially accommodating to employee values, will more likely attract available talent, and ultimately become the workplace of choice.”

Further to that, D’Amato & Herzfeldt (2008, p.947) found that companies struggle in the area of talent management, as they find it difficult to provide an attractive work environment for younger employees, while at the same time, retaining the valuable skills and knowledge of older generations, and therefore suggest that “this struggle could be solved by the implementation of generation-specific HR strategies, rather than by a general strategy across all generations of employees.” By understanding Generation Y’s expectations, companies will be able to adjust their strategies towards matching these expectations.

The business case for CSR includes the increased differentiation it can provide between employers with and without a CSR focus (Peloza & Falkenberg, 2009). CSR can be used to strengthen the employer brand and increase its competitiveness in the race towards the “best-company-to-work-for”, and therefore contributes towards an increase in the attraction and retention of talent (Pinkess, 2008). Bhattacharya et al. (2008) point out that where CSR was once ancillary to business practice, it is rapidly becoming an essential element of corporate strategy and that companies therefore need to shift their approach to CSR management if they want to truly leverage their CSR in the quest for talent based on the returns that CSR promises. The authors identified the need for job products which are tailored to the diverse needs of employees, and highlight the fact that: “few managers are clear about how to identify and understand the needs of different employee segments and subsequently configure their CSR efforts to address the unique needs of each segment” (Bhattacharya et al., 2008, p. 38). The findings of this research therefore aim to provide managers with more insight into the unique needs of the Generation Y segment. This should enable managers to adjust and
align their CSR strategy to these needs and use it as leverage in the attraction and retention of this generation.

1.3 Research Questions and Scope

The purpose of the study is to gain insight into the predominant factors that attract Generation Y to an employer and retain them, identify whether an organisation’s CSR policy is a factor, and understand why the factors that have been identified are attractive to Generation Y.

The research questions that the author seeks to answer are:

- What are the attraction and retention factors for Generation Y when evaluating employment options?
- What is the significance of CSR for Generation Y when these factors are considered?
- What is Generation Y’s view on the responsibility of companies towards society and the environment?

The study is limited to one employer, within the petroleum industry, which has a dedicated Corporate Social Investment department, a clear CSR strategy and has published a CSR Report. The research investigates what factors impact Generation Y in terms of evaluation of employment options, and whether the company’s CSR strategy plays a role.

1.4 Significance of the study

Retaining Generation Y employees is more difficult than previous generations as no previous generation began their working lives moving between jobs as frequently as Generation Y (McCrindle & Hooper, n.d.). According to a survey done by Drake International, 63% of Generation Ys remain with a single employer less than two years; many young people leave jobs not because there is a compelling reason to leave but because there is no compelling reason to stay (McCrindle & Hooper, n.d.). Employers need to ensure they provide Generation Y with compelling reasons to stay, and this study aims to explore those reasons.

Companies need to understand what is valued by Generation Y, in order to align appropriate organisational policies, such as recruitment and retention, with these values. McCrindle and Hooper (n.d.) found that Generation Y wants to contribute more to a company than merely adding to the financial bottom line, by also taking environmental considerations as well as
social-economic concerns into account. Generation Y wants to make a difference. According to a study by RainmakerThinking Inc., a U.S. research and consulting firm in New Haven, CT (as cited in Allen, 2004, p. 52), one of the top three job requirements for Generation Y is “meaningful work that makes a difference to the world.” Mirroring the values of the Baby Boomers, Generation Y possess a high level of sociability, morality and civic duty, making what they do with their lives more important than a huge salary (Allen, 2004).

As Generation Y have entered the workplace they are starting to have a more commanding voice in the industry. Echoing the authors in the previous paragraph, Deloite (2009, as cited in MacAskill, 2009, p. 2) also found key traits of this generation to include “an eagerness to engage in society, to take on responsibility early in their careers and to set ambitious goals.” Based on this finding, the author concludes that: “to recruit Generation Y, companies have been compelled to address social responsible and sustainable concepts” (MacAskill, 2009, p. 2). Given the potential value CSR can hold towards employee retention and attraction, Bhattacharya et al. (2008, p. 42) call for “considerably more attention and commitment from business leaders if it is to produce tangible results in terms of improved employee attraction, motivation and retention.”

By understanding the new work values Generation Y bring to the work place, evaluating the role CSR plays in those values, and adjusting the people-management processes accordingly, a business would be able to attract and retain Generation Y employees, thereby ensuring a lowering of costs of recruitment as employee turnover decreases, as well as a highly motivated, productive workforce (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008).

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2 Literature Review

2.1 Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

CSR means different things to different people at different times, making it hard to find a universally accepted definition (Ackers, 2009, p. 4). Some definition to CSR has been given in the introduction of this report. Smith (2007, p.186) found: “Corporate social responsibility (CSR) defines organisational consideration of multiple stakeholders and global impact, beyond simple focus on maximization of shareholder wealth.” As per this definition, CSR encompasses a wide range of stakeholders including shareholders, employees, creditors,
customers, suppliers, governments, unions, competitors, local communities, and the general public. It also introduces the focus beyond profit maximisation, for which the term triple-bottom-line has been coined, referring to the environmental, societal and economic aspects of the firm’s performance (Smith, 2007), as displayed in Figure 1 in the introduction.

CSR is used to describe the contributions companies can make towards sustainable development, which the Brundtland Commission (1987, cited in Ackers, 2009, p. 4) defined as “development meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. The impact of all the different interpretations, and interchangeable use of various terms is described by Ackers (2009, p. 4) who found:

Confusion surrounding the CSR discourse is exacerbated by terms like global warming; carbon footprint; green products; greenhouse gas emissions (Fust & Walker 2007:2); triple bottom line; environmental, social and governance (ESG); sustainable development; sustainability; corporate governance; corporate responsibility; corporate citizenship; corporate social investment; corporate ethics; stewardship; or responsible business (Kotler & Lee 2005:2).

To avoid confusion, for the purpose of this report the generic term “CSR” is used.

CSR was initially introduced to companies in the way of philanthropic actions, and this has remained to be one of the popular notions of CSR (Hamann, Agbazue, Kapelus, & Hein, 2005). The focus is shifting towards emphasis on core business practices, however, with the key of corporate citizenship rooted in the core business strategy and implementation thereof. As Hamann et al. (2005, p. x) put it: “we are not concerned so much with how companies spend a portion of their profits for worthy causes, but rather with how they make those profits (or losses) in the first place.” Porter & Kramer (2006, p. 80) argue that:

The prevailing approaches to CSR are so fragmented and so disconnected from business and strategy as to obscure many of the greatest opportunities for companies to benefit society. If, instead, corporations were to analyze their prospects for social responsibility using the same frameworks that guide their core business choices, they would discover that CSR can be much more than cost, a constraint, or a charitable deed – it can be a source of opportunity, innovation, and competitive advantage.

For companies to include CSR as part of its core business choices, business leaders are not only facing an increase in complex responsibilities and possible dilemmas that they have to deal with, but also new opportunities, which enhances the business case for contributing to sustainable development and increases the reach and effectiveness of such efforts (Hamman
et al., 2008). Porter and Kramer (2006) identify that the thinking within business needs to change dramatically in order to perceive social responsibility as building shared value rather than as damage control or as managing public relations. As Human Resources (HR) or Talent Management strategies form part of a company’s core strategic choices, the shift in focus to incorporate CSR into core business strategy will have the same opportunities for HR, such as the potential competitive advantage, which they can use to leverage in the attraction and retention of employees.

An example of the frameworks businesses use to guide core business choices, is Porter’s models which analyse competitive position and develop strategies (Porter, 1990). To identify where CSR can produce maximum benefit, both socially and to the organisation, these models have been used to analyse the interdependence between a company and society (Mapping Social Opportunities, 2006). With specific focus on HR management (e.g. recruiting, training, compensation system) the value chain model can be used to identify the social impact of all the different business activities, which will enable the company to identify all the problems and potential opportunities for social and strategic distinction. Porter’s diamond framework (Porter, 1990) identifies a company’s competitive contexts, and for CSR to be effective, also requires an understanding of its social dimensions. One of the areas critical for a company’s competitive position is good factor (input) conditions, which includes availability of human resources at the top of the list (Mapping Social Opportunities, 2006), identifying the link drawn between CSR and a company’s competitive advantage, which also relies on the attraction and retention of human resources.

A further model which recommends a shift in CSR management in order to get the most benefit out of CSR initiatives for a company in its aim of winning the war for talent, is the model developed by Bhattacharya et al. (2008), as seen in Figure 2.
Figure 2: Recommended Shifts in CSR Management Approach
(Source: Bhattacharya, Sen, & Korschun, 2008, p. 40)

The model was developed to demonstrate the link between CSR activities and the internal and external employee outcomes. The authors (Bhattacharya et al., 2008) defined internal outcomes as being in the employee’s head, such as commitment to the company, and external outcomes as behavioural outcomes such as employee retention. By incorporating CSR into the ‘job-product’, the authors found that it can satisfy certain employee higher-order needs, adding value to the employment proposition, which the employee will then find more attractive, and will lead to identification by the employee to the organisation. As employee needs vary, a one-size-fits-all CSR strategy cannot meet the needs of all employee segments. In order to get the most benefit out of CSR, the company therefore needs to understand the needs of the different employee segments and tailor its CSR initiatives accordingly. It is therefore important for organisations to understand Generation Y’s needs, as one of the newest employee segments, and to match these to the CSR initiatives in order to drive retention and attraction.

Companies are becoming more aware of the potential influence of ignoring CSR as this can make it more difficult for them to obtain a “licence to operate” from customers, investors, employees and society (Simmons, 2009). There has been a change in societal attitude towards CSR as society expects companies to produce beneficial outcomes, not only for themselves, but also for customers, employees and other salient stakeholders (Simmons, 2009). This change in attitude enables socially responsible organisations to differentiate themselves positively in the marketplace and reduce business risk, as evidence has been found that
“increasing numbers of customers, employees and suppliers are more likely to buy from, work for and work with organisations that demonstrate responsible corporate conduct” (Simmons, 2009, p. 686). A company’s CSR position can therefore be used to differentiate it in the market, create ethical capital, and bring on further benefits such as greater funding, sales, engagement and collaboration from more CSR-aware investors, employees and suppliers (Simmons, 2009).

CSR is being incorporated into companies’ internal component of branding (Bhattacharya, et al., 2008). De Bussy et al. (as cited by Simmons, 2009, p. 685) explain the internal component of branding, also referred to as internal brand, employer brand, employee branding or employment value proposition, as a view on jobs as “organisation ‘products’ that attract and motivate employee ‘customers’ because of the benefits they offer to this stakeholder group.” Employee branding is a way for an organisation to inform people about the merits for working for them and “its aim is to make staff feel good about their work and their employer, bring in better people, improve their motivation and keep them longer” (Pinkess, 2008, p. 38). Pinkess (2008, p. 38) further identifies CSR as the missing link in employee branding, as he finds that many employees are looking for organisations that play an active part in society, and support worthwhile causes, and supports his findings with a “benchmark study from the Employer Brand Institute (which) ranked CSR as the single most important factor in employee satisfaction.” In another study on chief executives’ perception of the objective of CSR programmes, Korn/Ferry (as cited in Pinkess, 2008) found a large majority see it as a way to hire and retain talented people.

Simmons (2009) supports the impact of CSR on recruitment and retention by identifying recruitment and retention, reputation and brand identity as well as employee expectation as CSR drivers in his marketing framework. The notion that CSR benefits the company in the area of talent retention and attraction is further supported by Ashenbaum (2008), as he found that younger talent (Generation Y) makes a potential employer’s stance on green issues a key factor in whether to accept a job offer.

Based on the various interpretations of CSR and the impact it has on the attraction and retention of Generation Y, as discussed in this section, it can be deduced that the impact of CSR to employee attraction and retention is thus two-fold. On the one hand, a company with high corporate social responsibility will value its employees as one of its stakeholders. It can therefore be expected that it will be an environment where employees are treated fairly,
health and safety issues are addressed, employees are fairly compensated, etc., and the organisation would attract employees with the favourable work environment it promises.

On the other hand, potential employees are part of society and becoming more socially aware (Hurst & Good, 2009). Generation Y want to do work that is meaningful, and be proud of where they work. Employees are attracted to jobs and organisations based on the congruence of skill sets and values with the organisation and job. As employees become more socially responsible, they would like to work for a company that is a good corporate social citizen (Strautmanis, 2008).

2.2 Defining work values and their link to employee attraction and retention

2.2.1 What are work values?

Values are difficult to define as it is not easy to separate them from attitudes, norms, preferences or views (Gahan & Abeysekera, 2009). Using the definition by Ros et al. (as cited in Gahan & Abeysekera, 2009, p. 129) as “desirable, trans-situational goals that vary in importance as guiding principles in people’s lives”, it can be seen as a basis for individuals against which they evaluate alternative options, make judgments and choose a course of action.

Smola & Sutton (2002, p. 365) define values as a person’s fundamental belief of what’s right or wrong and therefore deduce that work values are what a person believes to be right or wrong to the work setting. The same authors formulate a formal definition for work values as “the evaluative standards relating to work or the work environment by which individuals discern what is “right” or assess the importance of preferences.”

It is therefore important for organisations to understand the underlying values of their employees or potential employees, as this will guide their course of action when evaluating employment options.

The various approaches to classifying work values are best summarised by Cennamo & Gardner (2008, p. 892):

One of the most widely used distinguishes between work values that are extrinsic, or a consequence of work (e.g. job security, salary) or intrinsic, occurring through the process of work (e.g. intellectual stimulation, challenge) (Elizur, 1984). Subsequent research has added altruistic values (e.g. making a contribution to society) (Borg, 1990), status-related values (e.g. influence, recognition, advancement) (Ros et al,
1999), freedom-related values (e.g. work-life balance, working hours) and social values (e.g. good friendships with supervisors or peers) (Lyons, 2004)

The significance of understanding employee values for practical HR management is based on the influence of fit between employee expectations and organisational deliverables for employee retention and engagement (Gahan & Abeysekera, 2009). A person is motivated to work and remain in a specific environment based on his/her values linked to certain aspects of that environment (Warr, 2008). Employee values therefore have a direct impact on staff attraction and retention. In a study by Cennamo & Gardner (2008), who investigated the values, job satisfaction, effective organisational commitment and intentions to leave of generations in the workforce, it was found that where individual and organisational values showed poor fit there were reduced job satisfaction and organisational commitment, and increased intention to leave.

