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**DISCOVER THE POSSIBLE:
HOW TO RECRUIT TODAY'S DIVERSE CANADIAN GENERATION**

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JCSP 45

Master of Defence Studies

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ABSTRACT

Recruiting from today's diverse Canadian population is a task that the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) must embark. With the release of the Department of National Defence's *Strong, Secure, Engaged (SSE): Canada's Defence Policy* and the CAF Diversity Strategy, the goal of recruiting to reflect Canadian society has been clearly stated. Diversity must be increased, but not just within the Employment Equity Act designated groups of women, visible minorities, Aboriginal Peoples and people with disabilities, but also recognizing other dimensions of diversity. Specific targets have been set and changes to recruiting can contribute to this diversification of the CAF.

The recruiting strategies that will enable increased diversity include gaining an understanding of the characteristics of the next generation of employees. Millennials and Post-Millennials are the current and next generation to enter the workforce. They are the next members of the CAF, and therefore recognizing their motivations, their ways of navigating the world and their expectations of a workplace will help guide the recruiting processes to be designed with them in mind.

Currently the CAF seems to struggle with recruiting its mandated numbers overall and meeting its diversity goals. Unfortunately, it is not an employer of choice for young potential employees and a general lack of familiarity by Canadians about the CAF is a major contributing factor which must be overcome. Certain programs and initiatives have been put in place to address the challenges and target certain diversity groups, however more needs to be done in order to meet the ambitious SSE goals.

After gaining insight into the next generation and understanding the obstacles to recruiting Canadians into the CAF, several recommendations are provided. Offer a trial period to those interested in joining the military, effective use of social media and respected influencers, improve and incentivize the recruiting centres with appropriate representation, deliver on CAF promises and update processes leveraging technology. Ultimately, these changes to recruiting will make a difference however internal changes to the CAF workplace will have a larger impact on attracting potential candidates and improve the lives of the serving members too.

INTRODUCTION

Employers across Canada are always striving to attract and recruit the best and the brightest. For the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF), specifically, it needs to attract that talent at the entry level as it does not typically target employers for mid or senior level entry points. This means getting that initial recruiting phase right. Furthermore, future employees have different motivations and goals for their career choices but they also offer various skill sets and life experiences. Therefore, being able to identify an effective means of reaching this audience necessitates an understanding of their motivations, their methods of seeking information and their expectations in the work place. The advancement of technology and viral use of social media should be enablers in this strategy, however, there is more than flashy advertisements and visions of utopia required to reach the rich diverse Canadian population.

The CAF has tended to see the Canadian employable population in the groups of gender, disability, Aboriginal and visible minorities but there are also differences by generation, education, religion, language and sexual orientation. As Canadian society learns to accept, respect and appreciate these differences, so too should the Government of Canada (GoC) and the CAF. One avenue where the CAF can have an impact on inclusion and increasing the diversity of the Canadian military is in recruiting. Recruiting in the CAF consists of six distinct major sub-processes:¹ attraction, application, processing, selection, employment offer and enrolment. Attraction is focused on gaining

¹Office of the Ombudsman, *The Canadian Face Behind the Recruiting Targets: A Review of the Canadian Forces Recruiting System: From Attraction to Enrolment* (Ottawa: National Defence and Canadian Forces, 2006), 15, http://www.ombudsman.forces.gc.ca/assets/OMBUDSMAN_Internet/docs/en/rs-sr.pdf.

interest through physical recruitment activities at booths, career fairs, school presentations, digital communication and promotional products and information aids. The next step, application, involves having an interested candidate complete the application form and provide any other necessary documentation. Processing is defined as activities pertaining to aptitude testing, background checks, academic alignment and eligibility criteria. Selection is concerned with matching the right person to the right type of employment and the recruiting requirements for each military occupation, when making offers to applicants. Finally, enrolment is the last step towards officially acquiring a new candidate through the final paper work and ceremony before the member heads to the Canadian Forces Leadership and Recruit School. Although all areas in the CAF recruiting process could be analyzed and critically examined with the hopes of suggesting improvements and efficiencies, this paper will focus on the attraction and processing sub-processes.

In the context of military recruiting, attraction should be considered as “[those] activities, both passive and active, used to inform potential applicants and their influencers that the CAF is actively hiring.”² Specifically for this paper, activities that are designed to attract women, visible minorities and those from specific generations are the focus. In Chapter 1, this paper will identify the recruiting goals and intentions of both the GoC and specifically the Canadian Armed Forces. An analysis will occur of Canada’s Defence Policy, *Strong, Secure, Engaged* (SSE), which clearly outlines the goals for the CAF to be attained by 2026 and specifically, its description of recruiting expectations. Further direction will be garnered from the Employment Equity Act which aims to

²Department of National Defence, *Strong, Secured, Engaged*, (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2017), 7.

increase representation of the four traditional designated groups: women, Aboriginal people, visible minorities and people with disabilities. The CAF has taken this direction and expanded the definition of diversity. Consequently, it created its own CAF Diversity Strategy which will guide this paper towards methods for attracting a more reflective Canadian society.

Chapter 2 will introduce the concept of generational theory. All generations are exposed to different events and hence are impacted in different ways. As such, the general attributes often exhibited by Millennials and Post-Millennials, the two generations about to enter or currently are in the workforce, will be discussed. These two generations must be explained as they display slightly different characteristics and relate to the world in different fashions which must be leveraged when recruiting them. The author, a member of the generation before Millennials called Gen X, initially found writing this paper difficult as the research identified habits and motivations of Millennials and Post-Millennials that were unrelatable. The techniques suggested to work with Post-Millennials are foreign, seem inefficient at times and designed for dependent workers. However, the author had to be reminded this is why the current practices are not working because they were designed with the Baby Boomers and Gen X in mind and that the recruiting processes need to adjust and be updated for the upcoming generation. Although some processes or changes that need to occur might seem foreign or do not appeal to the current working generation, the reality is it works for the next cohort of workers, our future subordinates and may actually be beneficial for all those currently in the CAF itself and these changes need to occur now. Instead of trying to break the Millennials and Post-

Millennials of their 'bad' habits, perhaps the CAF can find ways to leverage their power and abilities to attract and retain future CAF members.

In Chapter 3 the issues that currently exist in recruiting will be identified. However, first an explanation of why the CAF should be concerned with the current recruiting attraction processes will afford an understanding of the urgency of this problem and the impact it has on the CAF. This will be followed by the challenges and current problems seen in the recruiting processes and the reality that the Canadian population is unfamiliar with the CAF. This chapter will end with a summary of current recruiting initiatives which are addressing some problems that exist and are attempting to improve the recruiting strategy.

Finally, Chapter 4 recommends solutions to increase diversity and recruit the next generation into the CAF, which are based on the research presented and abide by the goals and intent of both the GoC and CAF. These recommendations make improvements to processes, technology and using serving members to leverage all opportunities to connect with the Canadian employable population. Some of these changes are subtle but the more deliberate changes that need to occur are not actually in the recruiting strategy but in the environment and reality of the CAF organization itself.

The initial intent of this paper was to discover ways to improve recruiting to increase the number of applicants. This would provide a larger pool of candidates from which the CAF could increase diversity and hire those with the most potential for success within the military. This paper will show that although changes to recruiting strategies are much needed, changes within the military itself must be made in conjunction. These

intrinsic changes may have more impact on attracting employees from today's generation of diverse Canadians.

Current Situation

The CAF has a history of including women and visible minority groups. "Women first served in uniform as nurses during the Northwest Rebellion in 1885. Chinese and Japanese Canadians have served since the early-1900s. Canadian Sikhs served in the First World War."³ Additionally, attempts to break down barriers to position and rank have been achieved. "Aboriginal peoples, women, and visible minority CAF members have achieved the highest ranks: General Officer/Flag Officer and Chief Warrant/Petty Officer First Class."⁴ However, although enrolment and participation in the CAF by these marginalized groups exists, the demographics of the CAF do not reflect the Canadian society it serves and protects. The challenges of diversity present itself in not only the numbers of diverse members required but also with the complete conscious inclusion of these members into the CAF.

Canadian society continues to evolve which has impacts on the communities and demographics from which the CAF attracts and draws its recruits.⁵ Not only is the population changing by the makeup of specific generations, but the demographics are changing due to a more diverse immigrant population, "as half of all Canadian children currently have at least one ethnic origin affiliation other than British, French, Canadian or Aboriginal."⁶ Canada is approaching a time when the Baby Boomer generation is about

³ Chantal Fraser, "Diversity Recruiting: It's Time to Tip the Balance," *Canadian Military Journal* 13, no. 4 (2013): 25.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Department of National Defence, *Canadian Armed Forces Diversity Strategy*, (Ottawa, ON: Department of National Defence, 2018), 1.

⁶ Karen D. Davis and Brian McKee, "Women in the Military: Facing the Warrior Framework," in *Challenge and Change in the Military: Gender and Diversity Issues* (Winnipeg: Canadian Forces

to disappear from the active labour force leaving a large void for the next generation to fill. The population base is also decreasing as the national fertility rate has reached an all-time low. “Canada [needs] an average of around 2,060 children per 1,000 females to renew [its] population based on natural increase and without taking immigration into account. The last year in which Canada attained fertility levels sufficient to replace its current population was 1971.”⁷ Therefore, Canada’s reliance on immigrants to increase the Canadian population is a reality and necessary. As such, the country’s population is becoming more diverse. “27% of youth aged 15-34 identified as a visible minority versus 13% in 1996.”⁸ Not only is the nation becoming more diverse through immigration, but the percent of youth by Indigenous identity increased by 39% from 2006-2016 compared to only a 6.5% increase for non-Indigenous youth in the same time period.⁹ As a result of this current situation, “Canada is finding the recruitment and retention of women, visible minorities, and Aboriginals to the Canadian Forces (CF) an increasingly important concern.”¹⁰ Therefore in addition to attempting to meet the goals established by Canada’s Defence Policy, the CAF must grapple with altering its recruitment strategies to attract the new Canadian demographic.

Leadership Institute, 2006), 139, <https://wiisglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Challenge-and-Change-in-the-Military-Gender-and-Diversity-Issues2.pdf>.

⁷Statistics Canada, *Births, 2015 and 2016*, (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 2018), 1, https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/daily-quotidien/180430/dq180430f-eng.pdf?st=Au3Z_rKa.

⁸Department of National Defence, *Characteristics of the Recruitable Canadian Population and of CAF Recruits*, (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 2018), 5.

⁹*Ibid.*, 7.

¹⁰Davis, “Women in the Military: Facing the Warrior Framework,” ..., 122.

CHAPTER 1 - GOALS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

Canada's Defence Policy

In 2017, Canada's Minister of National Defence released the most recent defence policy: SSE. It outlines the goals for the department to be achieved over the next 20 years. It describes the operational environment, the threats to Canada, and how the Department of National Defence (DND) and CAF intends to prepare for, implement and defend its national interests. It also puts a large unprecedented emphasis on the people serving in the CAF by making Chapter 1: Well-Supported, Diverse, Resilient People and Families.¹¹ As such, recruiting has a role in ensuring that the goals of SSE are accomplished as outlined in the document. Emphasis is put on recruiting the best, increasing the diversity of the CAF, targeting those with the skills required and improving the process.

The CAF needs to continue to be an employer of choice but, to achieve this, SSE calls for many enhancements to recruiting. "The operational success of the CAF begins with a robust recruiting system that engages and attracts the best and brightest, communicates the unique opportunities and benefits of military service, and efficiently and effectively selects and enrolls new recruits."¹² SSE also addresses the requirement to diversify the CAF so it reflects Canadian society but also for the benefits that accompany diversity. "The CAF recognizes that diversity and inclusion in the CAF increases operational effectiveness by drawing on the strengths of Canada's diverse and multicultural population."¹³ More specifically with respect to women, "[the CAF aspires]

¹¹DND, *Strong, Secure...*, 19.

¹²*Ibid.*, 20.

¹³*Ibid.*, 105.

to be a leader in gender balance in the military by increasing the representation of women by 1 percent annually over the next 10 years to reach 25 percent of the overall force.”¹⁴ It even goes as far to state that the CAF is “committed to attracting, recruiting and retaining more women in the Canadian Armed Forces across all ranks and promoting women into senior leadership positions.”¹⁵

Moreover, SSE directs using targeting to recruit the right people for the right job. “[The CAF] will better forecast occupational requirements and engage in more targeted recruiting, including capitalizing on the unique talents and skill-sets of Canada’s diverse population.”¹⁶ To remain on the precipice of technology and defeat the upcoming future national security threats, SSE directs targeting those in the technology domain. “The Canadian Armed Forces must also attract Canadians with the aptitudes and skill-sets required to succeed in highly technical domains including space and cyberspace and to operate and maintain increasingly sophisticated equipment, including remotely piloted systems.”¹⁷

Finally, SSE specifically identifies the areas of improvement regarding recruiting members of the Canadian population into the CAF. Direct to the point, it highlights weaknesses in the current process. “The current system is too slow to compete in Canada’s highly competitive labour market and does not effectively communicate the exciting and fulfilling employment opportunities offered by military service”¹⁸ SSE further challenges the CAF to ensure success of new recruits by “adapting training to

¹⁴*Ibid.*, 107.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 21.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 12.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, 20.