As every person or generation holds different values, so too does every organisation. The fit between organisational and personal values is referred to as the Person-organisation (P-O) values fit. Cennamo & Gardner’s (2008) findings on P-O fit, as described above, are supported by Raylin & Ritchie (cited in Van Ness, Melinsky, Buff, & Seifert, 2010) who noted that a person’s organisational commitment is measurably influenced by the perceptions of organisational fit. Westerman & Yamamura (2007) also found that when Generation Y perceived a good fit between their goals and organisational goals, their intention to remain with the organisation significantly increases and they were more satisfied. The authors conclude that selection and pre-selection procedures, such as realistic job previews, should be implemented to allow prospective employees the opportunity of evaluating the alignment of their values to the organisation’s and determine values fit.

2.2.2 The link between work values and employee attraction and retention

The value of identifying differences between generational work values lies in the benefit organisations can gain from tailoring HR practices to take into account different groups’ likes and intentions.

D’Amato & Hertzfelt (2008) found differences between generational learning orientation, as well as leadership development intentions; however, both learning orientation and leadership development was found to have a relationship with employees’ organisational commitment and an intention to remain in the same organisation.
Gaining the commitment from younger employees is a challenge to employers, as they bring a new set of values and expectations to the workplace. Employers who are aware of the differences and adjust their human-resource strategies accordingly will more likely attract available talent, and ultimately become the workplace of choice (Hurst & Good, 2009).

Hurst & Good (2009, p.588) identify the required change in “recruitment strategies that employers need to use to attract, recruit, retain and motivate young people in the twenty-first century will need to rely less heavily on traditional pay and benefits (i.e. job security), and instead focus more heavily on creating a work environment that allows individuals to grow and develop.”

2.3 Generation Y and their work values

2.3.1 Generation Y

For this study, Generation Y will be defined as individuals born between 1980 and about 2000 (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008). The exact years are still being debated. As demographers declare generations based on changes in behaviour, and this generation is still very young, the end point has not yet been agreed on. This generation corresponds to the rise in birth rates in the early 1980s, however, when the Baby Boomers began to have children (Erickson, 2008). Generation Y is the largest consumer and employee group in history, making up almost a third of the world’s population, and as such a large group, will significantly influence the world. Their taste and preferences will determine not only products and service requirements, but they will also become a significant voice in the way work gets done (Erickson, 2008).


Not enough is known about Generation Y’s work values and career preferences as they are only now entering the workforce (Smola & Sutton, 2002; Cennamo & Gardner, 2008). The previous generations’ characteristics (Silent Generation, Boomers and Xers) are fairly well described. Sullivan et al. (2009) illustrate the lack of definition of the newest generation by the various names that have been given to them: Generation Why, The Millennial Generation, The MySpace Generation, The Nexters, The Internet Generation; and The Greater Generation.
Shared experiences which shaped Generation Y’s shared characteristics have been identified as global events (social, political and economical), changes in social (family and work) patterns and changes in technology.

Based on global events, including terrorism and natural disaster which Generation Y experienced, Erickson (2008) argues for Generation Y to have a high expectation of continued random disaster and that it is almost inevitable not to believe the most sensible thing is to live in the moment. Generation Y dislikes slowness and desires immediate feedback about performance (Hurst & Good, 2009).

Some significant changes to family and work patterns, e.g. an increase in working mothers, increasing gender equality, and a strong pro-child culture, form part of a large majority of Generation Y’s experiences (Macky et al., 2008; Erickson, 2008). The increasing numbers of dual-career and single-parent families have lead to changes in the meaning of work and influence Generation Y’s expectations for work/life balance (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008).

One of the characteristics of Generation Y is the prediction of multiple careers as they will often retrain and change careers in their lifetime (McCrindle & Hooper, n.d.). Accustomed to being active in family decisions, Generation Y is likely to expect a similar amount of authority or ability to contribute to decisions in employer organisations and favour inclusive style of management (Hurst & Good, 2009).

Generation Y has experienced rapid changes in technology and ways of communication. Eisner (2005) identifies the growth of the internet and technology as the most defining experience for Generation Y. Generation Ys cannot remember a time when they were not connected 24/7 and are therefore very comfortable with virtual relationships and social networks (Erickson, 2008; Sullivan et al., 2009; Wong et al., 2008). The use of technology by Generation Y has blurred the lines between work and play, however, as they don’t distinguish between being entertained, learning, and working (Erickson, 2008).

The increase in global networks, of which Generation Y forms part, has created a generation with a sense of global citizenship. They have a lower sense of cultural superiority and gravitate towards more inclusive and accepting environments. This influences their choice in work and environment as they value work environments where lifestyle choices, gender and race equality is valued (Erickson, 2008).
2.3.2 The impact of shared experiences on Generation Y’s work values

The experiences of uncertainty which Generation Y shared as teenagers give them a view of the future as unpredictable (Erickson, 2008). As they cannot rely on organisations to provide their security and stability, they value skill development and challenging job opportunities and other intrinsic aspects of work such as mentoring and training in order to enhance their employability and remain marketable. They seek employers who will further their professional development (Dries, Pepermans, & De Kerpel, 2008; Wong et al, 2008; Cennamo & Gardner, 2008; Hurst & Good, 2009). Erickson (2008) found that if Generation Y did not see opportunities to learn, they were not afraid to move onto a new job.

Passion, learning, security (not stability) and a willingness to work is identified by Dries et al. (2008) as work-related values of Generation Y. Wong et al. (2008) find Generation Y comfortable with change and counter Dries et al. (2008), as they suggest that Generation Y is not motivated by job security as they do not expect long-term employment (Wong et al., 2008; Hurst & Good, 2009). Wong et al. (2008) further found Generation Y to be driven and demanding, optimistic, confident, enjoying collective action, highly socialised, valuing responsibility and having input into decisions and actions.

Generation Y has grown up with an overwhelming number of options, and is therefore used to making their own choices. This is also evident in their expectations from work, as Erickson (2008) identifies that more than half of Generation Ys studied expect organisations to provide them with multiple career paths.

Based on the social networking and availability of information that Generation Y is used to, they prefer horizontal work structures to more hierarchical structures. They are used to learning, collaborating and tapping into their network, and are not shy to share their opinions with whoever they feel can benefit from it (Erickson, 2008).

Generation Y has a different perception of time and pace, and don’t see the value in “face time”, just for the sake of being at work (Erickson, 2008). However, they are not afraid to put in the hours required to get the job done.

In summary, Generation Y seems to share the following: they value freedom-related items more, place high importance on work-life balance, life style, career development and overseas travel more than other generations; they are found to be collaborative, sociable,
value home and family, require intellectual challenge, feedback and mentoring, need success, and want to contribute to society (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008; Eisner, 2005; Erickson, 2008; Hurst & Good, 2009; Smola & Sutton, 2002). Hurst & Good (2009, p. 574) find that “this globally aware, socially conscious, and volunteer-minded generation is likely to perform best when their abilities are identified and matched with challenging work that encourages them to reach their full potential.”

Hurst & Good (2009) find money less of a motivation; however, Erickson (2008) finds the most significant variance between Generation Y individuals to be the perception of money. Erickson (2008) finds the following to be the top priorities for Generation Y for their next job: interesting work (29%), meaningful work (18%), and work-life balance (18%). Financial reward scored fourth at 14%. However, Generation Y’s attitude towards money and the role it would play in their lives varies significantly: “Worldwide, 56% of Ys say that they would give higher priority in choosing work to the ability to pursue their passions, compared with 44% who would choose to make lots of money” (Erickson, 2008, p. 71). The difference exists mainly between the emergent and emerging world, where significant trends towards increased consumerism is experienced.

Generation Y is seen to have high moral values, including responsible citizenship, but consumerism is often seen as a driver of environmental and social exploitation, and stands in contrast to responsible citizenship. Generation Y’s perceptions of responsible citizenship is further discussed in the next section.

2.4 Generation Y and CSR

Generation Y’s credo is: “Let’s make this world a better place” (Dries et al., 2008, p. 910). Generation Y is identified as a generation with a strong sense of morality, striving to make a difference. They want to perform meaningful work that has the potential to contribute to a better world (Hurst & Good, 2009). McCrindle & Hooper, (n.d., p. 13) find that:

Generation Y truly want to help achieve profit outcomes, but environmental considerations and socio-economic concerns mean that they are looking to make a difference to more than just the financial bottom line. By running a values-based organisation making societal contributions, and empowering staff to actively support causes that they believe in, a company can become a corporate citizen. Increased commitment from Generation Y staff often comes directly by achieving congruency with the values and resonance with their causes.
This is supported by Westerman and Yamamura (2007) who suggest that organisations adjust their benefit structures to include the option for time off for employees to work on projects that have special meaning to them. A study done by Johnson Controls (Oxygenz, 2009) found that 95% of Generation Ys in the USA prefer an environmentally friendly or aware environment.

Erickson (2008, p. 27) describes Generation Y as the most socially conscious generation since the 1960s. She attributes this to their awareness of several issues including poverty, lack of education, violence and disease globally, which has sensitised them to the issues facing people in the world, and are driving them to action and creating a new wave of volunteerism. She supports this with the following facts:

Today 61% of 13- to 25-year-olds say they feel personally responsible for making a difference in the world. Eighty-one percent have volunteered in the past year; 69% consider a company’s social and environmental commitment when deciding where to shop, and 83% trust a company more if it is socially or environmentally responsible. Two-thirds of college freshmen believe it’s essential or very important to help others in difficulty, the highest level of social and civic responsibility among entering freshmen for 25 years (p. 27).

This level of responsibility is directly influencing their buying behaviour. Generation Y prefers products that are socially conscious: brands that give back to the community, are environmentally safe, or are connected to a cause (Erickson, 2008). If the same applies for employer brands, how does Generation Y “shop for a job?”

As previously discussed, when searching for a job, Generation Ys look for an organisation whose reputation and values they are proud to be associated with, one which reflects their values. Part of the question this study wishes to answer is whether a company’s social responsibility stance is one of those values.

2.5 Conclusion

The literature review has discussed CSR, work values, as well as the notion of Generation Y. The concept of work values and the impact these have on the attraction and retention of employees have been highlighted. Generation Y was defined based on shared experiences of global events, social patterns and changes in technology. Next, the impact of these events on Generation Y’s work values and subsequent preferences of Generation Y when evaluating job options were identified. This has provided an initial understanding of the anticipated results.
that would be achieved with regard to the factors that attract Generation Y toward a new job. Generation Y has been described as a socially responsible generation by some of the literature – the expectation being that an organisation’s CSR profile may have an influence on the attraction and retention of Generation Y employees.

By understanding the motivational factors for Generation Y when evaluating employers, and the role CSR plays in it, companies can align their HR and CSR strategies with Generation Y’s expectations, thereby strengthening their position in the war for talent, as these actions can lead to an increase in the attraction and retention of Generation Y employees to the organisation.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3 Research Methodology

“No single highway leads us exclusively towards a better understanding of the unknown. Many highways can take us in that direction. They may traverse different terrain, but they all converge on the same destination: the enhancement of human knowledge” (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010, p. 94). The justification and limitations of the highway the researcher decided to follow in the quest to enhance human knowledge will be described in the following sections.

3.1 Research approach and strategy

This study was exploratory and explanatory and followed an inductive analysis: exploratory, as it aimed to identify important variables, and at the same time explanatory, as it also searched to explain the forces causing the phenomenon in question (Gorman & Clayton, 2005). Exploratory studies further satisfy the researcher’s curiosity and desire for better understanding, explicate the central concepts and constructs of a study and develop new hypotheses about an existing phenomenon (Babbie & Mouton 2001). The phenomenon of employee attraction and retention has been described and researched by previous authors, but no direct investigation about the impact of a company’s CSR policy on Generation Y employees could be found in current literature. The study therefore aimed to enhance the current concepts of employee attraction and also to include a better understanding of why certain factors are important to Generation Y.
As qualitative research is often used in social science studies to research the complexities of human phenomena, it was seen as suitable for this research. It is used to describe and explain, to explore and interpret (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). The purpose of the research was to explore the factors that attract and retain Generation Y, explain, describe and interpret the individual perceptions (Gorman & Clayton, 2005). The utilisation of a qualitative approach was therefore deemed appropriate.

Merely following a qualitative approach, however, might not yield the most complete picture and fullest understanding of the complex human phenomenon (Gorman & Clayton, 2005; Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). Although certain methodologies are traditionally associated with particular research areas, Dzurec & Abraham (1993, as cited in Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004) suggest that the objectives, scope, and nature of inquiry are consistent across methods and across paradigms. To enhance this qualitative study, the research therefore followed a mixed approach.

3.1.1 Justification for the mixed method approach

Quantitative and qualitative methods are no longer seen as being mutually exclusive. The researcher drew on both as it allowed her to identify and mix and match components of both methods that would best address the research question (Johnson, & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

Two main types of a mixed method are classified as mixed research method and mixed model research. The former is based on the use of quantitative data for one stage of a research study and qualitative data for a second stage of a research. The latter is where a combination of both quantitative and qualitative data is used in one or two stages of the research process (Hunt, 2007). This study broadly followed the former approach.

Johnson & Onwuegbuzie (2004) created a six mixed-model design matrix which identifies different across-stage mixed-model designs (where the mixing takes place across the stages of the research process), as seen in Figure 3. This research followed an equal status, sequential design, QUAN – QUAL.
In order to get a result that is superior to mono-method studies, Johnson and Turner (2003, as cited in Johnson, & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 19) suggest what they believe to be the fundamental principle of mixed research: “researchers should collect multiple data using different strategies, approaches, and methods in such a way that the resulting mixture or combination is likely to result in complementary strengths and non-overlapping weaknesses.”

By combining methods, the researcher was able to process a problem from all sides. This lead to additional insights and understanding, which might have been missed if only one approach was taken. The researcher was therefore able to address different aspects of the same research question, thereby extending the breadth of the project (Gorman & Clayton, 2005) and was therefore able to produce more complete knowledge to inform theory and practice (Johnson, & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

Five purposes for mixed-methods have been identified and are described by Caracelli & Greene (1993, p. 196):

- triangulation, complementary, development, initiation, and expansion. In the classic sense, triangulation seeks convergence, corroboration, and correspondence of results across the different method types (Campbell & Fiske, 1959; Cook, 1985; Denzin, 1978; Shotland & Mark, 1987; Webb et al., 1966). A complementary purpose is indicated when qualitative and quantitative methods are used to measure overlapping, but distinct facets of the phenomenon under investigation. Results from one method type are intended to enhance, illustrate, or clarify results from the other (Greene &
McClintock, 1985; Mark & Shotland, 1987; Rossman & Wilson, 1985). In development designs the different method types are used sequentially. The intent, based on the work of Sieber (1973) and Madey (1982), is to use the results of one method to help develop or inform the other method. Development is broadly construed to include sampling and implementation, as well as measurement decisions.