¹⁸*Ibid.*

meet the highly technical requirements of modern militaries, and the CAF will also need to demonstrate to potential recruits that the military can offer competitive training and technical certifications on par with the standards of industry and the private sector.”¹⁹

Directive in nature, SSE provides clear mandates that must be followed with urgency as the CAF operational effectiveness depends on it. The commander’s intent with respect to recruiting is clear. The goals have been identified, “25.1% women, 11.8% visible minorities, and 3.5% Indigenous People by 2026,”²⁰ but the means or processes have not. It recognizes the benefits of diversity and that recruiting is a tool that must be leveraged to increase diversity. Therefore, a focus on attracting people to the CAF through enhanced technological solutions and deliberate recruiting campaigns is necessary to achieve the SSE goals.

Employment Equity Act

The Employment Equity (EE) Act, which was last amended in 2017, is intended to overcome the historic marginalization and increase the representation of four designated groups: women, people with disabilities, Aboriginal peoples and visible minorities. It describes the labour force which the GoC aspires to achieve.

The purpose of this Act is to achieve equality in the workplace so that no person shall be denied employment opportunities or benefits for reasons unrelated to ability and, in the fulfilment of that goal, to correct the conditions of disadvantage in employment experienced by women, Aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities by giving effect to the principle that employment equity means more than treating persons in the same way but also requires special measures and the accommodation of differences.²¹

¹⁹*Ibid.*, 21.

²⁰Vance, J. H., *Joint CDS/DM Directive: Operation Generation* (Ottawa: National Defence, 2018), 11.

²¹Jennifer Hoolachan and Kim McKee, “Inter-Generational Housing Inequalities: ‘Baby Boomers’ versus the ‘Millennials.’,” *Urban Studies* 56, no. 1 (January 2019): 1, <https://journals-sagepub-com.cfc.idm.oclc.org/doi/10.1177/0042098018775363>.

Mandated by law, the DND and the CAF must implement employment equity by “identifying and eliminating employment barriers against persons in designated groups that result from the employer’s employment systems, policies and practices that are not authorized by law.”²² Additionally, the Act dictates policies must be put in place so that “making such reasonable accommodations will ensure that persons in designated groups achieve a degree of representation in each occupational group in the employer’s workforce that reflects their representation in the Canadian workforce.”²³ This direction impacts the systems used for attraction, recruitment and processing of new recruits, but it also indicates the environment in the workplace itself must adapt and change to ensure it is equitable.

Canadian Armed Forces Diversity Strategy

The EE Act intends to increase representation for the four designated groups (women, people with disabilities, Aboriginal people and visible minorities), but the CAF Diversity Strategy attempts to broaden the definition of diversity and encourage inclusion. It defines diversity as “respect for and appreciation of differences in ethnicity, language, gender, age, national origin, disabilities, sexual orientation, education, and religion.”²⁴ It is with this view SSE states that diversity is paramount within the CAF, and the CAF Diversity Strategy outlines how recruiting must enable this diverse workplace. “Simply put, for the CAF to be successful in domestic and global operations, we must attract and retain the right people with a broad range of skills, perspectives, and

²²*Ibid.*, 5.

²³*Ibid.*

²⁴DND, CAF Diversity Strategy..., 1.

experiences.”²⁵ The CAF Diversity Strategy recognizes that to sustain the strength of the CAF, recruiting and retention strategies must be improved. One way it recommends this be accomplished, is through the use of a gender-based approach, as it incorporates all elements of diversity. Gender-based analysis plus (GBA+) is the GoC’s “analytical process used to assess how diverse groups of women, men and non-binary people may experience policies, programs and initiatives... GBA+ also considers many other identity factors, like race, ethnicity, religion, age, and mental or physical disability.”²⁶ The CAF will benefit from this analysis as “[it] is essential to recognize that people have multiple and diverse identity factors that intersect to shape their perspectives, ideologies and experiences”²⁷, which can improve operational effectiveness. It seems the entire enterprise agrees that diversity is important and that steps must be taken to increase inclusion. The question remains how is this accomplished in an effective manner with the reality that change in any institution can take decades to occur.

Operation Generation

Operation Generation, which was released in May 2018, is the Chief of Defence Staff’s direction to operationalize recruiting to meet the goals described in SSE²⁸. It identifies the failures of the recruiting processes and recognises key areas of improvement for attracting and recruiting new employees. It candidly states the general philosophy of current practices is reactive in nature and the strategic messaging is too generalized. One concept that this document emphasizes is that attraction, enrolment and

²⁵*Ibid.*, 1.

²⁶Status of Women Canada, “What is GBA+,” last accessed 25 April 2019, <https://cfc-swc.gc.ca/gba-acis/index-en.html>.

²⁷Status of Women Canada, “Introduction to GBA+,” last accessed 25 April 2019, https://cfc-swc.gc.ca/gba-acis/course-cours/eng/mod02/mod02_03_01a.html.

²⁸Vance, *Joint CDS/DM Directive: Operation Generation ...*, 3.

initial training all have a part to play in generating candidates. More importantly it states that all three of these areas require immediate attention to overcome the challenges of recruiting new employees.

Operation Generation highlights the CAF strategic objectives of attaining the employment equity goals by 2026 and the steps it will take to support that direction. Those steps include introducing the idea of completing a “gender-based approach plus (GBA+) assessment and methodologies to the near-term requirements of a more gendered and diverse force,”²⁹ which had not officially or deliberately been implemented prior to this document. It also states that the “communications capabilities, such as the recruiting website, are entirely inadequate to compete in a recruiting environment where public and private organizations use cutting edge strategies, information management and marketing capabilities.”³⁰ The operation order continues to describe how the CAF should target specific applicants and “coordinate proactive outreach at the right opportunity. The desired effect will be to move away from the mass attraction principle that elicits a large volume of potential applicants, and transition toward targeted attraction of individuals with specific competencies and attributes.”³¹

All these initiatives have the intent of improving the recruiting and retention processes in the CAF, however it appears that unless specific steps are taken to consider the population the CAF is attempting to target, there may not be significant enhancements or increased level of candidates. The desires, preferences, habits and incentives of that population should hold considerable weight in designing techniques for improving the

²⁹*Ibid.*, 15.

³⁰Department of National Defence, *Defence Plan 2018-2023*, (Ottawa, ON: Department of National Defence, 2017), 5.

³¹*Ibid.*, 13.

recruiting process. Although the CAF intends to target individuals based on competencies required for the military, these can be found in people of all shapes and forms. As reflected in CAF Diversity Strategy³², each of these diverse groups possess slightly different motivations and incentives and they bring different, work experiences, social norms and cultural pressures. Therefore, this targeted approach should consider their needs and what attracts them to a military lifestyle.

Diversity

The concept of diversity is not new to the CAF however the focus is now shifting. According to the CAF Diversity Strategy, diversity means appreciating differences. It is more than just respecting and tolerating differences. It is about embracing the integration of multiple viewpoints and the rich dimensions that each individual provides. These differences are what will provide not only a conducive work environment but also one that will give the CAF an operational edge and increased effectiveness. As revealed in the CAF Diversity Strategy action plan, it has been recognized efforts are needed to shift the current culture to value and acceptance.

As a goal for the CAF, “[reaching] out to a diverse population increases the pool of talent available and provides a competitive advantage in the war for talent.”³³ This will certainly enable recruiting and will increase the likelihood of attracting the best candidates, however one must not lose sight of the ultimate intent of increasing diversity in the CAF. Diversity is a force multiplier in today’s new security environment and not

³²DND, CAF Diversity Strategy..., 1,12-13.

³³Nelson Lim *et al*, *Planning for Diversity: Options and Recommendations for DoD Leaders*. 1st ed. Vol. MG-743 (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 2004), 82.

just a quota to be achieved. The benefits of diversifying the military will build on the strengths of the Canadian population.

Building a Defence team composed of people with new perspectives and a broader range of cultural, linguistic, gender, age, and other unique attributes will contribute directly to efforts to develop a deeper understanding of our increasingly complex world, and to respond effectively to the challenges it presents.³⁴

These benefits will be seen within units or possibly across the CAF and especially in domestic and overseas operation. The CAF should recognize that diversity increases innovation and creativity, improves the ability to mitigate cultural conflicts and increases performances within teams when members represent varied backgrounds.³⁵ This will only occur if there is a broader recognition of all aspects of diversity.³⁶ Ultimately, teams perform better when their members represent varied backgrounds and better decisions are made when diverse points of view are considered.³⁷

With the CAF predominantly working in coalition operations, the opportunities for leveraging this diversity has been invaluable. “CAF personnel with wide ranging backgrounds facilitate integration and synchronization with global partners.”³⁸ Additionally, a military with members from diverse backgrounds can take advantage of their experiences and have more success building relationships and interfacing with civilian populations, non-governmental organizations, and other actors within the operating environment.³⁹ As directed in the CAF Diversity Strategy, it is clear that the CAF should be striving for these benefits that come from a diverse force and avoid

³⁴DND, *Strong, Secure...*, 23.

³⁵Lim, *Planning for Diversity...*, 32.

³⁶House of Commons, Standing Committee on National Defence, *Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence*, no. 112, Thursday, 18 October 2018, 2.

³⁷Lim, *Planning for Diversity...*, 82.

³⁸DND, CAF Diversity Strategy..., 3.

³⁹*Ibid.*

simply populating the military with visible minorities to simply meet quotas. Diversity comes in all shapes and forms, and is not necessarily visible. “[The CAF needs] to appreciate that different experiences, perspectives and cultures enhance not only our understanding of issues but also how we make decisions and operate at home and abroad.”⁴⁰ The CAF seeks to reflect Canadian society⁴¹ but it should do so on all dimensions, which is difficult to measure, review and recruit. In addition, it is important that Canadians see the CAF as an employer of choice where one’s values and unique individual identity are embraced, and they are not simply treated as a number, a target or a quota to be attained.

The advantages of diversity need to be embraced and acknowledged by all in the CAF because in the past, as Dr. Okros states to the House of Commons Standing Committee on National Defence (NDDN), “...the others had to adjust to blend in, while the majority did not have to make substantive changes to who they were or how they performed their military duties.”⁴² Ensuring that the workplace is leveraging diversity and not simply assimilating it, is what will make the CAF a stronger force and an attractive employer. Although the CAF is legislated by the Employment Equity Act and the CAF Diversity Strategy is an internal initiative driven by CAF requirements, recognizing that diversity is a strength and it adds effectiveness to the organization, is a step that will require changing the organizational culture, to include recruiting. Although the recruiting process must take steps towards inclusion, the CAF must recognize that “those who have

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, Foreword.

⁴¹Department of National Defence, *Duty with Honour: The Profession of Arms in Canada* (Ottawa: Published under the auspices of the Chief of the Defence Staff by the Canadian Defence Academy - Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, 2009), 28.

⁴²House of Commons, *Minutes of Proceedings...*, 1.

been marginalized are not simply asking to be admitted to the military. They're seeking to be recognized as valued members of the team with the opportunity to contribute fully to military success."⁴³ This is just one more consideration that the recruiting process must incorporate into its strategies.

Increasing the numbers in all diversity groups within CAF will have a secondary impact. During testimony at the NDDN study on diversity in the CAF, Dr. Grazia Scoppio stated "I think that the numbers are important in order to achieve that critical mass. Once that critical mass is achieved, I think it will be a lot easier to change the culture of the organization."⁴⁴ She indicates momentum needs to be gained to have real permanent change within the organization. When marketing to the Canadian population, different approaches can be used depending on the factors considered. However, each of these means must be given substantial weight as they all contribute to the motivations, incentives, desires and attraction of individuals. Whether the CAF targets a specific biological age, generational cohort or life cycle will determine the marketing tactic to increase the efficiency of recruiting. In addition, as mentioned earlier, the goals of the Diversity Strategy, Canada's Defence Policy and Employment Equity must also have their part in the process.

This section has presented the GoC and CAF goals as they pertain to increasing diversity and improving recruiting. Changes in the recruiting strategies will have an impact on meeting the goals of increased diversity in the CAF. Additionally, understanding the needs and motivations of that diverse population will allow recruiting processes to change to become more tailored and therefore more effective. It has become

⁴³*Ibid.*

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, 5.

apparent recruiting could have an impact on increasing diversity in the CAF. It has also been illustrated that the CAF must take a broader view in understanding diversity moving beyond the Employment Equity group of women, people with disabilities, Aboriginal people and visible minorities. In considering other facets of diversity, differences related to age and age group are considered of importance and will now be examined by presentation of Generational Theory.

CHAPTER 2 - GENERATIONAL THEORY

One important factor to help aid in understanding the population base from which the CAF recruits is generational theory. Academics have identified that different generations can be characterized by significant events that occurred during their developing years that have an impact on their outlook on life, family and employment. “[Shared] formative experiences can produce important and widespread commonalities in personal traits amongst those of a similar age.”⁴⁵ More importantly, “these characteristics may be different than those developed by other cohorts who experienced differing social events or did so at a different stage in their development.”⁴⁶ For example, Baby Boomers who were born between 1946-1965 during the post-war era experienced “a thriving labour market, a rise in education levels, [and] a generous social security system.”⁴⁷

Generational theory is important when discussing marketing because to be effective, “[marketers] often advertise to a cohort group by using the icons and images prominent in their experience.”⁴⁸ As they have experienced shared defining historical events, they have also been influenced by media, politics, movies and music of that period. Consequently, each generation has different preferences for communicating and researching information which is important when developing recruiting strategies. The ages of enrolment into the CAF ranges from 17-52 for legal reasons, but specifically for

⁴⁵A.C. Okros *et al*, “Surfing the Digital Tsunami: How the Post-Millennials will be Key in Adapting to the Future” (in press, 2019), 41.

⁴⁶A.C. Okros *et al*, “Slide to Unlock: Implication from the Harnessing 21st Century Competencies Project” (submitted to Director General Military Personnel Research and Analysis, 2015), 7.

⁴⁷*Britannica Academic*, s.v. “Marketing,” last accessed 2 March 2019, <https://academic-eb-com.cfc.idm.oclc.org/levels/collegiate/article/marketing/109821>.

⁴⁸Emma Parry and Peter Urwin, “Generational Differences in Work Values: A Review of Theory and Evidence: Generational Differences in Work Values,” *International Journal of Management Reviews* 13, no. 1 (2011), 83.

this paper, the Millennial and Post-Millennial generations will be examined as the CAF prefer to attract younger enrollees.

When using generational theory concepts, it is important to note the birth years vary by reference as “no established, unanimously agreed upon standard classification scheme for generational cut-offs exists.”⁴⁹ So the years chosen for each generational cohort is not exact, since it would be unreasonable to expect drastic differences to be displayed between groups of individuals born in 1993 rather than 1995. However, “the generational attributes are sufficiently present to the extent they can be measured and can therefore, be appropriately used to predict outcomes.”⁵⁰ Moreover, these generational characteristics do not apply to everybody within their age group and should be considered generalizations as opposed to conformed identities. However, it does provide an insightful examination of possible characteristics of future recruits and how to motivate, drive and inspire them as part of the CAF recruitment strategy. This section on generational theory draws on a range of generational research to present a composite picture of Millennials and Post-Millennials.⁵¹

Millennials

Millennials (or Gen Y) were born approximately between the years 1980 and 1994. The historical aspects that seemed to have shaped their outlooks include the events

⁴⁹Kevin C. Cox *et al*, "Different Strokes for Different Folks: Generational Differences, Social Salience, and Social Performance," *The International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation* (September 2018): 3, <https://journals-sagepub-com.cfc.idm.oclc.org/doi/10.1177/1465750318796718>.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, 4.

⁵¹Amongst other articles, information is drawn from Twenge's *iGen*, Okros *et al* *Surfing the Digital Tsunami*, Stoker & Mehay *Recruiting, Advertising and Marketing Strategies in All-Volunteer Force Nations* and https://genhq.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/State-of-Gen-Z-2018.pdf?inf_contact_key=d97fc322c1cc9c49ac20400f1c8de3a016358d5485884e2f31e6019a0d26c8b0.

of September 11, 2001, environmental impact awareness, school yard violence and the rise of the first set of social media platforms. They are generally seen to be entitled and narcissistic, and as digital natives. As Millennials are currently in the workforce, it is important for the context of this paper to include them in this discussion regarding recruiting as they remain feasible candidates as the CAF is an option for a second career or one after their children have left their home.

This generation grew up mostly with their Gen X parents pressuring them to achieve good grades, filling their schedules with extracurricular and summer activities, and hovering over their every move. This resulted with a general hesitancy to think outside the box and avert risk due to the proclivity to follow the rules and pressure to perform.⁵² Due to their parents emphasizing teamwork whether it was on the soccer field or in the classroom, many Millennials are inclined towards group settings. “They are seen as being comfortable relying on peers and parents for support, and prefer to work in groups, sharing goals and failures.”⁵³ As family, community and friendships are important to the majority of Millennials⁵⁴, this sentiment has extended into the workplace. “They normally appreciate a diverse, collegial, and team-based work environment.”⁵⁵ This generation also tends to be more tolerant and understand the value of diversity of gender, race, and sexuality and are concerned with inequalities based on wealth, social issues and politics.⁵⁶ This might explain their “dislike to bureaucratic, pyramid-like corporate structures, preferring a much more “flat” environment.”⁵⁷ Unlike

⁵²Neil Howel and Reena Nadler, "Millennials Rising." *Leadership for Student Activities* 36, no. 8 (April 2008): 18, <https://search-proquest-com.cfc.idm.oclc.org/docview/234981664?accountid=9867>.

⁵³A.C. Okros, “Surfing the Digital Tsunami” ..., 57.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, 57.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, 58.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, 57.

⁵⁷*Ibid.*, 58.

generations before them, most Millennials are interpreting work-life balance in a slightly different manner. They tend to blend them together and as persistent multitaskers they can manage both their work responsibilities and home roles as they see fit. Millennials typically want flexibility and will likely have multiple employers throughout their careers.⁵⁸ A rigid work structure, a cubicle environment and a nine-to-five schedule is not conducive to the workplace a Millennial strives for where creativity is respected and encouraged.⁵⁹ Once in the workforce, many Millennials expect time and money to be spent on career planning and manager development. However, recruiting and attracting top candidates take almost all funds and efforts⁶⁰, while leaving the Millennials wanting for more.

All these Millennial qualities have forced companies to re-examine their recruiting and retention policies and strategies. It has “shifted the emphasis across media types, particularly from mainstream media to digital channels”⁶¹ No longer is the workplace full of Baby Boomers and Gen X, so companies have to adjust to make their place a desirable place to work for Millennials.

Post-Millennials

The generation after the Millennials are decidedly different from those who preceded them. Post-Millennials (sometimes referred to as iGen or iGeneration⁶²,

⁵⁸*Ibid.*

⁵⁹“Corporate Fail: Millennials & Gen Z Entrepreneurial | Crystal Kadakia | TEDx Centennial Park Women,” YouTube video, 14:21, posted by TEDx Talks, 16 July 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-VkVz1IVciE>.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*

⁶¹Carol Stoker and Stephen Mehay, “Recruiting, Advertising and Marketing Strategies in All-Volunteer Force Nations: Case Studies of Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States” (master’s thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2011), 142.

⁶²Jean M. Twenge, *iGen: Why Today's Super-Connected Kids are Growing Up Less Rebellious, More Tolerant, Less Happy--and Completely Unprepared for Adulthood* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2017), 2.

Generation Z or Gen Z, or the Homeland Generation) consist of individuals born anywhere from 1995-2012⁶³ or according to preeminent generational expert, Neil Howe as 2005-2020. Regardless of the specific birth years, they lived in a post 9/11 era and saw an African-American US President. Gay marriage and medical marijuana were made a constitutional right and are socially accepted instead of a controversial issue. Canada was contributing to combat missions all over the world. They may have also seen their parents struggle financially through the greatest economic recession in recent times and have seen the boom of overnight young billionaires through the power of YouTube channels. In addition, since almost all Post-Millennials are still not in the workforce, their defining moments are still happening, including “how Canada should be positioned in the world, and figuring out how to leverage our cultural and linguistic diversity to build the intellectual and economic corridors that connect Canada to the rest of the world.”⁶⁴

However, the most important characteristic that differentiates Post-Millennials from their previous cohort, the Millennials, is the evolution of the Internet and the use of social media. For this generation, they have not known a world without the World Wide Web, as the commercial release of the Internet occurred in the mid 90s.⁶⁵ When this generation came of age, the release of the first smart phone occurred and they have been surfing the web with their mobile devices ever since. “A quarter of Canadians belong to Generation Z – there are about 8.4 million of them in the country,”⁶⁶ and as of 2013, the most recent addition to the workforce has been this generation. Therefore, they represent a significant

⁶³*Ibid*, 6.

⁶⁴Celine Cooper, “Generation Z Poised to Tackle Canada's Future,” The Sault Star, last modified 2 November 2015, <https://www.saultstar.com/2015/11/02/generation-z-poised-to-tackle-canadas-future/wcm/3610a470-f821-8e60-f6db-6dcd065a4708>.

⁶⁵Twenge, *iGen...*, 2.

⁶⁶Adrienne Tanner, “Young blood,” *Pivot Magazine*, last accessed 25 April 2019, <https://www.cpacanada.ca/en/news/pivot-magazine/2018-07-09-pivot-young-blood>.

amount of the population base and potential candidates for the CAF, and other compelling Canadian employers.

Most Post-Millennials have different expectations when it comes to how they search for information, how they verify information and how they communicate with others since they grew up with the internet being omnipresent. Typically, they order food deliveries online, they get their news about current events through apps and share ideas and opinions with other Post-Millennials all through the power of social media. “Having grown up in a world where everything in life is customisable, they want that same flexibility in their work life as well.”⁶⁷ However, although technology is everywhere and their digital literacy is higher than any other generation, “[this] generation is seen as using technology as a means to an end; their devices are useful tools to enrich social interaction but do not define the individual as it appears to for many of the Millennial generation.”⁶⁸ That ease with technology, allows them to be creative and entrepreneurial. “Since Gen Z witnessed Gen Y suffer through the recession, they will come to the workplace better prepared, less entitled and more equipped to succeed.”⁶⁹ Hence, the majority of them long for a stable job, and are not as motivated by money. “After having seen college graduates with no jobs, post 2008 recession, they are concerned about stability more than Millennials.”⁷⁰ Technology allows this to occur as they learned marketing through digital tools at a young age and most believe it is there to help us improve our lives in all areas. Creating online websites and social media that speak to

⁶⁷Silver Swan Recruitment, “Everything You Need to Know about Recruiting and Retaining Gen Z Workers in 2019,” last accessed 25 April 2019, <https://www.silverswanrecruitment.com/recruiting-and-retaining-gen-z-workers-in-2019/>.

⁶⁸A.C. Okros, “Surfing the Digital Tsunami” ..., 104.

⁶⁹Millennial Branding, “Gen Y and Gen Z Global Workplace Expectations Study,” last accessed 25 April 2019, <http://millennialbranding.com/2014/geny-genz-global-workplace-expectations-study/>.

⁷⁰Twenge, *iGen...*, 185.

environmental concerns, children's education and global famine is not a challenging task and is second nature to this generation.

As many Post-Millennials have grown up with an online presence, they have a better appreciation of their online image and how to manage it. They are fully aware of how future employers may interpret their online lives. They know how to reflect the values and behaviours expected of their employer. The majority of Post-Millennials are aware of how to change "their language, actions and presentation to blend into their organizational surroundings."⁷¹ This will create a challenge for employers in differentiating the 'total package' from the truly skilled. "Post-Millennials will be growing up with a much better understanding of the implications of how others view their actions and...will be a bit more attentive to the longer-term consequences of their decisions."⁷² Future employers of this generation must be aware of the capabilities and vulnerabilities of social media and the internet when contemplating and recruiting candidates.

With constant bombardment of social media and use of smart phones, times have changed for this generation when seeking information on companies, products and jobs. "[Post-Millennials prefer] to follow brands on Instagram and uses it 2.5 times more often than Facebook to do so. Millennials, in contrast, prefer to follow brands on Facebook and choose Instagram far less often."⁷³ Most Post-Millennials no longer seek out traditional media outlets including newspapers, magazines and TV and therefore advertising and

⁷¹A.C. Okros, "Surfing the Digital Tsunami" ..., 119.

⁷²*Ibid.*, 105.

⁷³Center for Generational Kinetics, "The State of Gen Z 2018," last accessed 25 April 2019, https://genhq.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/State-of-Gen-Z-2018.pdf?inf_contact_key=d97fc322c1cc9c49ac20400f1c8de3a016358d5485884e2f31e6019a0d26c8b0.

piquing their interest using these means are not as effective. A 2018 study completed by Gen HQ, found that “40% of [Post-Millennials] say they would use YouTube to determine if they want to work for a company while 37% would use Instagram and 36% would use Snapchat...Much like the job search itself, this is completely inverted when compared to Millennials who rely on LinkedIn and Facebook.”⁷⁴ Therefore recruiters and companies need to focus their advertising campaigns on the correct platforms to reach the targeted audience. As avid users of technology, digital media literacy will be at its highest among Post-Millennials. From a young age many have had access to iPads, Netflix and YouTube. Therefore, “this generation will have the potential to enter the workforce much more skilled at social interactions and far more media savvy than the Millennials.”⁷⁵

One aspect worth mentioning regarding digital literacy since increasing the number of females in the military is a priority, is that “65% of Gen Z females and 50% of Gen Z males [use] their phones 5 or more hours per day.”⁷⁶ Understanding the difference between how social media affects males and females in terms of reaching and messaging is significantly important. “Females are more immersed and therefore more susceptible to comparing themselves and their lives to what they see on social media, and even gauging their happiness and self-worth accordingly.”⁷⁷ These considerations should be integrated into the recruiting and marketing campaign but also accepted as the new reality for potential employees. Since they are dependent on their phones, employers must recognize the impact this will have on their social interactions, but also their understandings, values and attitudes regarding society, the military and the world. Research suggests “Post-

⁷⁴*Ibid.*

⁷⁵A.C. Okros, “Surfing the Digital Tsunami” ..., 106.