For this study, the main purpose was development, as the results from the first study were used to develop the subsequent interview questions. Further to that, it was complementary and expansionary as the subsequent interviews enhanced and clarified the results from the first survey, thereby creating more depth to the study. One of the benefits of triangulation, the use of several research methods to test the same finding, is added internal validity, which will be discussed in the section under validity below.

Following a mixed-method approach allowed the researcher to investigate her concerns, which is a typical motivation for quantitative research. At the same time, the qualitative approach enabled the participant’s voice to be captured, thereby merging these two emphases within a single investigation (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005). The mixed-method approach further fits the researcher as a person who enjoys both the structure of quantitative research and the flexibility of qualitative inquiry (Creswell, 2003).

The quantitative data were solely used for descriptive purposes. The strengths of quantitative research which the researcher utilised were firstly to test and validate the theory constructed about the attraction factors of Generation Y to an organisation. The data collection and analysis was relatively less time consuming, using an electronic survey for data gathering and software for analysis. It provided precise, quantitative, numerical data which adds credibility to the research. Finally, the research results are relatively independent of the researcher (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

The following potential weaknesses of quantitative research were overcome by the subsequent qualitative research: The categories and theories that were used, based on the literature, may not have reflected local constituencies' understandings as most of the literature is based on studies outside of South Africa; potential confirmation bias based on the focus on theory testing rather than generation, may have lead the researcher to miss out on certain phenomena occurring; and lastly, “knowledge produced may be too abstract and general for direct application to specific local situations, contexts, and individuals” (Johnson, & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 19).
The subsequent qualitative research focussed in depth on a limited number of cases. With the benefit of qualitative research methods, the data which were collected provided an understanding of people’s personal experiences, based on the individual’s own categories of meaning and embedded in local contexts. It aimed to understand participants’ interpretation of constructs (e.g., work-life balance), and “qualitative data in the words and categories of participants lend themselves to exploring how and why phenomena occur” (Johnson, & Onwuegbuzie, 2004 p. 19).

The limitation to qualitative research’s ability to be generalised was not addressed by the quantitative research, as the same data set served as both the quantitative and qualitative sample. This sample was not random and not of sufficient size to be generalised. By using the results of the quantitative data, the researcher’s interview questionnaire was semi-structured, based on the findings of the survey, which enabled a shorter, more focused interview.

3.1.2 Limitations of the mixed approach

Although the combination of qualitative and quantitative methods can enhance and benefit various studies, Leedy & Ormrod (2010, p. 106) warn that “many novice researchers might not have the time, resources, or expertise to effectively combine approaches for their initial research attempts.” Creswell (2003, p. 23) states that the mixed method might require extra time, due to the need to collect and analyse both qualitative and quantitative data. It will be especially difficult if run concurrently (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). The researcher partly addressed this by running the methods sequentially.

To overcome the knowledge barrier, the researcher attended a workshop on qualitative methods, and also drew on her knowledge of a completed quantitative analysis module to deliver the descriptive statistics of the survey results. The electronic tools for data capturing (surveys) as well as analysis, both of the survey and interview coding and analysis, were utilised to address the issue of time.

Caracelli & Greene (1993, p. 204) highlighted the need for addressing the questions around “the role of inquiry paradigms in integrative data analysis strategies and mixed-method inquiry more generally. How can contrasting epistemological assumptions and worldviews be integrated or reconciled within a mixed-method framework?” Russo (2009, p. 40) also mentions the epistemological debate, referred to by Johnson & Onwuegbuzie (2004), as paradigm mixing, driven by the fact that both the quantitative and qualitative paradigm is
grounded in its own epistemological principles (assumption, values and methods) when mixed together, could lead to incompatibility. Johnson & Onwuegbuzie (2004) add the issues of interpreting conflicting results.

Triangulation, as mentioned in the previous section as one of the purposes of mixed methods, does have its limitations as Caracelli & Greene (1993, p. 204) note:

The underlying logic of triangulation requires independence of methods through data analysis and interpretation. Arguments for convergent validity of findings from different methods are stronger when such independence can be claimed. Hence, to integrate different data sets intentionally during data analysis is to undermine the potential power of triangulation design.

3.2 Research design

The aim of the research was to identify the factors that attract Generation Y to an employer and test whether corporate social responsibility is considered, followed by an investigation as to why the items identified in the first stage of the research were important.

The research method therefore followed a two-stage sequential design, where the first stage’s results were used to develop and inform the purpose and design of the second stage (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). The first stage was a quantitative method (survey) and the second a qualitative method (interview).

The aim was to capture and understand the events “against the background of the whole context and how such a context confers meaning to the events concerned” (Babbie & Mouton, 2001, p. 272), as these authors believe that a qualitative researcher could only then truly claim to ‘understand’ the events. Babbie & Mouton (2001, p. 279) identify the following features, shared by qualitative research, which were applied in this study:

- A detailed engagement/encounter with the object of study
  
  This was accomplished by an in-depth interview with the object of the study.

- Selecting a small number of cases to be studied
  
  The research was limited to 13 interviews which were conducted with employees of one organisation, 30 years and younger.
• An openness to multiple sources of data (multi-method approach)

Multi-method approach in the form of a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods was followed.

• Flexible design features that allow the researcher to adapt and make changes to the study where and when necessary.

The information from the survey influenced the questions which were prepared for the subsequent interviews.

The study was cross-sectional, rather than longitudinal, as the data was gathered over a relatively short period of time, looking at the variables at a particular point in time, and did not involve taking multiple measures over an extended period of time. The study was confined to one organisation, and the context was further restricted to Generation Y employees, with a minimum education at matric level. In order to protect the identity of the organisation, a pseudonym is used when direct reference is made to the company: Axon.

3.3 Sampling methodology

Sampling makes research manageable. It allows the researcher to access events that can’t be explored in totality. A researcher cannot be everywhere and observe everything. Schram (2003, as cited in Leedy & Ormrod, 2010, p. 147) observes that one’s “task, both derived and constrained by one’s presence, is thus inherently interpretive and incomplete. The bottom line is that there is no bottom line: It is not necessary (or feasible) to reach some ultimate truth in order for a study to be credible and useful.”

To ensure credibility of this study, the researcher was conscious that the sample needed to be meaningful and if possible contain elements of representativeness. O’Leary (2005, p. 91) provides two guidelines to follow in order to attain that goal: (1) selection is done with the goal of representativeness in mind and (2) strategies are used to ensure that the samples match population characteristics. The same author also highlights the added responsibility of the researcher to avoid both unwitting bias and erroneous bias, which will be discussed under the researcher bias section. Babbie & Mouton (2001, p. 84) refer to the units of analysis as the “what of your study” which are typically individuals. By drawing tight barriers around the research units, in terms of age, education, and employer, the researcher believes that those requirements were met by purposive sampling.
Due to the extra layer of sampling in mixed method studies, it is more complex than mono-method studies (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2010). An additional issue highlighted by O'Leary (2005) is that using both qualitative and quantitative methods will inevitably lead to a trade-off between the collection of rich in-depth qualitative data and the level of statistical analysis that might be possible. As the researcher seeks to “maximise the range of specific information that can be obtained from and about the context”, purposive sampling, in contrast to random sampling, provided that “by purposely selecting locations and informants that differ from one another” (Babbie & Mouton, 2001, p. 277).

As we can derive the characteristics of the social group from those of the individual members (Babbie & Mouton, 2001), using individuals falling within Generation Y will enable the researcher to derive characteristics of Generation Y employees as a group.

The researcher firstly identified a typical group with the following pre-selected criteria:

- Individuals 30 years or younger (based on Generation Y birth year starting 1980)
- Individuals in possession of a matric certificate
- Individuals who are current employees of Axon

As the research units were selected based on specific characteristics which they share, this method of purposive sampling is referred to as homogenous sampling (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007a).

After Axon consented to its employees being used as a sample group, the researcher received a list from the company identifying 68 candidates which fell within the sampling parameters. As this approach rendered too many units, the researcher resolved to use random purposeful sampling which Onwuegbuzie & Leech (2007a) describe as the event in which the researcher chooses cases at random from the sampling frame consisting of a purposefully selected sample, and 13 candidates were chosen from the list at random. The sample demographics are displayed in Table 1.
Table 1: Demographic breakdown of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Educational Qualification</th>
<th>Job Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>Coloured</td>
<td>First degree</td>
<td>Enterprise Risk and Assurance - Internal Audit Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>Matric</td>
<td>Axon Sales &amp; Marketing - Retail Sales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>Coloured</td>
<td>CA (SA)</td>
<td>Financial Services - Group Accounting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>Coloured</td>
<td>First degree</td>
<td>Finance - Procurement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>Coloured</td>
<td>Matric</td>
<td>Customer Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>Coloured</td>
<td>Honours</td>
<td>Supply Trading &amp; Optimisation - Supply Accounting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P7</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>African</td>
<td>First degree</td>
<td>HSEQ (Health, Safety, Environment and Quality)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P8</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>Board one exam</td>
<td>Supply, trade and optimisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P9</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>Coloured</td>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>Customer Services Technical Helpdesk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P10</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>Honours</td>
<td>Axon Sales and Marketing Financial Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P11</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>Coloured</td>
<td>First degree</td>
<td>Business Process Analyst - Policies and Procedures Departement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P12</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>22-25</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Matric</td>
<td>KAM support help desk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P13</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>African</td>
<td>Honours</td>
<td>Procurement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.4 Data collection

3.4.1 Methodology/strategy and rationale

For data collection of mixed-method studies, Johnson & Turner (2003, as cited in Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2010) recommend the use of numeric and non-numeric documents through building up a database of open- and closed-ended items. Based on the exploratory and explanatory nature of the study, the primary data-collection tools for the explanatory phase were a survey questionnaire and for the exploratory phase, in-depth interviews.

3.4.2 Data gathering sequence

3.4.2.1 Survey questionnaire

The survey questionnaire was used to provide the researcher with quantititative data. Surveying is “the process of collecting data by asking a range of individuals the same questions related to their characteristics, attributes, how they live, or their opinion” (O’Leary, 2005, p. 103). The benefit of a survey, which the researcher utilised, is that it allows for comparison, generates standardised, quantifiable, empirical data and can be confidential and anonymous. However, the limitations of surveys as noted by O’Leary (2005), which include only getting answers to the questions the researcher thought of, not being able to go back to the respondents if more data are required, and the lack of in-depth data, were addressed in the second stage of the research. The researcher was also aware of the possible influence that self-report data could have (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010).
The survey was based on existing surveys as used by Russo (2009) and Warr (2009). Russo’s (2009) survey which measures the factors which attract employees to jobs, was combined with elements of Warr’s (2009) survey which is an extract of the World Values Survey related to particular job characteristics’ endorsement as ‘important in a job’. Final adjustments were made to the survey to include corporate social responsibility (see Appendix 1).

The researcher ensured the questions formulated were unambiguous, inoffensive and unbiased (O’Leary, 2005). The survey questionnaire consisted of two sections: the first consisting of structured questions relating to demographic information; the second, a list of job and employer aspects which may be of importance to individuals when choosing an employer. The respondents were requested to indicate the importance to them of those aspects when choosing an employer. The response category was firstly a 4-point Likert scale which ranged from ‘not important at all’ to ‘very important’. Even response numbers were chosen to compel individuals to make a choice (O’Leary, 2005). Respondents were subsequently asked to rank the same aspects in order of importance from 1 to 10, with 1 being the most important. Background information accompanied the survey to “give credibility to the survey and make the respondents feel they’re part of something” (O’Leary, 2005, p. 112). Careful instructions were provided and the survey was kept short, as the subsequent interviews were able to address further issues.

As this was a online survey, a pilot study was conducted to test the questions, the time requirement, as well as the technical aspect. It was sent out to five individuals not forming part of the study, but who fell within the boundaries of Generation Y. Based on the feedback received from the pilot study, some survey questions were slightly amended to provide more clarity or include more tick-box options.

**3.4.2.2 In-depth interview**

The in-depth interview was used to address the exploratory component of the research as “exploratory studies usually lead to insight and comprehension rather than the collection of detailed, accurate, and replicable data, these studies frequently involve the use of in-depth interviews” (Babbie & Mouton, 2001, p. 80). As with many qualitative studies, this study also followed an emergent design, since collection early in the investigation influenced the kinds of data that the researcher subsequently gathered (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). The interview was used to further explore the data gathered in the first stage survey.
The interview took the form of a semi-structured one-on-one interview. The researcher started with the defined question plan, but allowed some deviation to follow a natural flow of conversation. A one-on-one interview was chosen over a focus group, as it allowed the researcher more control over the process and provided each interviewee the freedom to express their thoughts (O'Leary, 2005).

The benefits of an interview as highlighted by O'Leary (2005, p 114), are that it:

- Allows you to develop rapport and trust
- Provides you with rich, in-depth qualitative data
- Allows for non-verbal as well as verbal data
- Is flexible enough to allow you to explore tangents
- Is structured enough to generate standardised, quantifiable data

The challenges include

- Resisting the urge to lead your respondents
  - Facilitating honest and open responses, even though your interviewees may want to “impress”
- Figuring out how attributes such as race, gender, ethnicity, class and age of interviewer and interviewee alike might affect the interview process – and employing effective strategies for ensuing credibility
- A potential for communication miscues
- A lack of anonymity

The researcher addressed the challenges by conducting a pilot study with two individuals who did not form part of the study, to determine whether the questions were sensitive, and also to practise the interview process. As the researcher was part of the data-collection process, she was conscious about being a good listener and being more interested than interesting (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). She also enhanced understanding and richness of the interview, as Babbie & Mouton (2001) also advised, by minimising “don’t know” responses.
by using probing questions like ‘What would be an example of that?’ or ‘In what way?’ (see Appendix 2).

The interviews were captured in audio format to preserve the data for review at a later stage (O'Leary, 2005). The researcher was aware of two challenges: the first was that this process had the potential to cause unease for the interviewee; with the second being the risk of equipment failure. However, permission was received by all interviewees to record the interviews. To address the possibility of technology failure, the researcher also used manual note-taking during the interviews. The audio records of the interviews were transcribed afterwards and stored in electronic format.

3.5 Data analysis techniques

Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the survey questionnaire data. Based on the 4-point Likert scale, the data generated are ordinal, and were used to identify attractiveness of the factors tested relative to each other. The survey was conducted electronically using the GSB’s survey tool, which also contains a reporting function that was used to generate descriptive statistics. However, no indication of why the factors indicated are chosen was derived from this data.