⁷⁶Center for Generational Kinetics, “The State of Gen Z 2018.”

⁷⁷*Ibid.*

Millennials are often described as emotionally attached to their technology...[and] their smartphones represent a social hub that provides them with inspiration, interactivity and a creative outlet as well as increasingly serving as a parental substitute to help organize their lives.”⁷⁸

Another difference between Post-Millennials and other generations currently in the workforce, is the need for more frequent feedback. As this is a result of their constant use and immediate satisfaction garnered from their online lives, this expectation has flowed into the workplace. “Two-thirds of Gen Z say they need feedback from their supervisor at least every few weeks in order to stay at their job.”⁷⁹ Unlike Baby Boomers who are generally independent workers and unlike Millennials who prefer working as a group, Post-Millennials have a slightly different expectation for their work environment. “Post-Millennials will strongly value group and team efforts with the nuanced differentiation between a recognition that each is still going to be assessed and rewarded on their individual talent and accomplishments but an expectation that all will be acknowledged for their contribution.”⁸⁰ This is a change to which all generations will have to adapt. “Gen Z’s desire for greater communication frequency in the workplace will be a challenge for many employers, potentially even for Millennials who manage Gen Z...[but it] creates a tremendous opportunity to help the generation develop their workplace skills, mindset and attitude.”⁸¹ This expectation is not unrealistic nor is it a new concept as all employees, regardless of generation, would like to know that their individual work is valued and to learn how they can improve. “[It is] crucial to give Gen

⁷⁸A.C. Okros, “Surfing the Digital Tsunami” ..., 104.

⁷⁹Center for Generational Kinetics, “The State of Gen Z 2018.”

⁸⁰A.C. Okros, “Surfing the Digital Tsunami” ..., 112.

⁸¹Center for Generational Kinetics, “The State of Gen Z 2018.”

Z-ers direct, constructive criticism – they can handle it better than their predecessors, and they crave it in order to improve at their jobs.”⁸² Gen Z are only forcing the concept of frequent individual feedback more than previous generations.

This generation also wants options. Many may forgo university because they have seen the burden of debt and will seek out workplaces that offer university type training instead.⁸³ “They value experience over tangible possessions, so the argument for earning a degree has less weight.”⁸⁴ They believe that learning is a continuous lifelong path and that opportunities for professional development and higher-level learning should be encouraged and offered throughout their careers.

With respect to options, Post-Millennials desire customization to include job mobility. Generally, Post-Millennials do not expect to stay in the same job during their entire professional lives. “83% of Gen Z employees said they expected to make employment changes early on in their career.”⁸⁵ This is motivated by the fact that they are willing to job hop to find the job description that fits them personally. They want interesting work, not generic work and will take the steps necessary to make that happen. “An empowering work culture and the potential for promotions are the key things to make Gen Z-ers stay in a job for longer than 3 years.”⁸⁶ Although the idea of switching jobs is attractive, being impacted by the recession and witnessing the consequences of that crisis, also attracts Gen Z to ensuring a stable professional life. From a survey conducted across the G20 countries asking 3,400 Gen Z, “a stable career path topped the

⁸²Silver Swan Recruitment, “Everything You Need to Know.”

⁸³“How Will Generation Z Change the Workplace,” YouTube video, 1:55, posted by Ryan Jerkins, 2 April 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ka9PJbjFPqU>.

⁸⁴University of South Florida, “Getting Ready to Recruit Generation Z,” last accessed 25 April 2019, <https://www.usf.edu/career-services/documents/events/evt-empinst-2017-keynote.pdf>.

⁸⁵Silver Swan Recruitment, “Everything You Need to Know.”

⁸⁶*Ibid.*

list, viewed as important or very important by 89 per cent of respondents and 93 per cent of Canadians.”⁸⁷

This generation is full of multitaskers, but with shorter attention spans.⁸⁸

Although they can process information faster, any product that takes too much time to read including reviews or articles, will lose their interest and focus. This aspect of Post-Millennials should be considered when designing recruiting tools including videos, emails and online applications.

All these attributes possessed by these two generations should be taken into consideration when designing a recruiting strategy. They highlight aspects that attract Millennials and Post-Millennials to specific advertisements, and their patterns of behaviour that can be leveraged to launch an effective marketing campaign.

Unfortunately, the CAF recruiting strategy does not appear to completely consider all these factors. In addition, there are other challenges that stem from the recruiting process itself and from the Canadian population’s general lack of familiarity about the CAF. These will be presented in the following section to understand the challenges to the current recruiting problems, as well as initiatives already put in place that are hopefully addressing the concerns of the potential recruit and deem the CAF worthy of career consideration.

⁸⁷Tanner, “Young blood.”

⁸⁸“Millennials vs Generation Z: WHO IS BETTER?” YouTube video, 8:08, posted by SMART BANANA, 26 July 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5mcoHwoMhXQ>.

CHAPTER 3 - IDENTIFIED RECRUITING ISSUES

Why the CAF is concerned?

The CAF should be concerned about the recruiting system because it has been unable to reach its goals of diversifying the workforce in the military and leverage the ensuing benefits. According to the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) of Canada, findings indicate “ongoing, systemic recruiting challenges for the Regular Force in its efforts to counter higher rates of attrition...and there was no comprehensive plan to attract more applicants, particularly women, Aboriginal peoples, and visible minorities.”⁸⁹ Although the measure of performance is by objectives, the advantages gained should be the focus and not the ultimate goal. Legislation and policy support these initiatives as do United Nations Security Council Resolutions, yet the CAF must continue to act to have any drastic increase in diversity. Additionally, in general the CAF struggles⁹⁰ to recruit the numbers to meet the approved number of a force of 68,000⁹¹ which is important to support all its domestic and international obligations, let alone the new targets set by SSE of “3,500 Regular Force (to 71,500 total) and 1,500 Reserve Force members (to 30,000 total).”⁹²

As far back as the 2002 April Report of the Auditor General of Canada, the CAF has not had enough people in most of its military occupations, recruiters have been difficult to find and diversity recruiting needs more work.⁹³ In the most recent OAG

⁸⁹Office of the Auditor General of Canada, *2016 Fall Reports of the Auditor General of Canada: Report 5 – Canadian Armed Forces Recruitment and Retention – National Defence*, last accessed 15 April 2019, http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/English/parl_oag_201611_05_e_41834.html.

⁹⁰*Ibid.*

⁹¹*Ibid.*

⁹²DND, *Strong, Secure...*, 19.

⁹³Office of the Auditor General of Canada, *2002 April Report of the Auditor General of Canada: Chapter 5 – National Defence - Recruitment and Retention of Military Personnel*, last accessed 5 May 2019, http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/English/parl_oag_200204_05_e_12378.html.

Report, the same issues have been identified with recruiting not increasing the representation of women and overall recruiting targets achieved but occupations still left understaffed.⁹⁴ As stated earlier by both SSE and the OAG 2016 Report, the conclusion drawn is that there is room for improvement in recruiting. The statistics show an increase in women, Indigenous Peoples and visible minorities since 2016. In fact, the number of female enrolments has increased from 775 in March 2017 to 860 in March 2018.⁹⁵ However this simply shows an increase in number of women and not an increase in the percentage of women overall, which means the set targets are not actually being achieved. Additionally, these numbers do not address the fact that females are clustered in specific roles in the military. “In the 2014-15 fiscal year, statistics indicated that about 50 percent of women in the CAF were concentrated in six occupations: resource management support clerks, supply technicians, logistics officers, medical technicians, nursing officers, and cooks.”⁹⁶ In its attempts to recruit the other EE designated groups, the CAF has only seen a slight increase in the number of applicants. “Representation of Indigenous Peoples rose from 2.6% in April 2016 to 2.7% in February 2018. Representation of visible minorities rose from 6.7% in April 2016, to 7.4% in March 2017 and 8.1% in February 2018.”⁹⁷ Although the numbers depict a slight rise in the targeted populations, as mandated by SSE, a more dramatic and deliberate approach must be taken to avoid losing out from the benefits of increased diversity within the CAF.

⁹⁴Office of the Auditor General of Canada, *2016 Fall Reports of the Auditor General of Canada*.

⁹⁵Department of National Defence, Monthly Enrolments CFRG slides, 2018.

⁹⁶Office of the Auditor General of Canada, *2016 Fall Reports of the Auditor General of Canada*.

⁹⁷Department of National Defence, *Government Response to the 2016 Fall Reports of the Auditor General of Canada: Report 5 – Canadian Armed Forces Recruitment and Retention – National Defence*, last accessed 25 April 2019, 6, https://www.ourcommons.ca/content/Committee/421/PACP/WebDoc/WD9821327/421_PACP_reldoc_PDF/PACP_DepartmentOfNationalDefence-ProgressReport-2018-04-30-e.PDF.

Despite honest recruiting efforts specifically targeting women, “their proportion of the CAF population has remained fairly static.”⁹⁸ Therefore the strategies that are being used are not meeting the mark of increasing the females in the military. Things should change to prevent stagnation and prevent an over-reliance on the traditional pool of anglophone male recruits.⁹⁹

Challenges and Current Problems

The challenges and current problems that exist in the CAF with respect to increasing diversity and attracting Canadians in general, can be identified by examining a few key elements. Some of them originate from the recruiting process and others from the general lack of knowledge and unfamiliarity with the CAF itself. Identifying the issues that stem from these two areas will help formulate potential solutions to recruiting strategies.

Recruiting Processes

One reason why the numbers reflected in the recruiting process are failing to reach the set goals is “our attraction has historically been reactive; we have waited for applicants to come to us. Current recruitment marketing and communications strategies have delivered information about the CAF to the public that is too generalized.”¹⁰⁰ To increase the numbers in specific groups, there needs to be a deliberate and coordinated targeted approach. This target-based analysis has been initiated by Operation Generation with the intent to focus on specific diversity groups within the Canadian population.

⁹⁸Davis, “Women in the Military: Facing the Warrior Framework,” ..., 132.

⁹⁹*Ibid.*, 138.

¹⁰⁰DND, *Defence Plan* ..., 4.

Unfortunately, it is too soon in the process to determine the effectiveness of this campaign.

Recruiting problems cannot be discussed without mentioning the achievement of recruitment targets. Instead of the targets being defined by the components (Royal Canadian Navy (RCN), Canadian Army (CA), and Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF)) and their recruiting needs, “recruitment targets were based on National Defence’s capacity to process applications and enroll and train new members.”¹⁰¹ The tension here is between whether the CAF should have provided the incremental resources (money or people) to enable CFRG to meet full CAF requirements using their existing methods or forced CFRG to make the changes needed to process the required number with allocated resources. The current approach is a mix of both; investment in some new CAF positions and boosted budgets, but also increased pressures to streamline processing. Furthermore, in the 2016 Fall Reports of the Auditor General of Canada, it was found “the total recruitment targets had been met by enrolling more members than had been set as targets in some occupations, leaving other occupations significantly below the required number of personnel.”¹⁰² The numbers were set below the Regular Force’s needs. So, it appears the goal of increasing the overall CAF strength was being met but they were not aligned with the needs of the service itself. Therefore, they did not reflect the growth and increase originally demonstrated or necessary to ensure that the CAF had adequate numbers of trained personnel in the right occupations to meet Canada’s domestic and international requirements.

Unfamiliar with the CAF

¹⁰¹Office of the Auditor General of Canada, *2016 Fall Reports of the Auditor General of Canada*.

¹⁰²*Ibid.*

Despite the goals and aspirations of the CAF to increase the intake of recruits and attain specific numbers to diversify the employment pool, it appears that challenges still abound. Canadians are not naturally drawn to the military. Generally speaking it is due to insufficient familiarity.¹⁰³ “One of the challenges of recruiting in Canada is that a lot of people don’t understand what the CAF offers.”¹⁰⁴ Gaining awareness, providing education and maintaining a positive image in the public’s eye contribute to the challenges the CAF suffers in addition to the regular recruiting issues with which all Canadian employers must contend. As we are not currently engaged in major operations overseas and the government will unlikely take any drastic measures as we are approaching an election year, the “CAF has become all but invisible to most Canadians.”¹⁰⁵ When the economy is improving and unemployment is low across the country, the military tends to lose its allure. One could also argue when we are not at war, the CAF virtually disappears from the public consciousness.¹⁰⁶ Due to the lack of exposure in public media and pop culture, a career in the military for youth is not at the forefront of their minds. Measures should be taken to increase attraction among Post-Millennials and diverse populations even during times when the CAF is not a part of everyday discussions and therefore not even on the radar to be considered an employer of choice.