As this study aimed not only to report events, but also the context, description, process and participant perspective (Gorman & Clayton, 2005), the data gathered by the in-depth interview were subsequently analysed to provide further understanding to the “why”. O'Leary (2005, p. 255) noted that “the best way to move from raw qualitative data to meaningful understanding is through data immersion that allows you to uncover and discover themes that run through the raw data, and by interpreting the implication of those themes for your research project.”

Miles and Huberman (as cited in Gorman & Clayton, 2005, p. 205) summarise the numerous approaches to the analysis of qualitative data as a combination of

- Data reduction
- Data display
- Conclusion drawing and verification
Data reduction is the manipulation and reconfiguration of raw data in an attempt to discover patterns and connections not previously apparent (Gorman & Clayton, 2005). Discovering and uncovering is the first of the principles O'Leary (2005) identifies for qualitative data analysis. For this research, the approach was a combination of inductive discovery and deductive uncovering. As certain themes were identified based on literature, and also emerging from the survey results, the analysis of the interview looked to some extent to support those themes. However, the researcher also wanted to explore and discover whether any other themes emerge, which may have been omitted in the initial survey.

Data reduction is not separate from analysis, since you analyse your data as you sort through it (Gorman & Clayton, 2005). To be able to identify and map themes within the data, O’Leary (2005, p. 257) suggest delving into the data as it is collected which involves: (1) reading and re-reading; (2) annotating growing understanding in notes and memos; (3) organising and coding data; (4) searching for patterns in a bid to build and verify theories.

Through the process of transcribing, the researcher was immersed in the data, and the transcripts were then uploaded into Atlas.ti6, which was found to be a suitable qualitative data-analysis software package. The researcher created broad code families based on the initially defined attraction factors, as the interviews were structured around that, as can be seen from Figure 4.

![Figure 4: Code Families](image-url)
Whilst re-reading the data, the researcher created memos on the interviews and started to identify and highlight initial units of data or “chunks” of independent thought as it is referred to by Miles and Huberman (as cited in Gorman & Clayton, 2005), and displayed in Figure 5.

![Figure 5: Coding and Memos](image)

The software was used to assist the researcher in coding the data based on the identified chunks. Through this process the researcher looked for emerging themes. As the uncovering of themes was partly driven by exploring concepts with pre-determined categories, the researcher was wary of ‘fitting’ the data to her expectations, and not being able to see alternative explanations (O'Leary, 2005). The codes linked to a specific code family are displayed in Figure 6.
These codes were then grouped into bigger themes which emerged through the coding process.

3.6 Issues of validity

Validity encompasses the accuracy, meaningfulness, and credibility of the research project as a whole (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010, p. 97). Guba (as cited in Gorman & Clayton, 2005, p. 60) equates “validity, ‘truth value’, in quantitative studies with credibility in qualitative research” and finds the “key criterion or principle of good qualitative research is found in the notion of trustworthiness: neutrality of its findings or decisions” (as cited in Babbie & Mouton, 2001, p. 276).

Triangulation was used by the researcher to increase credibility in the research program (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Gorman & Clayton, 2005; Leedy & Ormrod, 2010), as “the more sources one examines, the more likely the researcher is to have an adequate representation of the underlying phenomenon” (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007b, p. 240). The researcher used triangulation to gain the following advantages described by Jick (as cited by Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007b, p. 240)

(a) it permits researchers to be more certain of their findings; (b) it enhances the development of enterprising ways of collecting data; (c) it can unravel contradictions, (d) it can lead to thicker, richer data; (e) it can lead to the fusion of theories; and (f) by
virtue of its extensiveness, it may serve as the litmus test for competing theories. As noted by Newman & Benz (1998), the more sources one examines the more likely the researcher is to have an adequate representation of the underlying phenomenon.

The researcher further ensured referential adequacy by transcribing interview audio and storing all additional notes electronically. Peer debriefing was used as a further method to enhance credibility by using a fellow MBA student whose research report was in the same area, and therefore understood the nature of the study, to review the perceptions, insights, and analysis of the researcher. Member checks were also performed by checking back with the individuals the researcher interviewed that their intentions were correctly captured, as this provided an opportunity to correct obvious errors and provide additional volunteer information (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007a).

Finally, in making the sampling decisions the researcher ensured an audit trail was left, in which decisions were documented at every step of the research process, to enable the reader to assess the rigor of the methods used and, subsequently, test the trustworthiness of the findings and interpretations (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007a).

3.7 Informed consent and research ethics

As human beings are the units of this research, careful consideration was given to respect their right to privacy. The research findings are presented in such a way that no response can be traced back to an individual or the company.

Confidentiality is ensured in the initial survey, as all names were removed from the data for analysis purposes. To ensure confidentiality to the interviewees, once the data were collected, the names were replaced with a code for analysis and reporting. To protect the identity of the company, a pseudonym is used.

The researcher made certain that the people who participated in the study were informed of the nature of the study, including the time commitment, the type of activity, and the topics that were covered (O'Leary, 2005). Participation was entirely voluntary, which ensured informed consent. The researcher ensured participants that no harm could be done by this research. The survey and questionnaire were carefully worded to ensure that neither caused concern with regard to any possible implication on participants’ current jobs.
3.8 Researcher bias

Bias, as defined by Leedy & Ormrod (2010, p.215), is “any influence, condition, or set of conditions that singly or in combination distort the data.” Due to the prominence of the role of the researcher in qualitative data collection, it has long been the object of criticism for the possible significance of researcher bias (Gorman & Clayton, 2005).

Bias in the selection of the sample group can involve unwitting bias (the tendency to unwittingly act in ways that confirm what you might already suspect) and erroneous assumptions, which involves sample selection that is premised on incorrect assumptions (O’Leary, 2005). By initially including all individuals who fell within the barriers set up in the selection section, and then using random sampling to select 13 participants within the bigger sample, the researcher reduced the risk of either selection bias occurring.

As the researcher is the person collecting data, researcher bias is not uncommon. It can be either active or passive. Onwuegbuzie & Leech (2007b) identify personality characteristics or attributes of the researcher (e.g. gender, ethnicity, type of clothing worn) as passive sources of bias. Active bias can creep into the interview process as “the researcher’s personality may affect the responses of the interviewee. In asking questions, the researcher’s tone of voice or the inflection or emphasis within the sentence may influence how a respondent replies” (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010, p. 215). As these biases are unavoidable, the researcher tried to reduce them to a minimum by being aware of them, and trying to be as neutral as possible.

As South Africa has multiple languages, bias can often creep in if a survey or interview is conducted in English, and that is not the participant’s first language. To avoid such bias, the language was kept as simple as possible, and contained explanatory sentences after concepts which might not have been common terms.

The data analysis phase is often prone to “be influenced by the researcher’s biases and values to some extent, reflecting the notion of researcher as instrument” (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010, p. 154). To minimise the extent to which the researcher’s prior expectations and opinions enter into the final analysis, the researcher used different kinds of data related to the research topic, got multiple perspectives and varying perspectives on the issue by reflecting on the results with peers and supervisor and acknowledging biases in the final report (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010).
CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS

4 Research Findings

4.1 Demographic Breakdown

The online survey indicated the male:female ratio of respondents as 69%:31%. The respondents fell within the following age brackets: 8% between 22 and 25, and 92% between 26 and 30. 17% of respondents were African, 50% Coloured, 25% Indian, and 8% White\(^1\). The question about race was optional, and one respondent chose to skip the question.

![Figure 7: Age, Gender & Race](image)

As the highest educational qualification, 23% of respondents had matric, 8% a diploma, 31% a first degree, 23% an honours degree, and 15% specified other. The other qualifications consisted of CA(SA), and Board one exam. 100% of respondents were full-time employees of Axon.

![Figure 8: Education, Time with employer & Time in role](image)

\(^1\) All terms used in terms of Employment Equity Act of 1998
The time with current employer ranged from less than a year to between 5 and 10 years, with 23% less than a year, 15% between 1 and 2 years, 23% between 2 and 3 years, 23% between 3 and 4 years, 8% between 4 and 5 years, and 8% between 5 and 10 years. Time spent within current role, stretched between less than a year, to 4 years, with 31% at less than a year, 23% between 1 and 2 years, 31% between 2 and 3 years, and 15% between 3 and 4 years.

4.2 Attraction factors for Generation Y Axon employees

Figure 9 below shows the combined response by respondents on what factors are important to them when choosing an employer. Respondents were asked to rate the importance of the various factors on a scale from 1 to 4 with 1 being not important at all, and 4 very important.

![Average response on importance of attraction factors](image)

**Figure 9: Average response on importance of attraction factors**

Subsequently, respondents were asked to rank the same factors in order of importance, with 1 being most important, and 10 least important. The combined ranking responses are exhibited in Figure 10.
4.2.1 Corporate Social Responsibility stance

A company’s corporate social responsibility stance was ranked least important in relation to the other attraction factors tested in this study. However, it is still rated between important and very important by 84.6% of the respondents.

The one-on-one interviews revealed varying degrees of familiarity with the term. Most respondents had some idea, but one respondent admitted he had no idea what the term meant, saying “I probably do know what it means – just not in those terms” [P5]. Confusion around the term was further illustrated, when the term ‘triple bottom line’ was used in the discussion by some of the respondents to link only to the profit motive, not including environment or society, as can be seen from P11’s statement: “It’s important to understand that there are things out there that are much bigger than just making money and the triple bottom line.”

Axon has a Corporate Social Investment department, and brought out a CSR (Sustainability) Report in 2009, which is also available on their website. The apparent lack of awareness of
access to this kind of information to the general public and employees, however, was illustrated in the interview by P4 when asked if CSR is something that she takes into account when looking at employers: “It probably would be a consideration, but it’s something that you probably would have to dig for when you are looking at a particular company.”

The one-on-one interviews were aimed at understanding the Generation Y employees’ understanding of the term and their perception of a company’s responsibility towards society and the environment, as well as determining its impact on attraction and retention. It was evident from the interviews that CSR means different things to different people. In general, CSR seemed important to employees, but it was seen more as an afterthought than a driver in attraction. Most respondents seem to see CSR as mainly philanthropic action, and as a cost to the company, not linking it to the core business of the company.

Reference was made to profit-making as a company’s main objective, alluding to the fact that CSR initiatives are not seen as contributing to profit-making, as the following statement illustrates: “Companies need to keep themselves afloat, they can’t just be looking at just pumping the money into communities and into staff ... [they need to look at] what the future cost implication is ... is it feasible?” [P9].

Two respondents had opposing views, however, and saw CSR more integrated in the company’s overall strategy. P1 said: “Corporate governance is looking at the bottom line, and corporate social responsibility is part of it ... with regard to giving back to the community because at the end of the day if it isn’t for the people, how could any business exist?” P12 echoed these sentiments to a degree, including stakeholder engagement in his explanation of CSR: “For me it means liaise with people, not directly with the company, but with the stakeholders of the company. You know, learning more about them, getting involved with them, and see how they can contribute to the company where you are in.” P1 also related CSR directly to the company’s values.

4.2.1.1 Giving back to communities

A primary theme in the CSR discussions was around giving back to the community. A lot of focus was placed on primarily philanthropic acts from the company to worthy causes, as P1 stated: “We have a separate department that looks after only CSR initiatives and from donations to communities.”
Asked to describe what CSR means, P11 said: “It is important that you back the communities.” P3 commented: “I think that a company has a responsibility towards not only the people who work for them, but also towards the communities, for instance whether it’s the [Axon] office here, or the refinery in Durban.” And P2 stated that:

As a corporate citizen, at the end of the day you have to give back. In terms of the country and the world at present; there’s a lot of people that are obviously less fortunate than us, and just as being a good corporate citizen you’ve got to give back. Be involved in outreach programs, community building, community upliftment. At the end of the day, a service station is also the type of product that long term doesn’t benefit the environment. So you’re obviously in this community, it’s noisy, it’s busy, for them to also have the patience with you, you also have to give back.

The notion of creating a mutually beneficial relationship between the company and the community is supported by P12, who said: “I find helping the community very important, because at the end of the day, it’s the community that ... supports you, so it’s almost like I scratch your back, you scratch mine.” It was further supported by P9’s view of CSR as: “Companies [are] looking not just at enriching themselves, but the community as well ... it is your community that builds your company, it’s the client, customer that builds the company. So what can you give back to them?”

Respondents seemed to have a certain level of awareness of the impact that a company like Axon, being in the petroleum industry, has on communities, specifically those around the refinery. As P3 commented: “The communities that live around the refinery ... what are they doing to ensure that you know maintaining standards and improving conditions, so that people around them aren’t affected negatively by refinery emissions and so forth?”

Mention was made of community involvement in refinery projects at the implementation stage, however, it was not clear to what extent the community is involved overall. Mention of community involvement was also made in P10’s comment:

It is important for them to realise that the people that live around that refinery also need to be uplifted in some sort of way. ... And I think they’re fairly visible with their involvement with the people in the community around there. And that’s important, because every year there’s something that happens in that refinery, due to the volatile nature of the industry.

Employee participation in initiatives was appreciated by respondents. Various examples were given from participation in the Big Walk, their market-day initiative where departments
raised funds for a charity of their choice, as well as the support of a local soccer team. P11 described her passion for children and being involved in volunteer programmes, and stated: “[Axon] is involved with quite a bit of groups and involved in their work. So it’s been through [Axon] that I’ve actually had the opportunity to go work in the communities and volunteer programmes.” This comment highlights the value placed by respondents on employees’ involvement within these initiatives, and also extended to employees taking personal responsibility to impact their communities positively.

4.2.1.2 Employee wellness

CSR was seen by employees as not only focussing on the community in which Axon operates, but also their internal employee wellness. This was supported by P4’s explanation of what CSR means to him: “I think corporate social responsibility probably refers to what the company does for society and what it does for its people.” An example was given describing Axon’s promotion of breast cancer awareness month: “So it shows they are conscious of their impact on the environment as well as the employees’ welfare” [P8].

Respondents felt that the focus on employee wellbeing was mutually beneficial: “As every company is dependent on employees. And if you don’t have good functioning employees, your company won’t be successful. So that’s where corporate social responsibility fits in” [P6].

Health and Safety, a very important aspect of CSR, was brought up by many respondents. HSEQ (Health, Safety, Environment and Quality) Standards from the company’s holding company, seem to be driving the focus on Health and Safety. The company performs an audit every second year, making employees very aware of HSEQ requirements, as well as the implications of non-compliance. Respondents saw Axon as having a responsibility to lead by example in this area: “Going into Africa, the infrastructure is not as capable as South Africa’s infrastructure but at the end of the day you still have those expected health and safety standards and if you go into Africa, we should lead by example” [P1].