For those Canadians who are slightly familiar with the military, their view and opinion of a life in the military is heavily based on either a lack of knowledge or

¹⁰³ Earnsccliffe Strategy Group, Views of the Canadian Armed Forces 2018 Tracking Study: Research Report (Ottawa: DND, 2018), 2.

¹⁰⁴House of Commons, *Minutes of Proceedings...*, 13.

¹⁰⁵David J. Bercuson, “The thinning of the Canadian Armed Forces,” *Legion Magazine*, last accessed 25 April 2019, <https://legionmagazine.com/en/2018/10/the-thinning-of-the-canadian-armed-forces/>.

¹⁰⁶*Ibid.*

misconceptions of the military itself. “Participants explained that their impressions of the CAF were typically influenced by news stories and accounts in the media and/or film (fictional).”¹⁰⁷ There even exist misunderstandings about the types and variety of positions available within the military. Many still believe “serving in the Army is dangerous...[although] only a small percentage of those in the Army directly participate in active land combat.”¹⁰⁸ There is a misleading aspect that to work in the CAF one must be a gun toting soldier, or drive a tank, or fly a jet but the reality is there are over 150 different jobs in the CAF available. In addition, in Canada all military occupations are now open to men and women as of 2001, when the last restriction was removed to allow women to be submariners.¹⁰⁹ There are multiple ways of serving through various jobs including engineering, cyber, medical and photography that do not put the member in danger directly.

Women, specifically, have many valid concerns about choosing a career in the military. According to evidence from focus groups, interviews, literature reviews, jurisdictional scans, and academic consultations “[there] are five broad areas that can affect women’s willingness to pursue a career in the CAF. These are: deployments and relocation; leave without pay; childcare support; long-term commitment/ability to resign; and culture/diversity.”¹¹⁰ Fortunately, most of these issues are concerns of serving members too. Therefore, the policies and options available simply need to be a part of the

¹⁰⁷Department of National Defence, “CFRG Tiger Team – Recruitment of Women in the CAF,” 4 November 2016.

¹⁰⁸“After Falling Short, U.S. Army Gets Creative With New Recruiting Strategy,” *NPR Weekend Edition Sunday*, 6 January 2019, <https://www.npr.org/2019/01/06/682608011/after-falling-short-u-s-army-gets-creative-with-new-recruiting-strategy>.

¹⁰⁹DND, *Strong, Secure...*, 85.

¹¹⁰Hardy, Elizabeth. *Behavioural Insights Project: Increasing Recruitment of Women into the Canadian Armed Forces*. Ottawa: Government of Canada, 2017, 32.

recruitment campaign. Women need to be reminded that a military career is respected¹¹¹, offers the unique opportunity to serve and help others, permits careers in a wide variety of fields, and provides career advancement. The CAF also needs to debunk the misconceptions of the role of women in the military and articulate there is not one type of female who can be successful in this type of job. Sailors, aviators, and soldiers come in not only all shapes and sizes but also bearing all measures of femininity and are accepted in the CAF.¹¹²

When identifying the barriers and concerns presented by visible minorities and immigrants, the idea of the military itself as a feasible career option is a task they may need to be reconciled. “Many immigrant groups are likely not to join because they fled countries with oppressive military regimes. In general, it does not appear that many ethnic minorities view the CF as an employer of choice.”¹¹³ Culturally speaking, joining the military may not be a respectable or acceptable career choice. Their ability to identify with Canada and possessing the inherent desire to serve their new country is often weaker “so that certain marketing approaches are less effective among these groups.”¹¹⁴ Sometimes the potential recruits of various ethnicities have a lack of interest in the CAF as a viable career option. According to the Ipsos Reid Report conducted in 2014, 30% of Black-Canadian youth, 28% of Filipino-Canadian youth and 33% of Latin American-Canadian youth have no interest in employment in the CAF.¹¹⁵ Not only is there

¹¹¹DND, “CFRG Tiger Team”.

¹¹²DND, CAF Diversity Strategy..., 2.

¹¹³Stoker, “Recruiting, Advertising and Marketing Strategies” ..., 50-51.

¹¹⁴*Ibid.*, vi.

¹¹⁵Ipsos Reid Corporation, *Visible Minorities Recruitment and the Canadian Armed Forces: The Black-, Filipino- and Latin American-Canadian Populations* (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2014), 76, http://epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/100/200/301/pwgsc-tpsgc/por-cf/national_defence/2014/049-13-e/report.pdf.

insufficient interest in the possibility of a military career, but these members of visible minorities are attempting to reconcile their culture with the predominantly Canadian culture. In that same survey, it was discovered “[many] Filipino-Canadian youth mentioned tension with their parents but more along the lines of family obligations. Latin-American youth were more similar to Arab- and Asian- Canadians mentioning tension with their parents due to conflicting views on appropriate behavior.”¹¹⁶ Other findings from a survey conducted by Human Resource Systems Group, Ltd for Director General Military Personnel Research and Analysis in 2018, with the goal to determine CAF career preferences and influential factors for those interested in joining the CAF,¹¹⁷ stated their fears were in the enrolment process. “Respondents most frequently indicated that they had doubts about meeting the requirements, followed by the potential mental health consequences of combat service, lack of information, and loss of personal freedom and control.”¹¹⁸ These are obvious challenges that need to be overcome when attempting to increase the attractiveness and acceptance of the CAF as an employer to these diverse populations. The message within the recruiting campaign must familiarize them with the CAF but also identify the barriers to joining and recognize the intrinsic conflicts that they themselves must face within their cultures.

Finally, due to the requirement that applicants must be Canadian citizens, new immigrants cannot immediately apply and may find employment elsewhere while awaiting their citizenship. In the United States “many occupations are open to non-

¹¹⁶*Ibid.*, 34.

¹¹⁷Edward Yeung and Nicholas Bremner, *Canadian Armed Forces Prospect Survey Descriptive results for data collected between November 2017 and February 2018* (Ottawa: National Defence, 2018), 32.

¹¹⁸*Ibid.*, viii.

citizens, and in fact, their citizenship is expedited once they join.”¹¹⁹ Major L.D. McCurdy addressed this issue in 2008 in his paper entitled “Recruiting: Policy Change vs Extinction”, suggesting that restrictions for children born in Canada to immigrant families of non-favored nations be waived to allow them the same rights and privileges as other Canadians, including military service.¹²⁰ Yet over the past ten years, legislation has still not adapted to the changing Canadian demographic. Not only is citizenship an issue but “military eligibility is lower among some immigrant groups, in part due to inability to acquire security clearances, and in part due to fitness, and aptitude (due to language) issues.”¹²¹ Security checks must go back several years, and if that recruit is from another country that can take some time, during which they may accept another offer of a job.

On the other hand, the next generation will also be the most diverse which makes the pool of recruitable people within Canada the most diverse yet, as “half of all Canadian children currently have at least one ethnic origin affiliation other than British, French, Canadian or Aboriginal.”¹²² This is a new developing situation which the CAF must acknowledge and adjust to with regard to recruiting and work environment. With the CAF competing with a diverse labour market, it must present a clear message in its recruiting efforts that the CAF is an employer of choice “that values and embraces [everyone’s] unique individual identity.”¹²³

Other indicators that present issues, include the process of recruiting or lack thereof, women into specific occupations. “In the 2014-15 fiscal year, statistics indicated

¹¹⁹House of Commons, *Minutes of Proceedings...*, 3.

¹²⁰L. D. McCurdy and Canadian Forces College, *Recruiting: Policy Change Vs. Extinction* (Toronto: Canadian Forces College, 2008), 24.

¹²¹Stoker, “Recruiting, Advertising and Marketing Strategies” ..., vi.

¹²²Davis, “Women in the Military: Facing the Warrior Framework,” ..., 139.

¹²³DND, CAF Diversity Strategy..., Fforeword.

that about 50 percent of women in the Canadian Armed Force were concentrated in six occupations: resource management support clerks, supply technicians, logistics officers, medical technicians, nursing officers, and cooks.”¹²⁴ With the goal of increasing the percentage of women in the CAF by 1 percent a year, this may occur in the CAF overall but does not address the significant lack of women in the other 90 available occupations. More accurately, it could result in dichotomization with the majority of occupations overwhelmingly male and a ‘pink ghetto’ of a few that are overwhelmingly female.

Since the recruiting processes and the unfamiliarity of the CAF have been identified as problems and challenges, it will be demonstrated in the following section that some current CAF initiatives are attempting to overcome these problems.

Current Recruiting Initiatives

While it appears the CAF faces significant challenges with respect to increasing the diversity within the military, CFRG has reported success in numerous areas. “The percentage of women in the CAF was approximately 15.0% at the end of 2015. 14.4 % of the Regular Force and 16.6% of the Reserve Force,”¹²⁵ but more recently the numbers show 17% of enrolments in 2017/2018 were women.¹²⁶ This can be attributed to the current recruiting strategy directly targeting women. Across the force, influencing activities are occurring that attempt to present a female face to the potential recruits. This has been accomplished through use of career days focusing on familiarizing and educating women on the benefits and opportunities open to them in the military. For “two days the RCN, in partnership with the Achieve Anything Foundation (AAF) hosted day

¹²⁴Office of the Auditor General of Canada, *2016 Fall Reports of the Auditor General of Canada*.

¹²⁵Hardy, *Behavioural Insights Project...*, 6.

¹²⁶Department of National Defence, “CFRG Women Recruitment Effort,” last accessed 26 April 2019, 4.

sails in support of AAF's "Operation: This IS you!" series...RCN welcomed approximately 240 girls and women aged 12 and older onboard to experience a day at sea."¹²⁷ Another recently launched initiative in 2017, the Women in Force Program (WFP), has allowed 120 Canadian women to "experience different facets of a military lifestyle, including fitness training, hands-on demonstrations of occupations and tactical skills."¹²⁸ These programs have also seen the integration of major influencers with the hopes of reaching a larger audience. During this program, the CA invited two female fitness oriented social media influencers to attend, with the intent that their experience and eventual online comments would have a positive impact. Both published ephemeral social media content from the WFP achieved an estimated combined reach of 9,000 people¹²⁹. As a direct result of this initiative, "CAF Instagram experienced a spike in new followership and recruitment inquiries."¹³⁰

Another set of initiatives include using advertisements on social media. There are job postings on LinkedIn, web banners on various websites, and 15 second videos on YouTube and Facebook. The introduction of a Snapchat Lens which alters the user's appearance or adds interactive characters to their surroundings¹³¹ is just another method by which the CAF has finally joined the 21st century as it pertains to technology and leveraging it for recruiting purposes.

¹²⁷*Ibid.*, 12.

¹²⁸Department of National Defence, "The Women in Force Program, a new Canadian Armed Forces Initiative for Women," last modified 31 May 2017, https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/news/2017/05/the_women_in_forceprogramanewcanadianarmedforcesinitiativeforwom.html.

¹²⁹DND, "CFRG Women Recruitment Effort," ..., 6.

¹³⁰*Ibid.*

¹³¹Department of National Defence, "Looking at recruitment advertising through a new lens," *The Maple Leaf*, last accessed 25 April 2019, <https://ml-fd.caf-fac.ca/en/2018/02/10322>.

Other tactics that are currently being employed to encourage and attract new and previous employees of the CAF include seeking out specific required skill sets. The RCAF needs aviation experts and therefore are actively seeking to re-enroll ex-military fully trained members. “The Air Force Intake and Liaison Team (AFI<), which is based in Ottawa, works to identify and staff initiatives aimed at improving the re-enrollment of former skilled personnel into the RCAF.”¹³² The RCAF intends to reduce waiting times and expedite re-enrolment, to make it more attractive to the targeted candidates. Taking advantage of already trained members who may be enticed to return to the military if the transition is easy and seamless, is another step in the right direction for leveraging a significant pool of potential employees.

As described in SSE, CFRG must leverage modern technology-based solutions. Recently it has designed a more streamlined application website and smart phone application. Recruiting processes need to take advantage of technology and make the entire experience enjoyable, efficient and encouraging. Although, “the ideal job application for Gen Z is one that takes 15 minutes or less to complete,”¹³³ all generations will benefit from a more user-friendly online application process. Small tweaks, such as allowing the user to save their profile to allow them to return to the application form with the creation of an account with their email, prevents duplicating efforts but also provides the CAF access to the applicant by email to remind or encourage them to continue the application process. Other changes recommended for the application process include the following: “gender neutral job titles and descriptions, terms need to be defined,

¹³²Department of National Defence, “WANTED: Re-enrollment Air Force Experience,” last modified 24 September 2018, <http://www.rcaf-arc.forces.gc.ca/en/re-enrollment.page>.