4.2.1.3 Environmental impact

Respondents seemed less aware of a company’s responsibility towards its impact on the natural environment. Few comments were made on the matter in the general CSR discussion, unless asked directly about it, when the BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico was often referred to.
Emphasis was mainly placed on oil companies not being negligent, taking precaution, and taking responsibility for their actions, as P4 said:

*I think as an oil company you probably have a greater responsibility, especially the upstream oil companies ... because it really has a massive impact on everyone in society if they don’t take proper precaution in doing what they’re supposed to be doing. Just on the BP spill, what happened there is massive, and we’ll only feel the effect, we’ll feel the effects for ever and they’re not even taking responsibility for that at all.*

As with social responsibility, respondents seemed to value employee involvement and acknowledge personal responsibility, as illustrated by P9’s comment: “*Environmental impact is not just the responsibility of the company, but everyone within the company’s responsibility.*”

4.2.1.4 Company reputation

A strong theme which emerged in the discussion about CSR, and also the ethical record of a company, centres around the company’s reputation, and its effect on the employees which include amongst others, their job security.

The link between CSR and reputation is illustrated in the statement: “*End of the day it makes your company look good*” [P12]. One respondent saw the CSR initiatives, in particular the market day, as a pure marketing tool, saying: “*I would see it under marketing. As you see the market perceives you in a certain way, you obviously take advantage of it*” [P5].

The subsequent impact of the company’s reputation on the employee is highlighted in P10’s statement: “*It is important for the company I work for not to be seen publicly in a negative light. So if they’re visible in terms of charity things, you almost feel within yourself, OK, I work for a company that actually cares for other people.*”

The impact of the industry in which the company operates increases the sensitivity around the company’s reputation, as P3 stated: “*especially the product we have, it’s very important. Also the way that you’re perceived from the outside world.*” P7’s comment further highlights the heightened awareness around the industry they are in, saying: “*I would like to be associated with a company that does good to the community ... to show people that it’s not necessarily about the numbers or the units sold, but that there’s also a human touch to the company ... I wouldn’t want to [be employed by] say BP.*” P7’s comment alluded to the fact that following
the BP oil spill, oil companies have received bad publicity, and the subsequent consequences employees have to face, is illustrated in P10’s comment:

*I mean over the last few months it’s been all in the news about what happened with that BP thing and the way that that had an impact on the company. So if a company is responsible, and they do things properly, it ensures that ... there’s not environmental damage, and it’s sustainable for the company, because all of a sudden, people at BP are wondering now, will I have a job tomorrow? And that’s important from a personal job security point of view.*

Respondents acknowledged that consumers are becoming more educated and this will impact business in the long run, placing even more emphasis on company reputation, as P7 stated:

*Environmental factors after awhile will precede quite a number of things and then you’ll find that to be seen as a great company by the public, by the society, will actually help and most companies I think will start spending more on their image: What are we doing to the environment? Do we have parks that we are rehabilitating? Do we have any trees that we helped plant in the communities?*

4.2.1.5 CSR as an afterthought

Even though most employees saw CSR as an important factor, they did not see it as a driving factor when choosing an employer. In asking employees if they would take CSR into consideration when evaluating employers, P11 responded: “Yes I would, but it would be subconscious though. It wouldn’t drive my decision”, and P10: “If it came down to me looking at it in terms of looking at a place to work it would be something in the back of my mind, but it would definitely not be a deal-breaker.”

Some respondents saw it as something that should be part of a company by default: “So if you look at the company from a requirement CSR I always say should be by default instilled in their operation and should be something you can see automatically rather than to go look for. Every company should play a corporate responsible role” [P1]. P3’s views could be described as seeing CSR as a hygiene factor: “I ranked it last, but like I said all of these things are important to me. And personally, a company that does not take corporate social responsibility into account, ... it would count very negatively for me personally.”

Many respondents admitted to looking out for themselves first and therefore rated CSR lower. As P4 said:

*It is possibly very important in the bigger scheme of things, but as a selfish human being, what we all apparently are, that ranks lower. Because the first thing you look*
at is, is this what I want to do? How much am I gonna get paid? What’s the opportunities for growth? Those are the kind of things that I look at. And second to that, is if you’re probably in the organisation, ... you start thinking about social responsibility.

P2 echoed his sentiment, saying:

*I think sometimes initially, you normally look at yourself first, because when you’re looking at the opportunity it’s is there any growth, is the company going to give me anything at the end of the day, some kind of mutually beneficial. So yes, as much as I can say that it’s probably important in the long term, in your initial decision, it might not necessarily be the swaying factor. So it’s a big factor, but not a major contributing factor initially unless they’re really doing something that you think is against my morals.*

One responded felt that CSR is not important to him at all: “*Corporate social responsibility doesn’t faze me,*” adding “*I think people’s perception has changed over the years, the older generation might have had it higher up, because I know people of that age was more like ‘for the company’, whereas people of today, it’s more ‘for myself’.*” [P5]

4.2.1.6 Conclusion

Based on the findings discussed above, CSR is not seen as a primary attraction factor for Generation Y in the sample. It could be seen as a retention factor, since some respondents described CSR as something they will look at once they are within the company, and other factors such as growth opportunities and salary have been satisfied. Mention of CSR in terms of employee wellness and company reputation, shows CSR as a possible indirect attraction and retention factor to respondents in this study, as these themes emerged under the discussions of other attraction factors as well. The findings discussed above, address two of the research questions: ‘What is the significance of CSR for Generation Y when employment options are considered?’ And ‘What is Generation Y’s view on the responsibility of companies towards society and the environment?’

Through the discussion around attraction and retention factors other than CSR, indirect links to CSR emerged. To provide a complete picture of the impact of CSR as an attraction and retention factor both direct and indirect, and address the other research question: ‘What are the motivating factors for Generation Y when evaluating employment options?’ the findings on the other nine factors which were tested are also discussed below.
4.2.2 A chance to learn and develop

A chance to learn and develop is ranked the most important attraction factor for Generation Y Axon employees in this study, and 92% of respondents rated it very important in the survey. It became evident during one-on-one interviews that both personal and professional development are seen as very important. It is also important to note that most respondents take responsibility for their own development and future.

4.2.2.1 Further qualifications, training and mentoring

For respondents in this study, it is important to have the opportunity and support of their employer to further their professional qualifications and be able to meet the requirements from professional bodies, such as the Continuous Professional Development (CPD) points.

Respondents value the opportunity to go on different training programmes, and often enquire about training opportunities prior to accepting job offers. Respondents look towards training to further their technical knowledge of a field, as well as development in terms of softer skills like managerial skill development. Respondents seemed very aware that technical skills are not the only ones required for succeeding in their career. Some respondents placed a lot of value on the opportunity to learn from more experienced employees.

4.2.2.2 Driven

A strong theme around growth and development was the desire to keep on moving and not to stagnate in a role as there’s a desire to “set yourself a target to move up and up and up” [P2]. The respondents are very goal orientated and want a challenging job which “pushes your bounds” [P4]. They also see learning and developing as a crucial part of their career development.

Respondents saw moving into new areas of the business, or new roles as an opportunity to learn and grow. New roles are used as a place to learn as well as a stepping stone for the next position, as P2 said: “So with each new position I’ve taken, that has been my mindset, to use it as a learning tool. And obviously look for growth to the next level.”

4.2.2.3 Staying marketable

One of the main reasons why learning and developing is very important for Generation Y employees in this study is related to the respondents’ desire to stay marketable, and to be able to grab opportunities as they arise. The study showed respondents displaying a strong sense
of personal responsibility for their career paths, with P6 stating: “Each and every individual is responsible for their own success and for their own future.” Respondents saw continuous learning as a way to stay marketable, as can be seen from P8’s comparison of knowledge to technology:

*It’s the same as technology – every time something new comes onto the market, whatever was there previously becomes obsolete. So that’s just the same with your job. If anyone else comes with a better qualification or more recent qualification, with more recent knowledge or when company change, then your knowledge becomes obsolete so you need to keep learning, just keep on your feet so that you’re not going to become obsolete, or your role won’t become obsolete.*

**4.2.2.4 Desire to contribute**

Respondents expressed a desire to know they are contributing positively towards the company, which they felt learning and developing enables. P8 describes what will happen if you’re not learning or developing:

*You will remain stagnant and then I think you get older quicker, and how are you going to benefit the company? And I think I’m just that kind of person, I want to feel useful, I want to feel needed and the only way for me to be useful in that way so that I can do things better, or I am continuously improving myself.*

It’s further supported by P4’s statement that: “You want to know you’re making a difference” and “I’m earning my money for a particular reason, not because I’m just here.” P7 added “No one just likes to be put in an office, just idling, that’s why it’s the most important thing.”

**4.2.3 Opportunity to do work that excites me**

The opportunity to do work that excites me was ranked as the second most important attraction factor by Generation Y Axon employees in this study. Exciting work was often closely linked to the opportunity to learn and develop, which further strengthens the position of ‘a chance to learn and develop’ as the highest ranked attraction factor. Learning new things is seen as exciting and motivating, and keeping you on your toes.

Most respondents summed up their reason for requiring exciting work, to avoid boredom and not to waste their time as they want to contribute to something meaningful. A direct link between exciting work and employee wellness was made by P8. She described the impact of doing work which is not exciting by using an example from her previous job as articles clerk
where she was often ill and had to take sick leave, and contrasting it to her current role, where she hasn’t taken a sick day in a year.

4.2.3.1 Not routine and new experiences

Repetitive, routine jobs were highlighted as very un-exciting jobs, and respondents required something additional or different to their normal day to day activities to break the routine. Some unpredictability in the day “keeps the job interesting, and it keeps it challenging” [P3].

The theme around new experience which was expressed in ‘a chance to learn and develop’ is repeated, as respondents identified new experiences, whether different countries, segments of the business, or aspects of a role as exciting, proving examples of audits in Africa and project work, which keep things interesting.

4.2.3.2 Challenge

Most respondents described exciting work as containing some element of challenge in one way or another, describing exciting work as stretching their limits, stimulating them to think in different ways, and coming up with solutions and improvements. Respondents found it exciting to be given an area of responsibility in which to excel, and once they’ve achieved the goal, to be recognised for it.

4.2.3.3 Rewarding

Many respondents found a job exciting if they feel they are making a contribution to something bigger than themselves, either by excelling in what they do, coming with solutions or improvements, or assisting someone else to succeed. P2 described his job as rewarding when he can help someone else achieve: “That for me is what excites me, that I might be a small part to this person, and help them achieve their targets.” P4’s reward comes from the knowledge of being part of something bigger, when commented that exciting work would be: “Something where it’s not the portion that you’re doing, but you see the big picture, even though you’re just doing a little brick to an entire building.”

4.2.4 Having a job aligned to my talents

There is wide variability in respondents’ perception of the importance of having a job aligned to their talents. Some saw it as very important in order to be passionate and excel by focussing on their strengths. An opposing theme emerged, however, as respondents did not want to be boxed in or limited by what their talents are perceived to be. Some respondents
also felt that they study to have a job which is “something solid to fall back on” [P8]. Consideration is given to their current responsibilities, which sometimes don’t allow them the luxury of having a job that they feel is aligned to their talents and that they are willing to sacrifice it for a job that “feeds the kids and it pays the bills, for now” [P4].

4.2.4.1 Focus on strengths to excel

Some respondents highlighted the benefit of focussing on having a job that matched their strengths, not to waste their talents, and which allows them to excel in that position, as it allows them to feel more confident, and on the front foot. P11 commented: “I think to get the best out of someone, you need to align their job with their talent as well.” Once again, the theme around marketability arose, linking to the discussion around marketability under ‘a chance to learn and develop’, as P10 said: “Having studied to be a CA, I want to do something where I can use those skills that I’ve gained and also improve those skills so that I’m marketable both within [Axon] and outside.”

4.2.4.2 Awareness of capabilities

Respondents were mostly very aware of their capabilities and knew what they are good at. They found it important to have the opportunity to show what they are capable of. Respondents also highlighted the importance of being realistic about their capabilities and matching it to the requirements of a role, not to “bite off more than you can chew” [P10], but also being willing to take up a challenge: “Look at the expectations and from a realistic point of view and then take up the challenge” [P1].

4.2.4.3 Limitations

Respondents identified a fear of becoming stagnant or limited, since they perceive a job aligned to your talents to become less of a challenge over time as it becomes a comfort zone if you stay with things you know. Some respondents also pointed out that they believe you have capabilities and interests in areas beyond your talents, in which you can also perform well. Another concern about being boxed in by your talents, was that it may make respondents less versatile and limit opportunities of learning, as can be seen from P7’s statement: “I don’t want to belong to skilled boxes, that says this is a technical person, this is an engineer, this is an architect. I like to venture out, areas that are new to me, because that’s part of the learning ... I would like to be more versatile.”
4.2.5 Ethical record

Even though ethical record featured third last in the ranking of attraction factors, 100% of respondents rated it important or very important. The most prominent reason given by the respondents for ranking it lower, was because most respondents almost see it as a given.

In the discussion around ethics, many of the same themes from the CSR discussion emerged, such as company reputation, the focus on employee welfare and the expectation that it should be part of the organisation at default.

A company’s ethical record was described as “doing things in the right way” [P10], and as with CSR were closely linked to the company’s values or principles as P1 said: “A lot of it is entrenched in its values.”

4.2.5.1 Fair labour practice

Fair labour practice was identified as a theme of ethical behaviour which respondents valued. Emphasis was placed on avoiding exploitation, adhering to rules, ensuring no favouritism is being practised and following South African labour standards and procedures in termination of work contracts. P5 provided an example of an ex-employer whom he felt exploited people: “If you just exploit people, that’s also unethical, so I would expect them to treat me fairly, acknowledge my skills, acknowledge my work, accordingly.”

4.2.5.2 Personal values

Respondents saw a close link between ethical behaviour and personal values, morals or principles. They saw ethical behaviour as starting at home, and spilling over into work, based on how they were brought up. P7 summarised ethics as: “Where you stand morally with regard to what is perceived to be acceptable, and what’s not acceptable.”

4.2.5.3 Company reputation and the influence of the media

There was strong awareness of the impact of a poor ethical record on the reputation of the company, as well as the implications thereof on employees, as was also seen with CSR. Mention was also made of the speed of information flow, which increases the impact of exposed unethical behaviour on company reputation. As P1 said: “Should anything fraudulent or unethical happen within any organisation, those things come out immediately, and influence the perception as information flows ... again it comes back to the perception of
any company out there, whatever they do, how does it impact the image also.” The impact of the media is described by P8 when she said:

> It would depend if they were in the media recently regarding illegal activities or suspicious activities. And obviously you don’t want to be involved in a company that has been negatively publicised. Whether it’s true or not, cause the fact that it’s there, you don’t know.

The importance of a good ethical record was based on the respondents valuing the trust their stakeholders have in them as a company, highlighting the fact that the perception stakeholders have of the company will influence their willingness to engage in business with the company.

The impact of a company’s negative ethical record was identified as being negative for the personal reputation of the employees, as well as a potential threat to job security, as can be seen in P2’s comment: “Ethical record is very important. Thing with an ethical record is, if a company has a poor ethical record, your job security is not great in the sense that the door is always open for them to do something that can compromise the entire company.”

To illustrate the impact of company reputation on the employee, P9 used BP as an example, saying:

> If it’s a bad perception, you’re basically branded with that bad perception. You as an employee ... for instance BP. They went through that whole PR stuff up with that oil spill. What was people’s reaction when that happened? They branded BP. And if you’re an employee of BP, even though it’s not your fault, you have that branding hanging over your head. You’re working for a company that is polluting the environment.

Not all respondents saw a company’s reputation in the media as impacting negatively on their decision whether or not to work for the company. Also using BP as an example, P11’s response was the opposite of P9’s: “I won’t be dealing with a company that’s involved with illegal doings on a regular basis, but ... a place like BP, I would go work for BP. Regardless of what their image is like portrayed now because of the oil spill in Mexico ... oil spills happen.”

4.2.5.4 Default

As with CSR, most respondents expected the company they work for to have a good ethical record, almost at default, as P11 said: “It is very important, but once again, it’s like the CSI
component. You think about it, but it’s at a subconscious level.” P3’s statement enhanced that idea: “The reason why I also think it’s important, but ranked it further down, is because I would expect it. So I would almost not even want it on here as a consideration, because you would want a company to have that.” P2 saw an ethical record not as a driving factor, but aware of the potential negative impacts a bad ethical record can have on him as employee, something to take into consideration, saying: “It’s not your driving factor when looking for a job, but it’s something to be wary of.”

4.2.6 Good chances of promotion

Good chances of promotion were rated as very important by 100% of respondents. Most respondents saw promotion as acknowledgement of their performance or value to the company. This in turn motivates them to perform better, as well as being an opportunity to learn and grow. P7 felt strongly that without the chance of promotion, which she sees as a measure of growth, she will eventually leave the organisation, saying: “Promotion could be a measure of growth, because if you’re not being promoted, you’ve reached your corporate limit, your growth is being stunted. And if there’s no growth, after a while I will leave.”

Some respondents acknowledged limited promotional opportunities within Axon, as they found Axon’s structure quite hierarchical. People get stuck in roles, with limited opportunity for younger people to move into those positions. However, they felt comfortable with a lateral move instead of a traditional promotion into their superior’s position, as long as they see the value of the learning experience.

Most respondents expect promotion as part of their career plan, and investigate the “natural line of promotion” [P9] within a company, as part of their employer evaluation stage, prior to accepting a new job. As one respondent said, climbing the ladder is very important as “you don’t want to stay at the bottom all the time” [P12].

As was discussed under ‘a chance to learn and develop’, most respondents seem to take responsibility for their own development plan, making sure they differentiate themselves and stay as marketable as possible to be considered for promotional positions.

4.2.6.1 BEE and Office Politics

Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) as well as office politics were raised by some respondents as limiting their opportunities of promotion, as can be seen from the following comments by P9 and P6:
It comes down to office politics ..., the other factor that people overlook is BEE. Not that I’m being funny, but if a person is capable of doing a job, you do the job, you get the job. If you’re not capable of doing the job, then I don’t see why you should be put in there just because of colour. I think we’re way past the stage of colour [P9].

Promotion to me is really important. Currently based on BEE, as a coloured man, I don’t think promotions will take place quite easily, due to black females within the organisation. So I personally feel that from promotional point of view if one can eliminate the BEE status, and just chose the person from his background, and from his ethical status and job satisfaction and how he can perform with his duties, for me that is how promotion should take place [P6].

4.2.6.2 Time expected to be in a role

The overall time respondents expected to be in a role, ranged from 2 to 5 years, depending on the nature and level of the role. Most respondents also preferred to stay with one organisation for an extended period of time, as long as they see learning and growth opportunities, as it provided them with a sense of security.

4.2.7 An opportunity to use initiative

All respondents expressed a desire to have the opportunity to use initiative, and all respondents rated it between important and very important. They see taking initiative as the freedom to think, pre-empting problems, finding solutions, making improvements and making decisions. They want to have the freedom to be creative, the autonomy to make decisions, take responsibility for the decisions they make, and use it to learn from and grow. They identified the requirement to have the support and trust from their manager and the business to be able to do it. P10 summed up why he felt the company required people who take initiative to reach their goals, saying: “You need people who can think a bit wider than just those that would just sit and carry on doing their work. They need someone that is a bit more forward thinking, and maybe can see the bigger picture as well.”

Most respondents were also aware of the responsibility that comes with taking the initiative and making decisions, as P2 said:

For me initiative is aligned with that freedom and then obviously taking the consequences of it ... having to think on your own two feet and to stand by your decision ... If it works, you look like a hero, if it doesn’t you have to face the consequences that unfortunately you made a bad call, but you learn from it.
Being allowed initiative was seen by respondents as being trusted by the company and their managers.

### 4.2.7.1 Obstacles to taking initiative

The major obstacles to taking initiative, identified by respondents, were the management style of their managers, as well as a perception of older people being stuck in their ways, seen in P1’s comment: “If your boss allows you to apply those initiatives, then it becomes easier. If your boss doesn’t like the idea, and shoots it down, then it becomes difficult in applying yourself to new initiatives.” Another respondent felt the only way to get her ideas heard is to sell it as if it’s her manager’s idea.

Alluding to a potential generation gap, P1 identified a barrier to initiative as complacency by a certain age group, stating:

> Unfortunately, there’s an age group also that might be complacent with how things have been done ... You come with ideas, that might be a concern to us, and we have the energy to apply ourselves to it, but we know the stumbling blocks come from people that are maybe more complacent, people that don’t like working that hard or that fast because everything’s fine, why do you actually want to go that route?

### 4.2.8 Good job security

Good job security was rated as very important by 100% of respondents. Most respondents made reference to the tough economic conditions of the time and the impact it has on them, and therefore value the peace of mind job security provides, as P3 says: “Just a good state of mind, that you know that you will be able to see to your responsibilities financially.”

Respondents required job security in order to meet their responsibilities, as many respondents have dependants which they support. Some also made reference to the desire to maintain a certain lifestyle. Permanent positions were seen as ensuring better job security than contract positions. Having a secure job was valued as creating a sense of belonging.

Some respondents had a negative perception towards job-hopping, seeing it as a sign of instability, and desire job security in order to stay with one employer and develop a career within one industry.

One respondent, P4, who believes there is no such thing as job security, saw it in a negative light as limiting her freedom, saying:
No one has security of tenure, that doesn’t exist. So I think as soon as you accept the fact that you can be replaced and that you are replaceable, you actually be a better person in an organisation. Don’t stick yourself to glue to a particular organisation. Because you also limit your growth by doing that. I want a degree of security, but I don’t want to feel so secure that I’m on a plateau all my life, because I’m so secure in my job. I don’t want that, I want a push to deliver and excel, I don’t want a job where for the next 30 years I’m going to be in this role. No, I want an opportunity to look for another job if I need to.

4.2.8.1 Recession impact

The impact of the current economical downturn came up in most of the interviewees’ responses as to why job security is important to them. They felt threatened by job cuts made in other businesses, and felt some comfort in Axon, feeling it’s more stable or insulated from that, which provided them with comfort and proof that the company looks after its staff members.

4.2.8.2 Responsibilities

There was a strong theme around having the responsibility to support themselves, and often other dependents with their salary: “There’s a lot of people that rely on me, so it’s not like this job is just for me. I’m putting food on someone else’s table at the moment too” [P7]. The responsibility of servicing debt, car and bond, was also highlighted. Respondents raised the fact that the importance of job security change for them based on their age and phase of life they are in, becoming more important as they grow older and start to have a family.

4.2.9 Pleasant people to work with

Although pleasant people to work with was the second last ranked factor, all respondents rated it between important and very important. The response to this factor was driven by a strong distinction between respondents who were more people focused, and others who were more task focussed.

The stronger people-orientated group linked the company’s performance directly to its people, stating: “What makes a company is the people” [P7], and “We at [Axon], we believe working with people, working with pleasant people is one of the key factors towards being a successful company as well” [P6].

Other respondents focussed less on people and more on the task, commenting: “Coming to work, you’ve got a requirement, and that is to get the job done. To include people as a
priority, then what is the focus?” [P1]. P12 echoed it, saying: “You’re not going to work to be looking to and talking to people, you’re going to work to do your job to do your function. You determine how you work, not other people.”

4.2.9.1 Better functioning work teams

Most respondents wanted a “friendly work environment” [P11], and respondents seemed to agree that while you spend so many hours at work, pleasant people to work with make life easier. It was also seen as important to have pleasant, approachable people to work with, as it enables learning from others, and the opportunity to grow, as P8 said: “People need to be approachable in order for you to be able to ask questions, so that you can get further in your role ... [and] do your job.”

4.2.9.2 Manage diversity

Overall, most respondents seemed to be quite at ease working with diverse people and personalities. Most accepted it as part of work, and just something that needs to be managed: “People have different cultures, attitudes, etcetera, and you just have to find a way to work around those things ... staff might be coming with their own styles, it’s just how you use that—what they have to give—to apply themselves to the job” [P1]. P9 echoed that, saying: “People are different every day ... You still need to perform no matter what, so you need to deal with that person ... most of all you need to manage it.”

4.2.9.3 Increase productivity

Working with pleasant people was seen to increase productivity and performance, of the individual as well as the team, as P3 said: “I think that’s quite nice that you can actually get along with people, you’re more productive, you get to think more, do your work together.”

Unpleasant people are seen to reduce job satisfaction, and ultimately performance of the company as a whole, as can be seen from P2’s comment:

Key why you want a pleasant environment, is to get the best out in people personally, and probably those around you. If you’re in an environment where you know it’s rigid, people don’t laugh, don’t smile, your performance and motivation will be mirroring what your work environment is ... So you want to have a pleasant environment, ... [the] company’s not going to be productive if its workforce is unhappy and there’s a whole lot of unpleasant people around.
4.2.10 Known to pay well

Known to pay well was rated 2 places below job security. In the interviews, it became even more evident that even though all respondents wanted a good salary, it was more important to them to have job security. Talking about getting the job at Axon, P8 said: “When I received the job, I didn’t think about if I was well paid or market related salary at all, the driving factors for me was the job security.”

A strong theme around being grateful for what you have surfaced in the discussions as well. Most respondents expected a fair pay, based on the market average, their qualification and experience, and saw it as recognition for their hard work. Many respondents also highlighted the fact that they don’t make their decision on money alone, but various other factors also come into play, such as work-life balance and benefits that the company offers. P12 felt strongly that the most important thing is to follow a job that is your passion, and that: “The salary is just the bonus.”

4.2.10.1 Recognition of worth

Respondents saw a good salary, as recognition of their work, and what they are worth to the company, as P3 said: “If people are performing well, and people are important to your company, then you should reward them accordingly.” Various ‘value-adding’ aspects on which remuneration should be based were mentioned, such as qualification, contribution to the workplace, performance, hard work and working long hours.

4.2.10.2 More than just money

Although money was important, various other factors were also mentioned to play a role when looking at a company’s reward structure. Work-life balance was mentioned often: “What’s the sense in earning good money if you working yourself like a slave, and you can’t enjoy life itself” [P1]. Some other factors that were mentioned which respondents valued, but felt you can’t put a price on, were flexibility around family emergencies or family responsibilities, a dynamic environment, educational assistance, children educational assistance, maths and science programmes for employees’ children, housing subsidies, and work experience.

Travelling options were seen as a very attractive benefit, and respondents therefore valued the international affiliation Axon has with its holding company, as it provides options for travelling and experiencing work in other areas.
4.2.10.3 Being grateful

As part of the discussion, the theme about being grateful for what you have, and an awareness of others being less fortunate, emerged. P1 felt: “Sometimes you just have to accept and be grateful if you have a job that pays a salary, versus people who are unemployed, and not earning a decent salary and working even harder.” P9 felt the same, saying: “Money could’ve been worse ... could’ve had nothing, that’s my view.” P2 concluded the discussion around pay, saying: “As long as I can take care of my family, and still walk away with a bit. ... I think just having a job at the moment ..., there’s so many people out there studying and sitting without work, so just to have a job I say thank you.”

4.2.11 Other factors

Additional factors which were mentioned in the interviews are discussed below:

4.2.11.1 Flexibility

Linking to work-life balance, respondents appreciated the standard working hours, limited required overtime and flexibility of working hours, enjoying not taking work home. Some would like more flexible working hours, or the option to work from home, without increasing the total work hours in the week, and see the current requirement to be in the office as very traditional: “Somehow companies are still very traditional in the way they operate, and you have to arrive here at a certain time, and be here a particular time to validate your existence within the organisation” [P4]. P5 explains how flexibility will enhance his sense of achievement, saying: “If you have the flexibility of doing it in your own time, and managing it by yourself, it’s more satisfying, because you’ve achieved something doing it that way. It’s a personal achievement, not just the company’s achievement. You did it.”

4.2.11.2 Location

The employer’s location was highlighted as important, and linked to work-life balance or the lifestyle it allows, by reducing travel time, and thereby increasing personal time.

4.2.11.3 Company employees

Getting insight into your potential work team and manager came up as information respondents would like to have, prior to accepting a job at a company, with P4 saying: “The cliché that says you leave a manager not a job is very, very true.” P7 focussed more on his work team, wanting to know the calibre or skills profile of people he will be working with as
well as their age range, saying: “I would like to be working with the best brains in SA. I wouldn’t like to go to a company where I’m the highest ranking qualification, I’m the only person with a degree, and when I get there, the age average is about 43.”

4.2.11.4 Brand

Company brand, linked to brand perception, was an important attraction factor to P10:

*One thing, for me when I came to [Axon], was the brand. It’s almost you feel more comfortable if it’s a household name that you are going to work for ... It just feels different to work for a place where people know what they do, and this is probably where you fit in. ... It also comes with the fact the [Axon] is the market leader for petroleum in SA. So that’s also something that played in my mind: if they are doing things to get to that position, then it’s something I would like to work for, because it’s probably quite competitive there and also they focus on being good at what they do, so that’s important to me, that’s for sure.*

4.2.12 Conclusion

The main factors which play a role in the attraction and retention of Generation Y employees at Axon were addressed in this section. The impact of the company’s Corporate Social Responsibility stance, was firstly discussed, and even though it was seen as a less important factor by respondents, various themes which emerged in the discussion of the other factors identified as important attraction and retention factors could be indirectly linked to CSR. To fully explore the role CSR plays in attraction and retention both directly and indirectly, the other factors were therefore discussed in the second part of this chapter.

**CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH**

5 Research conclusions and further research

5.1 Introduction

The aim of the study was to determine what the motivating factors are in the attraction and retention of Generation Y employees, and whether a company’s CSR stance plays a role. As explored in the literature study, the impact of CSR on attraction can be twofold. On the one hand, job seekers may be drawn to a company which has proclaimed itself socially responsible, and a company’s CSR stance will therefore directly influence the job seekers’ decision-making process, as supported by Strautmanis (2008, p. 248) who noted:
According to the research on the correlation between the implemented practice of the corporate social responsibility and appeal of the enterprise on the labor market (Backhaus et al., 2002), labor relations, relations with the society, environment protection and quality of the production are found at the top of the job seekers’ priorities. Moreover, these are mentioned as the main criteria for choosing the place of employment.

On the other hand, Bhattacharya et al. (2008) found companies are using CSR tactics as part of their strategy to win the war for talent, by improving the workplace, for instance by undertaking ethical practices in employment and labour, thereby indirectly influencing job seekers’ attraction to the company. By operating in a socially responsible manner, the company goes beyond merely fulfilling its legal obligations, by increasing investment in human capital and focussing on stakeholder relations, which includes it contributing to the welfare and interests of staff and the community (Terry, 2010). The relationship with staff includes “such factors as working conditions, training, employee relations, and health and safety” and in South Africa specifically it also includes “employment equity and broad-based black economic empowerment programmes” (Terry, 2010, p. 18).

### 5.2 CSR’s direct impact on attraction and retention

Based on the results of this study, it became evident that even though most respondents felt that CSR is important, they did not see it as a direct driving force in their choice of employer. There was also a lot of uncertainty among respondents about the term and various interpretations of its meaning, which might have influenced its rating. As stated in the literature review, CSR means different things to different people. Ackers (2009, p. 4) found people attach different meanings to socially responsible corporate behaviour in different places or at different times; some people see CSR in an ethical sense, others as legal responsibility or liability, causal responsibility, simply benevolence or philanthropy, or some see it as a mere synonym for “legitimacy”. In essence, for this research the term CSR refers to everything which impacts the sustainability of the company.

The primary understanding of CSR in the study was around giving back to the community, followed by employee wellness, and little mention was made of the company’s impact on the natural environment. In describing giving back to the community, some focus was placed on philanthropic actions of giving money to good causes, such as charities of choice. It was also seen as a cost to the company, not linking it to the core business of the company, aligning with some of the criticism of CSR that Hamann, Agbazue, Kapelus & Hein (2005, p. 4) also
picked up on, stating: “CSI is easily criticized for its “add-on” nature, without much influence on companies’ core business.”

Some respondents took it further than philanthropy and saw the community as a stakeholder, and therefore saw the management of that relationship being mutually beneficial, based on the impact the community has on the company in terms of, *inter alia*, its licence to operate.

Employee wellness was described by identifying the interrelational dependence of both sides, highlighting the fact that the company needs a productive workforce, which in return requires and a safe and healthy workplace. Respondents highlighted issues such as fair labour practice and HSEQ, which links directly with Campbell’s (2007, p. 950) measure of CSR as “how the corporation treats its employees with respect to wages, benefits, and levels of workplace safety.”

The focus on environment was largely based on the impact irresponsible behaviour can have on the company’s reputation, which also influences the employees’ personal reputation.

The fact that most respondents saw CSR as an afterthought can be partially linked to the limited scope respondents used to define CSR, without being aware of the full umbrella of its aspects. For example, the fact that something such as total stakeholder awareness, which is core to CSR, is also the key to the company’s sustainability and would provide respondents with job security, a factor they rated highly. Another consideration is that employees might be taking CSR for granted, and that there is not enough focus placed by the company on how it communicates its CSR stance to employees, as Pinkess (2008, p. 39) found:

> It is not enough just to have a CSR programme to impress employees. Staff now take this for granted. Employers need to work harder to find activities that really resonate with their people. On top of that, they need to get the communications tone exactly right.

Some respondents’ direct admission of looking out for themselves first, however, might disprove Erickson’s (2008) statement that Generation Y is the most socially conscious generation since the 1960s.

### 5.3 CSR’s indirect impact on attraction and retention

One definition of CSR, as defined in the literature study by Smith (2007), is the company’s consideration of its various stakeholders of which the employees are one. Stakeholder theory implies that in return for their productivity, organisations will provide employees with good
working conditions and fair pay, which were found to be attraction factors, showing an indirect link between CSR and employee retention and attraction.

Some of the factors highlighted in the findings as attraction and retention factors for employees are also indirectly linked to CSR under the broader umbrella, as can be seen in Figure 11, which shows the cyclical matrix of CSR. Kanji & Chopra (2010, p.121) used this figure to conceptualise CSR as an integral component of the company:

CSR (also known as corporate social performance, sustainable business, sustainable responsible business, corporate responsibility, corporate citizenship, responsible business) is an integral component of the operations of a company whereby it voluntarily contributes to society in terms of economic, environmental, ethical and social investment.

This shows that respondents’ requirements highlighted as attraction factors, based on workplace and market place requirements primarily, also form part of a company’s overall CSR stance.

![Figure 11: Cyclical matrix of corporate social responsibility](Source: Kanji & Chopra, 2010, p. 121)

The findings on the other attraction and retention factors which were tested in this research will now be discussed. As most of the factors also had an indirect relation to CSR, this will be identified by describing on the one hand the factor’s impact on the company’s CSR stance,
otherwise known as sustainable business (or sustainability) (Kanji & Chopra, 2010), and on the other, the impact on employee attraction and retention, as they often go hand in hand.

5.3.1 A chance to learn and develop

A productive workforce lies at the core of the company’s sustainability as without employees, the company will not be able to produce the products and services the market requires. To ensure a productive workforce, the company therefore needs to understand what attracts and retains highly productive employees. Porter and Kramer (2002, as cited in Peloza & Falkenberg, 2009, p. 97) argue that in linking social and financial objectives “a firm can gain economic returns by tackling social and environmental issues that in turn provide advantages for the firm, such as a better educated workforce or a healthier community economy”.

An opportunity to learn and grow was not only rated the highest attraction factor, but much of the motivation behind the rankings of other factors, such as ‘exciting work’ also revolved around the desire to develop and grow. Personal as well as professional growth was seen as important. Many respondents also identified the desire of having the opportunity for personal development through training, mentoring, learning from others and new experiences. Linking learning and CSR, Strautmanis (2008, p. 358) found that “lifelong learning is an important condition for the facilitation of the entire concept of corporate social responsibility”. The author further identified company-organised training as one way to accomplish this and grouped value orientations which have a high degree of impact in the formation and improving conditions of CSR as “human relationship; involvement; personal development; orientation to quality; professionalism.”

By providing employees the opportunity to learn and grow, a higher skilled and motivated workforce is ensured which would be able to increase the productivity of the company. The current talent pool for the industry the company is in, is very limited, especially locally. The company’s focus on continued education of its current workforce as well as providing bursaries for non-employees in specific fields of study, which forms part of their CSR strategy, is crucial to ensure a sufficient skills pool from which the company can source in order to attain its growth goals, thereby not only increasing productivity, but also ensuring sustainability of the overall company operations.

This highly skilled workforce is also required to identify the opportunities, as well as manage the risks brought on by the rapidly changing environment businesses are operating in today,
and therefore key to the sustainability of an organisation. This is echoed in the company’s Managing Director and CEO’s foreword in their Sustainability Report (Axon Limited, 2009):

The global energy-supply landscape is continually changing and we will strive to adapt to these changes and embrace them. An ongoing process of dialogue with our stakeholders is fundamental to ensuring we are able to respond strategically to evolving risks and opportunities.

Marketability was also a key theme in the desire to have the opportunity to learn and grow, supporting D'Amato & Herzfeldt's (2008 p. 935) finding which also links it to employee retention:

Learning and development have now a vital importance for the youngest generations to decide to stay in their present working environment. Younger generations, as stated in the introduction, have a continuous need for development in order to remain “marketable” as well as eventually to prepare for the next step of their career in consequence of the turbulence of the job market and the instability of careers and careers tracks.

5.3.2 Opportunity to use initiative

Generation Y’s desire to be able to use initiative or freedom to perform, as Eisner (2005) described it, became evident in this study. Respondents saw the opportunity to use initiative as seeing the bigger picture, being more forward-looking, improving things, pre-empting what would be needed, foreseeing problems and finding solutions to problems. As the world is changing, old solutions will not work for new problems, and initiative as described by respondents is therefore required to manage a company’s risks and identify opportunities, which in turn is crucial to its long-term sustainability.

Utting (2005, as cited in Barkemeyer, 2009) highlighted a central issue in the adoption of CSR as a risk-management tool. Another aspect of risk management is good governance, ensuring capable people in key roles and clear distinction of responsibilities. The respondents showed that they see the opportunity to use initiative as the trust the company places in them to make decisions, but were also aware of the responsibility that comes with it, and were willing to take it as part of the package. As Generation Y “are seen to value having responsibility and having input into decisions and actions” (McCrindle & Hooper, 2006, as cited in Wong et al., 2008), providing employees with the opportunity to use their initiative as part of its CSR can further enhance the company’s attraction and retention of this generation.
5.3.3 Having a job aligned to my talents

In the discussion about ‘having a job aligned to my talents’, some respondents identified the desire to have the opportunity to excel in their strengths. From a governance perspective, with employees specialising in certain fields, this can enhance the company’s ability to manage its risks and opportunities. By also providing some respondents with the opportunity to move around and not be limited to one area, which addresses their fear of being boxed in, can make them more adaptable and flexible and able to change as the world around them changes, ensuring long-term sustainability of the company, as well as the retention of employees.

5.3.4 Opportunity to do work that excites me

As seen in the discussion of the findings, a major theme of doing a job that is exciting revolved around employees wanting a challenge, which echoes Eisner's (2005, p. 6) finding that “Gen Y is likely to perform best when its abilities are identified and matched with challenging work that pushes it fully.” Providing employees with the opportunity to do work which they found exciting, was also directly linked to employee wellness, which is part of CSR, for example one respondent’s reduction in sick leave since she’s been in a more exciting role.

The challenging aspect of work which respondents described as exciting was based on solving problems, and closely linked to learning or development opportunities, as well as the ability to take initiative. To be able to reach its Vision 2016, the company has highlighted the need for employees who are ready to take up the challenge. By providing employees with the opportunity to be part of it, they will not only be able to learn and grow from the challenge, but will also be motivated and engaged in helping the company reach its objective, and therefore increase employee retention.

Respondents didn’t want to waste their time doing something they are not passionate about; they want to be part of something significant, supporting Eisner's (2005) finding that Generation Y is attracted to work which they perceive as meaningful and which improves the world. This theme also emerged in the discussion around learning and development, as respondents wanted to make a difference and contribute positively towards the company. Respondents identified the reward of doing exciting work as being part of something bigger, helping others achieve and excel, showing their desire to be part of the challenge of developing South Africa, which is core to the company’s CSR stance.
5.3.5 Ethical Record

There is a direct link between CSR and ethics, as described by Strautmanis (2008, p. 348):

Corporate social responsibility can be as well referred to as business ethics because the strategy of the corporate social responsibility and the Code of Ethics or Conduct determines the attitude of the enterprise to its shareholders and stakeholders.

It therefore comes as no surprise that the same themes emerged in the discussion around ethics, as did around CSR – for instance the focus on company reputation, employee welfare and the expectation that it should be part of the organisation by default. The respondents’ requirement of fair labour practices is a direct requirement of a socially responsible company.

Respondents placed significant focus on the impact of ethics on the company’s reputation. There was also major awareness of the impact the media has on the spread of information and therefore company reputation. In discussion with the company’s communications department on why they engage in CSR initiatives, a major consideration was reputation management, especially given the industry they are in. The link between CSR and reputation was also highlighted by Peloza & Falkenberg (2009, p. 97) who found that “CSR can lead to an enhanced reputation that makes the firm more attractive to customers and is helpful in attracting and maintaining a more productive, high-quality workforce” as well as by Ackers (2009) who argued that the reduction of transaction costs, through risk and reputation management, are the most dominant aspect of the CSR business case.

Another aspect mentioned was the desire to work for a company with a well-respected brand. The brand image of a company closely links to the company reputation and impression, and as Pinkess (2008, p. 39) pointed out: “(i)nevitably, the CSR and employee brand agendas are going to overlap and if handled skilfully, they can definitely help to improve recruitment and retention performance.” Strautmanis (2008, p. 348) summarises the link between long-term profits and a favourable impression by stakeholders on the company as follows:

One of the arguments in favor of the corporate social responsibility is the fact that successfully implemented strategy by the enterprise, for example, improvement of the living and work conditions of the employees, produces favorable economical effect on the enterprise itself, and promotion of public welfare provides favorable grounds for entrepreneurship. Consequently: successful implementation of the corporate social responsibility helps the stakeholders (employees, society as such, suppliers, etc.) to develop a good impression of the enterprise. This creates a positive long-term image of the enterprise, increases its value and forecasts bigger profits in the future.
5.3.6 Good chances of promotion

The respondents placed high value on the opportunity for promotion as they see it as an opportunity for growth as well as recognition of being valued by the company. Respondents enquired about promotional opportunities during job interviews, highlighting the importance thereof for employee attraction. The company has aligned itself to this by implementing a talent management system which they felt they needed to reach their 2016 goal. The respondents found this recognition highly motivational, which in turn will lead to increased performance and productivity towards the organisation. In this research, respondents were very loyal to their employer, and willing to stay with the organisation, as long as they see opportunities to learn and grow. They see promotion as providing them with those opportunities, without which they’ll leave the organisation, directly linking it with retention.

To maintain a stable and engaged workforce, which the company requires, it will need to ensure enough focus is placed on this aspect as well.

As identified earlier, Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) plays a role as part of South African companies’ socially responsible behaviour, with Hamann, Agbazue, Kapelus, & Hein (2005, p. 4) identifying that:

South Africa’s history and the resulting socioeconomic challenges influence the definition of CSR, its motivating forces, and its implementation. This legacy includes racially skewed participation and ownership of the economy, structural unemployment, widespread poverty, and low levels of education and training,

with Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) being the most prominent South African CSR concept. Based on discussions with the company’s communications officer, as well as from their Sustainability and Annual Report for 2009, it is evident that BEE is high on its agenda. The only mention of BEE by respondents, however, was in a negative light, identifying the complexity of the problem and the tension that can exist in trying to adhere to conflicting requirements from stakeholders. In the interview, some respondents saw the company’s BEE policy as a direct threat to their chances of promotion and felt that it de-motivates them, as they felt promotion should be based purely on performance.