¹³³Center for Generational Kinetics, “The State of Gen Z 2018.”

expandable menus would enable the process to be easier to follow and background information easier read.”¹³⁴

There are three successful programs in place for some time that target Indigenous Peoples to allow them to experience the military lifestyle without a commitment to join and that cover all the associated costs. First is the Canadian Forces Aboriginal Entry Program which allows those considering a career in the CAF to attend a course similar to the Basic Military Qualification (BMQ) over a three-week period. They experience field conditions and are introduced to morning inspections, daily physical fitness and military drill. “The results are overwhelmingly positive, with 85 percent of the graduates from the last two years applying to join the military while still on course.”¹³⁵ Another successful program includes Bold Eagle, Black Bear and Raven. These are three six-week long summer training programs allowing candidates to connect with their Aboriginal roots and ease the transition from a civilian lifestyle to a military one. They will also be a temporary member of the CAF while completing their military training based on the Army Reserve Basic Military Qualification.¹³⁶ Options to join the CAF are offered upon completion of one of these courses. Finally, there is the Aboriginal Leadership Opportunities Year (ALOY). This program targets those interested in attending Royal Military College of Canada (RMC). It is an opportunity to introduce Aboriginals to life at university for a year with the benefit of free tuition and books, and the flexibility to leave the program at any time or to continue in either the Regular Officer Training Program or

¹³⁴Hardy, *Behavioural Insights Project...*, 14.

¹³⁵Fraser, "Diversity Recruiting: It's Time to Tip the Balance" ..., 30.

¹³⁶Department of National Defence, “Programs for Indigenous Peoples,” last accessed 25 April 2019, <https://forces.ca/en/programs-for-indigenous-peoples/>.

the Reserve Entry Training Plan.¹³⁷ This program has shown success as 19 of 21 of the ALOY cadets joined the military in 2018.¹³⁸

Despite all these initiatives and the increased interest and number of enrolments they may have generated, these recruits are not guaranteed to be successful to reach their Operational Functional Point (OFP). OFP is “that point in the training progression of a CAF member when the CAF member has completed all qualifications required for first employment in their military occupation and is considered trained to an “operationally functional” level.”¹³⁹ If that is the case and the recruit falls out of the CAF, then the intent of reaching these quotas and increasing diversity in the CAF has not actually been achieved and the statistics are not representing a true increase in numbers. These initiatives need to continue but other potential solutions must be considered to increase the intake and success rate of the candidates, by recruiting the correct candidates who will flourish and enjoy a military lifestyle. Those potential solutions, with the lens of generational theory and diversity, and understanding the intent of the GoC and CAF, will be recommended in the following chapter.

¹³⁷*Ibid.*

¹³⁸Department of National Defence, “Indigenous students complete training program at Royal Military College of Canada,” last accessed 25 April 2019, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/news/2018/06/indigenous-students-complete-training-program-at-royal-military-college-of-canada.html>.

¹³⁹Department of National Defence, *DAOD 5002-7, Non-Commissioned Member Subsidized Training and Education Plan-Regular Force* (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 2014), <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/policies-standards/defence-administrative-orders-directives/5000-series/5002/5002-7-non-commissioned-member-subsidized-training-and-education-plan-regular-force.html>.

CHAPTER 4 - POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

Potential solutions to the recruiting challenge must address multiple facets. Firstly, they must meet the intent and goal of both GoC and CAF mandates. Secondly, they must recognize and respect the differences of diverse populations and meet or exceed the expectations of the Millennials and Post-Millennials. Thirdly, they need to address the identified problems including the shortcomings in the recruiting processes and unfamiliarity of the CAF. Finally, they must clearly demonstrate these are investments into the future of the CAF worthy of resources when budgets are tight. Although these solutions stem from research into the generations and diversity groups, these changes will benefit all. Therefore, their implementation can be justified as they improve the quality of life and work experience of all those in the CAF.

With a greater appreciation for the composition of the next generation entering the workforce and a clarification of the intent of increasing diversity (beyond the numbers) in the CAF, this chapter will explore some potential solutions to recruiting in the CAF. To improve the attractiveness of the military, not only do the recruiting methods need to be transformed, but organizational changes within the CAF itself must occur. These changes are heavily associated with increasing inclusion but also with adjusting the military lifestyle to ensure that working within the CAF becomes more attractive to Post-Millennials and other minority groups who have specific expectations for their careers. The CAF needs to ensure that the product it is advertising, a career in the CAF, is the same one that new employees will actually experience and expect.

As stated earlier, recruiting consists of attraction, processing, selection and enrolment. In the current initiatives it was shown that small subtle but effective changes

within the attraction stream will have a big impact on recruiting, but these will take time. The CAF must continue to broaden the scope of its initiatives to include the other elements of recruiting and strive for deliberate actions that perhaps steer the entire CAF in a new direction. The CAF may need to take drastic steps to provide the product it promises its new recruits. First, however, this paper will discuss solutions to the recruiting processes itself followed by suggestions for internal changes to the CAF. All these recommendations would require further research, analysis and consideration before implementation. A further disclaimer is required since recruiting initiatives are frequently occurring, following the recent direction from SSE and Operation Generation, and may already be implemented.

Optimize Recruiting Processes

The CAF would like to be on the cutting edge of technology with respect to the equipment that its members use to support, enable and fight in conflict. This edge should begin at the start of one's journey in the military during the attraction phase. Although initiatives are currently being implemented to modernize the intake process, further, more aggressive measures need to occur. The Post-Millennials expect all aspects to leverage technology and not be hampered by it. Advertisements need to be genuine and creative, websites need to be user-friendly and interactive, and the actual application process needs to be seamless and encouraging. All methods chosen should be incorporating the technology of the future and not relying on systems of the past. The communication capabilities and information management need to reflect cutting edge strategies to

compete in a recruiting environment where public and private organizations are using cutting edge strategies.¹⁴⁰

The application itself needs to incorporate ‘nudge’ techniques. According to authors of *Nudge*, Thaler and Sunstein state that nudging is “any aspect of the choice architecture that alters people’s behaviour in a predictable way, but does so without forbidding any options or significantly changing their economic incentives.”¹⁴¹ It allows for gentle, non-coercive, cost-effective ways to guide people toward better choices. In this context, it would encourage candidates to complete the application process which may seem initially daunting. “[People] don’t like change. Most people accept the default option when given a choice, which makes setting a beneficial default one of the most powerful nudges available.”¹⁴² Therefore, allowing the drop-down menus to default to specific military occupations based on the diversity group targeted may increase the numbers in those areas. Providing a status bar of completion at the top of the screen encourages one to continue the process simply by having the knowledge of their progress. Setting the default to allow the recruiting centre to contact the applicant as opposed to one where the applicant must consciously choose, will provide an opportunity for the recruiting centre to connect with the candidate at any stage of the application process. All these small changes would nudge the applicant towards a successful application.

Currently, other nudges are being used by the Personnel Research in Action team to encourage applicants whose files have been closed due to no further contact, to re-open

¹⁴⁰DND, *Defence Plan ...*, 5.

¹⁴¹Richard H. Thaler and Cass R. Sunstein, *Nudge* (New York: Penguin Group, 2009), 6.

¹⁴²Bob Holmes, “Nudging grows up (and now has a government job),” *knowable Magazine*, last accessed 25 April 2019, <https://www.knowablemagazine.org/article/society/2018/nudging-grows-and-now-has-government-job>.

their files and consider other CAF occupations.¹⁴³ The study concluded it supports “the use of email messages to encourage CAF prospects to continue with the application process,”¹⁴⁴ however perhaps when targeting Post-Millennials these messages should be through a text message or Snapchat, instead of email. The concept of reengaging potential candidates has merit, but perhaps the method needs to be more in line with what how the next generation primarily communicates.

Other simple changes to the recruiting website for both the CAF and the RMC could achieve greater interest. Taking the example from any major corporation or university, and knowing that their website may be the first chance it has to make an impression on a potential employee, the website needs to pop and garner attention immediately. Post-Millennials, nor do any other tech savvy generation, have the patience to dig for the information they require. Photos and videos of all aspects should be incorporated and updated on a regular basis. One should not have to dig for the answers they want, as users of any website should be able to find the necessary information with no more than three mouse clicks otherwise they become frustrated, lose patience and leave the website.¹⁴⁵ Ultimately, all applicants and particularly Post-Millennials are less likely to show interest in a company where they have had a poor experience as a job applicant.¹⁴⁶ This argument should be used to combat the strict GoC website policies that require all sites to be have the same common look and feel. Being issued a waiver to the

¹⁴³Department of National Defence, *Results of a messaging study to encourage CAF prospects to continue with the application process* (Ottawa: National Defence, 2018), 1-2.

¹⁴⁴*Ibid.*, 7.

¹⁴⁵Wikipedia, “Three-click rule,” last accessed 25 April 2019, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Three-click_rule.

¹⁴⁶Silver Swan Recruitment, “Everything You Need to Know.”

website policies would allow the RMC website to improve drastically with minimal investment and meet the needs of the targeted Post-Millennial generation.

The application could even incorporate existing technology to capture the advanced skills of Post-Millennials. Just like they would prefer to watch a video than read a book or article, so too should the application process. They could use video tools to create a video of themselves to replace a resume or written application. This may even provide the CAF employers with a better reflection of the attributes necessary for the positions.

Recruiters and Recruiting Centres

The Marine Corps places a high emphasis on recruiting from the United States population. One step taken to ensure this occurs, is choosing the right people to conduct the recruiting mission. The Marine Corps selects “the top 10 percent of colonels and top 4 percent of majors for recruiting assignments and conducting multiple screenings of potential recruiters.”¹⁴⁷ If the CAF is serious about attracting the best and the brightest into military service, then it needs to show its commitment and invest in the right people to carry out recruiting. Often the recruiters know little about all the Military Occupations, have little detailed knowledge about Royal Military College of Canada or “are rarely suited to acting as College recruiters or to carry out high school liaison in competition with other excellent universities.”¹⁴⁸ Recruiters are the face of the military to the unfamiliar candidate but with the right first impression, people skills and genuine passion

¹⁴⁷Douglas Yeung *et al*, *Recruiting Policies and Practices for Women in the Military: Views from the Field*, RAND Corporation, 2017, 44, https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR1500/RR1538/RAND_RR1538.pdf.

¹⁴⁸Department of National Defence, “Recruiting/Retention – Withers Report,” last modified 21 September 2018, <https://www.rmc-cmr.ca/en/college-commandants-office/recruiting-retention-withers-report>.

for their career, they can have an impact on that candidate. Those recruiters need to start their information campaign at the junior high school level by knowing the principals, local leaders, and coaches in the area, make their contacts and follow through as the years go by. Additionally, by ensuring a knowledgeable representative from each component is employed at the Recruiting Centres they would have all the necessary information about each individual military occupation.

Another step that would increase intake would be to have the staff at the Recruiting Centre be deliberately chosen to represent the diversity of that area. Aboriginal serving members should staff the Recruiting Centres in urban areas where there is a high population of Aboriginals. Visible minorities tend to live in metropolitan areas therefore the recruiting team should reflect that diversity. Moreover, where there is a higher concentration of specific diversity groups, the goals for those recruiting detachments should be higher than those in small cities and rural communities.¹⁴⁹ To attract and connect more with women, female recruiters should be placed in the recruiting centres.¹⁵⁰ It is not about reducing the number of men, but reflecting the type of work force the military aspires to achieve. “Female recruiters may play a key role in the recruiting process by building confidence in young female applicants, serving as role models, and answering female-specific questions.”¹⁵¹ This would permit female candidates to more easily relate to the possibility of a career in the military simply by having a female at the recruiting centre. Although choosing representatives of diversity groups to work at recruiting centres would benefit potential candidates, the CAF should

¹⁴⁹Fraser, "Diversity Recruiting: It's Time to Tip the Balance" ..., 29.

¹⁵⁰Cox, "Different Strokes for Different Folks...", 28.

¹⁵¹Yeung *et al*, *Recruiting Policies and Practices...*, 29.

recognize a tour in the recruiting centre as important as an operational tour or command appointment. This would attract members to the position as they would receive the well-deserved acknowledgement.

Finally, recruiting centers need to be accessible and located in areas where there is higher volume of foot traffic from the specific group the CAF is targeting. Recruiting Centres located in shopping malls or pop ups, that appeal to Post-Millennials, would provide more opportunities for the recruiters to pique the interest of the general population rather than one stuck in a government office building.

Create a Brand

To increase the attraction of a brand or product, a company should have a marketing strategy. Advertising alone will not increase the level of interest and therefore marketing must be used to deliberately garner the attention of the individual. Although “[the purpose of advertising is to modify the way individuals relate to the product or service being advertised,”¹⁵² it is not enough to post a simple advertisement in the local newspaper and expect increased attention towards a product, marketing involves a carefully thought out approach to messaging and the use of various methods. According to the SAGE, “the practice of marketing has shifted attention from mass marketing to the mass and individual customization where understanding of customer segments and segmentations has become crucial for gaining a competitive position in the eyes of customers.”¹⁵³ More importantly and more relevant to this paper, “marketing is important

¹⁵²David Anderson *et al*, “Navy Advertising: Targeting Generation Z,” (master’s thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2015), 5.