The value respondents placed on promotion, as well as their enquiries regarding promotional opportunities at recruitment stage, indicates its importance in the retention and attraction of employees. These findings are also supported by Wong et al. (2008, p. 887) who found that “Gen Ys also tended to be more motivated by career progression and advancement than the
other generation cohorts.” Taking this into consideration, the company would need to be resourceful overcoming potential conflict between the progression needs of all employees and their BEE requirements.

5.3.7 Pleasant people to work with

Generation Y is attracted to a pleasant work environment which enables better and more productive teamwork. Eisner (2005) also found Gen Y values teamwork and is likely to equate job satisfaction with a positive work climate. As Generation Y is more open than previous generations to leave their job for something better, ensuring job satisfaction is key to employee retention.

Another aspect of BEE, a South African CSR initiative, is the aim to increase diversity in the workplace. Based on respondents’ inputs in the discussion around working with pleasant people, most respondents seemed very comfortable working with diverse people, and were able to manage it well.

As Simons (2010, p. 31) also found Generation Y to be typically team-oriented, working well in groups, and “preferring team over individual endeavours” by ensuring Generation Y is placed in pleasant work teams, and trained in managing the work team diversity, companies will be able to increase worker engagement which in turn will increase worker retention, at the same time meeting their CSR objective of increasing diversity in the workplace.

5.3.8 Job security and known to pay well

Even though the responses partially supported Hurst & Good’s (2009) finding that recruitment strategies towards Generation Y employees need to be focussed more on creating an environment for development and growth than relying on traditional pay, benefits and job security, the latter was still valued very highly by most respondents and should therefore not be neglected. Eisner’s (2005, p. 11) comment that “GenY workers tend to distrust long-term job security” was supported by only one respondent, P4, who believes there is no such thing as job security, and saw it in a negative light as limiting her freedom.

Earning the biggest salary was not seen as the most important factor and respondents identified that there were more important things for them than money. Earning a salary and having a sense of job security was very important to them, however, supporting Dries et al. (2008) who found security (not stability) as one of Generation Y’s job-related values. The
finding that Generation Y does not value stability was also supported, as respondents highlighted the fact that they do not want to stagnate.

It can be argued that in order to have long-term job security, the company needs to be sustainable, and therefore CSR is crucial in delivering this requirement of respondents. Respondents’ desire for a decent salary is directly linked to socially responsible behaviour as defined by Campbell (2007, p. 950): “that which provides the corporation’s employees with a decent living wage relative to local costs of living as determined by some independent organization, such as the United Nations.”

As many of the respondents alluded to the fact that responsibilities towards dependents are driving their desire for job security, by providing them with the security, the company is also acting in a socially responsible manner by looking after more than just the direct employee, but also their families and other dependants.

As a part of the discussion around being paid well, respondents identified their gratitude for the position they are in to be able to earn a salary, showing sympathy towards people in a less fortunate position. Strautmanis (2008) found that the conditions under which CSR develops are a strong orientation towards personal and society benefiting values which form organisational culture, specifically values such as tolerance, sympathy and empathy. These values seemed to be expressed by respondents, showing positive conditions for CSR to develop further within the organisation.

In the discussion around ‘known to pay well’, respondents highlighted the fact that they take many other factors into account, over and above salary. One of the themes which emerged was the desire to have flexibility and work-life balance. This supports Eisner's (2005, p. 11) finding that many Generation Y’s “have developed a work-to-live rather than live-to-work mindset that spills over into valuing the quality of the work environment as well as work-life balance.” As a socially responsible organisation, allowing workers a well-balanced lifestyle enhances employee wellness, which in return will increase employer productivity as well as retention.

5.4 Summary

The discussion addressed the direct as well as the indirect impact CSR has on the attraction and retention of Generation Y employees. A model developed by the researcher presented in Figure 12 graphically displays the indirect impact CSR has on the attraction and retention of
Generation Y employees at Axon based on the mutually beneficial stakeholder relationship between the company and the employee, as discussed in the various attraction and retention factors above.

On the left hand side, the model identifies the indirect benefit of CSR to the employer found in the attraction and retention factors which were tested by the researcher. On the right hand side, the indirect benefit of CSR to the employee is identified for the same factors, enhancing attraction and retention. For instance, by channelling resources into employee education and training, which is seen as socially responsible behaviour by the company, the company benefits from a better educated workforce, which leads to increased sustainable performance by a more productive workforce, at the same time employees have the benefit of personal growth and increased marketability, which attracts and retains them.

Figure 12: Indirect impact of CSR on employee attraction and retention
(Source: Pienaar, 2010)
It is clear that implicit in respondents’ discussions of other factors, CSR plays a major role. There seems to be a gap in the understanding around the principles of CSR, however, which limits its scope. For the company to benefit more from its CSR strategy in terms of attraction and retention of employees, they need to place more focus on communication with their stakeholders. Communication needs to take place internally – with their employees in terms of what they are doing – as well as externally to incorporate CSR into its employer brand. In the race to win the war for talent and increase their attraction and retention of Generation Y employees, the company can differentiate itself based on its CSR stance and become an even stronger employer of choice, especially if they align their CSR focus with the values expressed by this generation. As Westerman & Yamamura (2007, p.151) point out:

Ultimately, all organizations are influenced by the values and preferences of their next generation ... Failure on the part of managers to understand and adjust appropriately to generational differences and the demands of new generations entering the workplace can result in misunderstandings, miscommunications, and mixed signals (Fyock, 1990), and can affect employee productivity, innovation, and corporate citizenship (Kupperschmidt, 2000), ultimately resulting in problems with employee retention and turnover.

5.5 Future research

The current study was conducted within the petroleum industry. In their study on CSR reporting by oil and gas companies, Guenther, Hoppe, & Poser (2007, p. 8) found that based on their significant impacts on the environment, these companies have come to address CSR issues following public pressure or regulatory jurisdiction, and “in order to maintain their licence to operate, the extractive industries have embraced CSR.” As this implies a high level of CSR awareness by the specific industry within which the organisation is located, a similar study could be conducted in other organisations or industries to explore the transferability of the conclusions drawn here.

In the current study, reference was made by respondents to the current poor global economic environment and its impact. As its first proposition for why companies would behave in socially responsible ways, Campbell  (2007, p. 952) stated “(c)orporations will be less likely to act in socially responsible ways when they are experiencing relatively weak financial performance and when they are operating in a relatively unhealthy economic environment where the possibility for near-term profitability is limited.” From this statement, it can be
deduced that individuals will have the same response in poor economical conditions. Further studies during an economic upswing may yield different results.

The study was conducted amongst employees with varying education levels with a minimum of matric. Strautmanis (2008, p. 356) found that the social responsibility development is a change in values orientation, which in turn “takes place in the course of accumulating experience. Therefore, studies at a higher educational establishment (university, college, professionalism development courses) are of great importance as they facilitate accumulating experience and the principles of social responsibility.” Further research can be conducted to determine whether different education levels affect the impact CSR has on the attraction and retention of employees.

Lastly, the research was limited to Generation Y employees. Various literature has pointed towards this generation being more socially aware than previous generations. Generational differences in work values have been explored by various studies of which some have been cited in this study, such as the work done by Cennamo & Gardner (2008), Macky, Gardner, & Forsyth (2008), Smola & Sutton (2002), Wong, Gardiner, Lang, & Coulon, (2008), and Westerman & Yamamura (2007). Further research to determine if generational differences exist based on the attraction and retention of CSR initiatives will add to this literature.
References


Appendix 1: Online survey

Introductory page

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this research. As discussed telephonically, the aim of the research is to identify what factors are important to you when you are looking for an employer. The researcher has received consent from [...] to approach Axon employees to participate in the research. By completing the questionnaire, you also consent to a subsequent interview. The questionnaire is structured to take 10 minutes to complete. Once the survey data has been gathered, the researcher will contact you telephonically to arrange the interview.

Please note that this research is being conducted in strict adherence the UCT Graduate School of Business Ethics in Research Policy, and that all information will be kept confidential.

Demographic Information

1) Gender
   a. Male
   b. Female

2) Age
   a. 18-21
   b. 22-25
   c. 26-30
   d. >30

3) Race (all terms are used as stated in the South African Employment Equity Act, 55 of 1998)
   a. African
   b. Coloured
   c. Foreigner
   d. Indian
   e. White
4) Educational Qualification (please indicate the highest level of education you currently have)
   a. Matric
   b. Diploma
   c. First degree
   d. Honours
   e. Masters
   f. Doctorate
   g. Other:_______________________________________

5) Employment Status (please indicate your current employment status)
   a. Full-time
   b. Part-time
   c. Other:_______________________________________

6) Job Information (Please indicate the name of the department that you are currently working in)

7) Number of People in your department or work group (please choose one)
   a. 1 to 3
   b. 4 to 6
   c. 7 to 10
   d. 11 to 15
   e. 16 to 20
   f. 21 to 30
   g. 31 or more

8) Length of time with this particular employer (please choose one)
   a. Less than 1 year
   b. 1 to 2 years
   c. 2 to 3 years
   d. 3 to 4 years
   e. 4 to 5 years
   f. 5 to 10 years
   g. 10 to 15 years
9) Length of time in this particular role (please choose one)
   a. Less than 1 year
   b. 1 to 2 years
   c. 2 to 3 years
   d. 3 to 4 years
   e. 4 to 5 years
   f. 5 to 10 years
   g. 10 to 15 years

10) For each of the following aspects, please indicate how important it is to you when choosing an employer. Please use the response options of not important at all, not very important, somewhat important, and very important, scored here from 1 to 4, respectively. (1 = not important at all, 2 = not very important, 3 = somewhat important, 4 = very important)

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<th>Not very important</th>
<th>Somewhat important</th>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Having a job aligned to my talents</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Known to pay well</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pleasant people to work with</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An opportunity to use initiative</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate Social Responsibility stance</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical record</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good job security</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good chances of promotion</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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</table>
11) Please rank these 10 aspects in order of importance to you, when choosing an employer, where 1 is most important and 10 least important. (Please use each number only once)

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<td>Good job security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Good chances of promotion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2: Interview questions

1. *A chance to learn and develop* was chosen by 90% of the respondents as very important, and it was ranked the most important aspect when considering an employer. What do you see as learning and developing within a professional context and why is it important when choosing an employer? Could you illustrate with an example from your previous or current work experience?

2. The survey indicates that 50% of the respondents chose a company’s *Corporate Social Responsibility stance* as important, and it was ranked the least important factor compared to the other factors when choosing a company to work for. What does CSR mean to you? Do you think a company has a responsibility towards society and the environment? What do you see that responsibility to be? Why do you see it as being important or not important when choosing an employer? Could you please give an example from your previous or current work experience?

3. The results of the survey indicate that 90% of the respondents indicated that the *opportunity to do work that is exciting* is very important to them when evaluating employment options. Could you explain what you would classify as exciting work? Could you illustrate this with an example from your previous work experience?

4. *Having a job aligned to one’s talents* was selected by 70% of the respondents as very important. What does alignment between job and talents mean for you? Why is it important when choosing an employer? Could you please give an example from your previous or current work experience?

5. The survey indicates that 100% of the respondents see an *employer’s ethical record* as very important, however, in the ranking, it was ranked second last. What does ethical record of a company mean for you? Why do you see it as being important when choosing an employer? Could you please give an example from your previous or current work experience?
6. **Good chances of promotion** was chosen by 100% of the respondents as very important to them when evaluating employment options. How would you evaluate your chances of promotion within a company? Why is it important to you? Can you please illustrate this with an example?

7. 90% of respondents, identified an **opportunity to use initiative** as very important. What do you see as an opportunity to use initiative? Why is it important to you? Could you please give an example from your previous or current work experience?

8. **Good job security** was chosen by 100% of the respondents as very important to them when evaluating employment options. Could you please explain what good job security means to you, and illustrate it with an example? Why is it important to you?

9. **Pleasant people to work with** was selected by 60% of the respondents as very important. Why would pleasant people to work with be important or not important to you? Could you please provide an example?

10. The survey indicates that 60% of the respondents sees an employer **known to pay well** as very important when choosing an employer. How important is it to you? Could you please explain how you would determine if you are well paid?

11. Are there any other factors that you consider important when choosing an employer?
Appendix 3: Results of online survey

**UCT GSB MBA Research Survey: What attracts you to an employer?**

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**Active Report Filters:** None Active.

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   **Total Respondents:** 13

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   **Total Respondents:** 13

4. **Race**

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<td>Indian</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
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</table>

   **Total Respondents:** 12

   (stopped this question) 1
5. Educational Qualification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Response Total</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Avg</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Matric</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First degree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honours</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other, please specify</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Respondents 13

6. Employment Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
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<th>Response Percent</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Avg</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other, please specify</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Respondents 13

7. Job Information

View responses to this question

Total Respondents 13

8. Number of people in your department or work group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Response Total</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Avg</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 - 3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 - 6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 - 10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 - 15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 - 20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 - 20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;31</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Total Respondents 13

9. Length of time with this particular employer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Response Total</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Avg</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 1 year</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 2 years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - 4 years</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 - 5 years</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - 10 years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 - 15 years</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Respondents 13

10. Length of time in this particular role

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Response Total</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Avg</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 1 year</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 2 years</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - 3 years</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - 4 years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 - 5 years</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - 10 years</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 - 15 years</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Respondents 13
### UCT GSB MBA Research Survey: What attracts you to an employer?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Response 1</th>
<th>Response 2</th>
<th>Response 3</th>
<th>Response 4</th>
<th>Total Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to do work that excites me</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>15.38% (2)</td>
<td>84.62% (11)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A chance to learn and develop</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>7.69% (1)</td>
<td>92.31% (12)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a job aligned to my talents</td>
<td>7.69% (1)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>23.08% (3)</td>
<td>76.92% (10)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Known to pay well</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>38.46% (5)</td>
<td>61.54% (8)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pleasant people to work with</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>38.46% (5)</td>
<td>61.54% (8)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An opportunity to use initiative</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>15.38% (2)</td>
<td>84.62% (11)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate Social Responsibility</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>15.38% (2)</td>
<td>38.46% (5)</td>
<td>61.54% (8)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical record</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>7.69% (1)</td>
<td>92.31% (12)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good job security</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>100% (13)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good chances of promotion</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>100% (13)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Respondents: 13