¹⁵³Richard J. Varey and Klement Podnar, "Marketing", in *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Corporate Reputation* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2016), 411.

for organizations because it also helps build reputation and brands, which are often seen as sources of differentiation, and can help build competitive advantage for organizations and other social units.”¹⁵⁴ With this in mind, for the CAF to be successful in its marketing strategy and to compete with other employers, it must first entice the candidate and then highlight the benefits and differences of a life in the military. Ultimately, the CAF needs to help the Canadian potential recruit to identify and connect with the military brand, but needs to first recognize its audience’s demographic by gender, socio-economic level, ethnicity, and age. The military must avoid being seen as the career of last resort. With the use of appropriate strategies to create a brand, effective advertisements will create a desire to want to learn and experience more.

One of the main challenges to recruiting is the lack of familiarity of the military in the Canadian population.¹⁵⁵ The CAF must create a brand for itself to change this lack of awareness about the role of the military, explain the opportunities that exist in both education and career progression, and the job stability it can provide. Although creating a brand is not a new concept or practice, this brand needs to stick out from the rest. This brand must be developed in such a way it attracts young and old, male, female and non-binary, but entices the best and brightest Canadians to maintain the high standard expected of military members and the institution. With a changing demographic in Canada and knowing it needs to remain relevant, “the CAF must strive to effectively communicate how it values and promotes diversity not only to build the reputation as an employer of choice, but to foster deeper more respectful relationships with all of

¹⁵⁴*Ibid.*

¹⁵⁵House of Commons, *Minutes of Proceedings...*, 13.

Canada.”¹⁵⁶ Finally, in creating that brand the CAF must dispel misconceptions that are barriers to being considered an employer of choice for Canadians. One effective way of achieving this would be to conduct a comprehensive rewrite of the CAF’s *Duty with Honour*, which explains within a Canadian context how the profession of arms is conducted¹⁵⁷, to present this image to Canadians and the CAF.

The CAF offers career opportunities in over 100 different fields but almost all of them are not known to the potential recruit, as they are mostly familiar with combat roles. These are the ones that are often used for recruiting purposes, are visible in pop culture and showcased in movies. However, the enabling and supporting careers have a lot to offer for those still looking to serve their country and help those in need without necessarily being put in a war zone. Highlighting these different unheard-of occupations may interest those Post-Millennials simply looking for a stable income with benefits and career progression. It may be a place for those who possess ideas to solve conflicts without violence in the military.

In an attempt to create a brand, the CAF must dismiss misconceptions and clear up misunderstanding. Potential candidates believe when joining the military, frequent moves occur. They see the need to move often and far distances away from their communities and family support network as a barrier to showing interest in the CAF.¹⁵⁸ The CAF could put more emphasis on the idea of joining the Reserves in their local area as a feasible option. This needs to be presented at the forefront and not as an afterthought. Then the geographic stability issue does not become an impediment for them.

¹⁵⁶DND, CAF Diversity Strategy..., 10.

¹⁵⁷DND, *Duty with Honour*..., 2.

¹⁵⁸House of Commons, *Minutes of Proceedings*..., 6.

Other misconceptions that are creating a barrier identified by the Behavioural Insights Project, include “the concern about the commitment required for a certain number of years before being able to take a voluntary leave and the perception of a lack of support after being discharged or retiring (with mental health issues being a concern).”¹⁵⁹ Another issue being the availability of childcare support as a determining factor for choosing a career. Being aware that these are the perceptions held by those not in the military provides the recruiting campaigns the insight to address these concerns and clarify these issues. Some of these issues are being addressed by the CFRG program titled the Journey as directed by Chapter 1 of SSE.

As part of the brand revitalization, the CAF should consider sharing a message of a commitment to environmental programmes, similar to the Australian Defence Force¹⁶⁰, and racial equality, as these are considerations for Post-Millennials. In fact, “93% of Gen Z say that a company’s impact on society would affect their decision to work there, and 94% believe that companies ought to address social and environmental issues.”¹⁶¹ This should lead recruiting campaigns to address the CAF’s views on these issues, but more importantly it should force the CAF to take an internal look. The CAF must make changes to truly reflect a work environment taking drastic steps to reduce its carbon footprint, to become a paperless work place and to enhance social awareness and engagement throughout the military. Additionally, the aspect of diversity and inclusion must be better handled. The CAF can no longer ignore or reject these issues, especially since the GoC has mandated it, and make it a part of its brand.

¹⁵⁹Hardy, *Behavioural Insights Project...*, 35.

¹⁶⁰Australian Government Department of Defence, “Environmental Management,” last accessed 5 May 2018, <http://www.defence.gov.au/Environment/>.

¹⁶¹Silver Swan Recruitment, “Everything You Need to Know.”

Social Media

Although recruiters have the challenging task of tracking down leads, processing applicants, and completing the enrolment of a candidate, marketing and advertising campaigns, mainly on social media, affect the attitudes and behaviour of youth as much as the adult influencers in their life. It has been stated multiple times that with the Post-Millennial generation, since they are technology reliant, recruiting campaigns must capture their attention. They are far more visual in nature and therefore the initial contact must attract the viewer or reader immediately. Since their average attention span is as low as eight seconds, four seconds less than Millennials,¹⁶² the appropriate platform must be used and all traditional forms of media re-evaluated for effectiveness. As it has been explained, Gen Z have an affinity for YouTube, Instagram and Snapchat. Unlike previous generations, they are not using Facebook or Twitter as their main source for researching or discovering new concepts or ideas. Nor do they read newspapers or even subscribe to news feeds therefore social media platforms needs to be used to establish the CAF brand and not just job opportunities. Additionally, the Defence Research and Development Canada 2018 CAF Prospect Survey produced similar and relevant findings. When respondents were asked how they first learned about the CAF recruitment website they indicated the most frequently used source “was an online search tool (e.g., Google, Bing, Yahoo; 36.6%), followed by being told about it by somebody other than a recruiter (12.1%), [then] Facebook (11.1%).”¹⁶³ Therefore, when searching for job opportunities the right web platforms must be employed and the CAF should create advertisements and videos to capture that audience.

¹⁶²*Ibid.*

¹⁶³Yeung, *Canadian Armed Forces Prospect Survey ...*, 64.

A recruiting drive on YouTube must be initiated with videos that capture the attention and imagination of the potential candidate. Serial videos that draw the viewer into watching a series, like Netflix binge watching, would attract and keep the interest beyond the initial view. The Royal Navy has created videos that present a better life, full of comradery and a sense of belonging.¹⁶⁴ These are emotions that strike at the heart of many in search of a career when the cost of post-secondary education is insurmountable, applicable to many Post-Millennials. The United States Army recently released a recruiting video which depicts two Army soldiers rapping about the educational opportunities, leadership development and adventure they have experienced since enlisting. This approach is the result of the US Army failing to meet its recruiting goal in 2018¹⁶⁵ and with the intent to target the Post-Millennial generation who seek information on social media. The benefits that are provided through medical and dental care, family support and potential for travel can be addressed later once the enticement of making a difference and feeling accepted has been established. Creating Snapchat and Instagram stories would allow a glimpse into the “Day in the Life of XX” and more importantly establish a means for potential recruits to provide feedback, ask questions and explore the possibility of life in the military through a platform that they are already familiar and trust. As Gen Z are far more visual in nature, recruiting campaigns should “avoid trying to reach [them] with lengthy job descriptions and content...they want short, snappy, to the point bullet points of information that tell them what they need to know to apply for

¹⁶⁴“Made in the Royal Navy – Michael’s Story,” YouTube video, 1:02, posted by Royal Navy Recruitment, 18 June 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KXTCzdden2o>.

¹⁶⁵Military.com, “Army to Release Music Video Aimed at Recruiting Gen-Z,” last accessed 25 April 2019, <https://www.military.com/daily-news/2019/01/31/army-release-music-video-aimed-recruiting-gen-z.html>.

the position.”¹⁶⁶ No matter what platform is chosen by the CAF to recruit, social media is still the best way to reach, communicate with and understand the next generation, and will likely remain so for years if not decades to come.

Targeted Recruitment

The Australian Defence Force have been working to recruit more women, Indigenous People and Australians from other cultural backgrounds for the past five years. In the last full year of recruiting they saw a 29% increase in women recruits, and 9% of recruits identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders.¹⁶⁷ One of the techniques used in targeting these populations included using authentic, inclusive stories in the recruitment ad campaigns. Serving members from various backgrounds would recount their experiences in the military in an honest, genuine, and powerful way, and presented in a way that others from those communities could relate. Additionally, these would run in different languages as they were targeting recruits whose first language may not be English. These are techniques that should be incorporated into the CAF to see results.

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and other police forces across the country have also struggled with increasing diversity and recruiting members of those diversity groups to their ranks. In Nova Scotia, the Halifax Regional Police are the only force nationally to have matched or surpassed the racial diversity of its community. They were able to successfully achieve this by targeting the African Nova-Scotian

¹⁶⁶Silver Swan Recruitment, “Everything You Need to Know.”

¹⁶⁷LinkedIn, “3 Ways the Australian Defence Force Attracted More Indigenous and Female Recruits,” last accessed 26 April 2019, <https://business.linkedin.com/talent-solutions/blog/diversity/2018/3-ways-the-australian-defence-force-attracted-more-indigenous-and-female-recruits>.

community.¹⁶⁸ Currently they are working closely with the Muslim community hoping to achieve similar results. The lesson that the CAF should take away from the RCMP experience is patience will be necessary and accepting that this will take time to have an impact is key as they began “targeted recruitment of minority groups in the mid-1990s,”¹⁶⁹ and are just now seeing the results of their efforts.

Use of Influencers

The way Post-Millennials act and think are influenced by multiple external factors. Those factors can range from advertisements, pop culture, current events, experiences and opinions of their peers. However, when seeking employment, a great deal of influence still resides with their parents or guardians. Young people searching for a job rely on and seek the approval of their parents. “Generation Z recruits are heavily influenced by their parents when making career decisions, 54% vs 16% for previous generations.”¹⁷⁰ This power the parents hold, cannot be overlooked and should be considered when devising a recruiting strategy. This generation has “had more guidance, direction, support and coaching than any generation in history.”¹⁷¹ Their input and advice have a tremendous impact on their Gen Z children. Therefore, “[advertising] directly to parents in media that only parents consume could be an effective way to reach out to influencers of potential new [recruits].”¹⁷² Parental advertising could use traditional means including magazines and newspapers, but the message needs to be clearly targeted at parents so they can influence their children about job opportunities in the military.

¹⁶⁸CBC News, “Police diversity fails to keep pace with Canadian populations,” last modified 28 July 2016, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/police-diversity-canada-1.3677952>.

¹⁶⁹*Ibid.*

¹⁷⁰Anderson, “Navy Advertising: Targeting Generation Z”...., 2.

¹⁷¹*Ibid.*

¹⁷²*Ibid.*, 55.

Therefore, marketing campaigns for the military must consider the habits and means of interacting with the media of this group as well as the primary target audience.

Parents and guardians need to be informed about the military and the opportunities available. They are the ones with the greatest impact on young people who consider joining after high school. This does not begin the day youth start their search for employment, but must be ingrained in their influencers conscious beforehand. They need to be informed so they can understand the values and rewards of military service and be encouraged this choice for their child is the right one.

As the CAF is attempting to reach the diverse population within the Canadian population, it is reasonable to believe that their parents may not speak English or French. Introducing the idea of the Canadian military as an option for employment and gaining their approval may need to be conducted in their Primary language. Providing that advertising hook and setting expectations of a military lifestyle need to be readily available to those who have the most impact on the next generation, regardless of race or ethnicity. Advertising and the official website should offer options to explore the content in those languages.

Another consideration when targeting Post-Millennials specifically, is the impact of online influencers. “Online influencers, defined as individuals who have a large social media following and share their opinions, research, expertise, etc., online, are a natural part of life for Gen Z as they engage in social media and surf the Internet.”¹⁷³ Post-Millennials not only follow online influencers, 46% follow more than 10 influencers¹⁷⁴, they allow them to guide their choices. “Influencers now occupy a platform of authority

¹⁷³Center for Generational Kinetics, “The State of Gen Z 2018.”

¹⁷⁴*Ibid.*

previously known to celebrities and star athletes.”¹⁷⁵ Online influencers have the potential to reach a large audience and can make a large impact with little effort. They do not possess any proven expertise in any area, as it is simply enough to have a large online following to voice opinions on any specific topic. The Post-Millennials seek genuine comments and put more trust into online Vloggers than traditional advertising methods. “Their reliance on strangers to influence their purchasing pathway not only shows the importance of outside influencers on their consumer journey, but it also provides a sneak peek into what brand leaders must know to drive engagement.”¹⁷⁶ Since these influencers unfortunately do not have to be an expert nor are they backed by official entities, their voice can be significantly detrimental on a brand or the brand can ride the wave of success purely on the opinion of one instrumental online influencer. The CAF needs to establish online influencers to increase the visibility and prestige of the military when recruiting and creating their brand. This type of engagement with Gen Z will ensure exposure and external influence that this generation not only seeks but upon which they rely for making major decisions.

Influencers have a huge impact on youth and potential military candidates. The CAF should leverage these influencers to re-brand itself. Young people graduating from high school are not making career decisions in isolation. They rely on input from parents but more and more the input of online influencers is having an impact. The mere mention of the military in a positive light by a well-recognized, respected, non-CAF member, is a priceless endorsement for the fraction of the cost of an entire recruiting campaign. The

¹⁷⁵*Ibid.*

¹⁷⁶Center for Generational Kinetics, “State of GEN Z 2018: Surprising New Research on Gen Z as Employees and Consumers,” last accessed 25 April 2019, <https://genhq.com/generation-z-research-2018/>.

CAF could use the Honorary Colonels network to promote the military as a profession within their sphere of influence which would have an impact on the parents of future recruits. These Honorary Colonels need to connect with future young candidates and not simply support the engagements of serving members. They need to be ‘cool’ but genuine and authentic to influence the demographic of the typical 17-21-year-old CAF recruit. With their engagement with community groups, clubs, sports and activities, they can actively educate the youth leaders about the opportunities and benefits which the military provides. Their involvement in the community would increase visibility to many diverse groups who may not necessarily have any exposure to the military. Additionally, the CAF could engage with well-established online influencers. As these online influencers already have a following, they are trusted and respected. Since the Post-Millennial youth want messages to be genuine, the credibility of the content of an online influencer were they to comment on the military as a career, would be exponentially more accepted than a simple advertisement.

If the goal is to become more diverse, then military members need to be seen in those communities to eliminate fears, answer questions and serve as role models. Findings again from the Ipsos Reid Report on Visible Minorities Recruitment showed that Chinese-, Asian- and Arab-Canadian “said that personal contact with their communities – at cultural events, at church, in the community centres and in schools – could go a long way towards addressing the lack of familiarity with the military and towards making careers in the CAF seem more real and plausible.”¹⁷⁷ The impact of individuals reaching out to their own communities could have an enduring effect and

¹⁷⁷Ipsos Reid Corporation, *Visible Minorities...*, 38.

should be considered even during operations. By exposing members of specific ethnic groups to members in uniform during domestic operations is “a key step towards alleviating some conflicted feelings they have about military service in Canada and towards impressing upon them that the CAF is an option available to them and which other members of their community have chosen.”¹⁷⁸ Dreams and aspirations are difficult to imagine without an example to follow, and having this exposure opens up possibilities to these diverse groups.

Interaction

As we have learned about Post-Millennials, they desire and need one-on-one connection. Therefore, any opportunity that allows them to speak directly and be exposed to serving members of the military is beneficial. Whether that is at a recruiting centre, at a community event, or at their high school, Post-Millennials want the genuine authentic experience. Continuing this vein, when reaching out and connecting with different diversity groups, encouraging serving members of specific diversity groups to get involved in their community will have an impact. Allowing young people to see their demographic, their gender, their ethnicity or their sexual orientation, not only being a part of the military but also being respected and being successful despite their differences will help connect them to the CAF. It would allow them to be inspired and envision themselves in a similar career. Leveraging current programs like the CFRG “Recruiter for a Day” should be more aggressively applied. The CAF should mandate that all members, on an annual basis, interact with their community, at a school, or other venue in a military capacity to expose youth to the military in a positive way. Cadets from RMC should visit

¹⁷⁸*Ibid.*

high schools in their hometowns to provide the most current information about their life at military college.

Although women spend more time on their smartphones than men, they are not necessarily seeking out information about the CAF. Only 50% of women compared to 63% of men will initiate that search on their own.¹⁷⁹ “Instead they [are] more likely to have been approached by someone (21%) or have seen, heard or read information about the CAF (26%) that made them want to learn more, compared to men (16% and 19% respectively)”¹⁸⁰ These facts show that to encourage and connect with women, those interactions are a key aspect of recruiting for the military. The venue where these connections occur is more important and should be chosen deliberately. Military recruiters should be at job fairs, Women’s Day events, daycare centres, all female gyms, or even craft fairs where women feel safe and not intimidated by the machismo aspects of the military.

Trial Period

Millennials and Post-Millennials avoid long term commitments, especially when the future is unknown. They want to know everything before fully embracing an idea. To allow them to experience the military without the requirement to commit to a contract, the CAF should offer programs that allow them to test drive military occupations. The Australian Defence Force (ADF) has developed a program to try out the military before deciding to enlist called the ADF Gap Year. It provides recruits with a “12-month taste of life in the Navy, Army or Air Force, and enjoy full job training, meaningful work and

¹⁷⁹Ipsos Reid Corporation, *Formative Research for Recruitment Marketing & Advertising* (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2013), 9, http://epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/100/200/301/pwgsc-tpsdc/por-ef/national_defence/2013/039-12/summary.pdf.

¹⁸⁰*Ibid.*

memorable experiences.”¹⁸¹ This experience comes with the pay, health care benefits, uniforms and lodging of a regular basic new military member. Once the trial period is over the recruit is given an offer to stay in the Regular Force, permitted to transition to the Reserve Force or allowed to leave without penalty. The CAF utilized this program in the past as the Youth Training and Education Program (YTEP) and should be reevaluated. This program would aid in dismissing many of the misconceptions of the military mentioned earlier, demonstrate that the CAF is attempting to be inclusive and respectful of all people and hopefully get them excited about a life in the military. This option could also be offered through co-operative education programs in high schools or simply intended as a gap year between high school and post-secondary education. “One thing we do know is that teenage summer employment is at historically low rates, so early job experience is not taking shape for Gen Z the way it once did—even compared to Millennials.” So, any opportunities that students can gain during high school would greatly enhance the interest of any candidate and fill the void from a lack of job experience. This would expose candidates to the life in the CAF providing them genuine insight and knowledge about the positions available before making a commitment.

Changes Within the CAF

With the understanding of the motivations of most Millennials and Post-Millennials and what guides their behaviour, the CAF needs to adjust their recruiting processes but also consider making changes within the military itself. Providing a workplace where cutting edge technology is the standard and inclusivity is the norm, is

¹⁸¹Defence Jobs, “More Than Just a Gap Year,” last accessed 26 April 2019, <https://www.defencejobs.gov.au/students-and-education/gap-year?page=1&perPage=21&query&query=>.

not aspirational for these generations but the expectation. Therefore, in a competitive job market, the CAF cannot wait for potential recruits but must provide a “compelling rationale for why an enthusiastic young Canadian should invest their skills in the CAF.”¹⁸² Therefore, the CAF needs to incentivize people to come into the Canadian military for what they want from us and what we can offer them. Knowing what motivates these people and what their concerns and fears are would aid the CAF in knowing what changes need to occur to make the military an attractive choice as a career. Making changes to recruiting is necessary but the CAF may see more of an impact if changes occur within the organization that align it with what the next generation of Canadian employees desire and expect in their future careers.

Job mobility

As future military members desire a meaningful career that through a customized and personal job description, changes need to be made within the CAF to make it an attractive option. “Especially considering many Gen Z employees expect to be in their dream job within 10 years of starting work, [they are] not shy of “job-hopping” to make this happen.”¹⁸³ The CAF should enable this job-hopping possibility within the CAF itself, by facilitating not only the transfer of occupation but by also enabling the exposure to all job opportunities. Perhaps at the initial processing of the recruit, they should not be assigned a specific occupation, but merely a component (Air Force, Army, Navy or Special Operations). This was a recommendation from the Withers Report conducted in 1998 stating “from a retention perspective, a number of problems derive from early MOC selection. Candidates are not sufficiently mature or knowledgeable to make informed

¹⁸²House of Commons, *Minutes of Proceedings...*, 2.

¹⁸³Silver Swan Recruitment, “Everything You Need to Know.”

choices.”¹⁸⁴ Permitting the cadet to experience different MOC while at RMC would permit them to choose one that interests them but it would also reduce the frustration of attempting a transfer. This would ensure the cadet was better matched to their MOC and meet the needs of the CAF. The Withers Report recommends “an allocation of MOC slots to RMC each year would accord with the developed projections for critical officer needs 3.5 years after the allocation date. The CF should preferentially allocate MOC slots most likely to create full career tracks for the officers who fill them.”¹⁸⁵

Another way to permit exposure would be to allow the recruit, who does not intend to attend RMC, to complete a six-month on-the-job training (OJT) covering all the potential occupations in that element. Based on their performance during Basic Training and an assessment during OJT they would be awarded their preference. Now their choices are from an educated decision through exposure to the people and hands on aspects of the job instead of a video or a discussion with a person at the recruiting centre.

Similar options could be offered throughout their careers in the military. If one is discontent with their assigned occupation than a transfer to another occupation would only occur after completing an OJT session in a potential new area. Informing new recruits that flexibility exists to experience different aspects of the military will permit the job-hopping they desire but keep them as members of the CAF. Amalia Jimenez, a Toronto-based organizational development advisor confirms this and found “young employees were happiest if companies offered them stimulating career experiences and opportunities to move around the organization.”¹⁸⁶ This job mobility would be an

¹⁸⁴DND, “Recruiting/Retention – Withers Report.”

¹⁸⁵*Ibid.*

¹⁸⁶Tanner, “Young blood.”

attractive option to Post-Millennials as they consider their options. Knowing that they will not have to remain in the same occupation their entire career and that job mobility is encouraged, would be an attractive feature of the military.

Inclusion in the CAF

Diversity can be described as a multitude of different aspects of a person. The generally accepted definition of diversity includes differences in race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion and sexual orientation. However even within each of these differentiating qualities, there exists diversity. Not all Caucasian people possess similar values or behave in the same manner. Similarly, not all women or Indigenous Peoples have the same philosophies, work ethic or motivations. It has been shown that having women participate in UN Peacekeeping missions allows the military to create relationships with host nations and the populace which improve cooperation and collaboration. Does that mean that all UN peacekeepers should be women or that all UN missions should have a few women to be those key enablers? Furthermore, the CAF wants to increase its diversity but does that apply to every element, each military occupation or the whole military. The CAF would reach its goal of 25% women in the entire force but unfortunately that does not meet the intent of a more diverse force, especially if the women are primarily still in the same military occupations.

Another issue to contemplate, is the military culture itself. Once a recruit is processed and enrolled in the CAF, they attend BMQ Training. During this training, the CAF indoctrinates them into all things military to include dress and deportment but also ethos, leadership styles, planning processes, and acceptable military behaviours. Elements of valour, courage and physical strength start to be emphasized and praised. At

that point, it seems the CAF is erasing and eliminating all aspects of diversity which was initially targeted in the process of recruitment. This phase also emphasizes normative conformity, obedience to authority and group loyalty which are the key factors that result in people giving up individuality in order to fit in. Therefore, the indoctrination and inculcation of recruits should be reviewed to ensure the diversity of opinions, viewpoints and ideas remain but still achieve the original objectives.

Join the 21st Century

In the current CAF recruiting advertisements, one of the impressions a viewer sees, is the CAF is a cutting-edge organization, operates-state-of-the art equipment and can easily compete with the current threats. However, the CAF struggles with budgets, procurement of equipment in a timely manner and political decisions that often affect the military's goals¹⁸⁷. This translates into a military that does not necessarily provide its members with the modernized equipment, adequate training or sufficient people. The impression created does not reflect reality in the CAF. The improvements to the procurement processes are beyond the scope of this paper, however, the introduction of online tools providing efficiencies to everyday processes would be a start to bringing the CAF to the 21st century. The following are several examples that might be considered under the Journey initiative. When a member arrives at a base, there should be easy to use on line applications that guide the member through the in-processing procedures. Use of paper versions of the PLC card should have been replaced years ago. The incorporation of technology extends beyond the simple in processing aspects but should be incorporated into all fields where it can make processes more efficient. For example,

¹⁸⁷ DND, *Strong, Secure...*, 16, 44-45.

simply scanning your military ID card at the medical clinic should open your medical file and reveal all data to the provider. Filling out the lengthy paperwork would no longer be necessary as all data is associated to your service number. The FORCE test should be online and require no hard copies. Once the evaluation is, complete a copy of the results would be automatically sent to the necessary offices to be recorded. When one goes to Supply to be issued or return uniforms and accessories, all transactions should occur through an interactive online application and no signature should be required on a piece of paper. When one is screening for a remote posting or one outside of Canada, there should be a website or online platform that allows the member to access the necessary paperwork from any computer. All these recommendations require the generation of online tools, yet would make all these processes more efficient for both the user and those administrating the service provided. Furthermore, the next generation regardless of their ethnicity, have been surrounded by these online tools. If the CAF does not introduce these online applications and incorporate them into its everyday processes, it would appear the CAF is actually not cutting edge and does not reflect an environment that would attract the best and the brightest.

CONCLUSION

According to SSE and OAG, the way in which the CAF conducts recruiting leaves significant room for improvement. The CAF has been directed to employ targeting strategies to increase diversity that reflects the Canadian population and also mandated to use recruiting techniques that engage and attract that population. Unfortunately, employing marketing strategies that may have worked on older generations or on primarily white Anglophones have become irrelevant and obsolete. Therefore, the CAF must discover creative solutions that can be applied to a new and improved recruiting campaign.

Using slow and out-dated technology during the application process can be changed and drastically improved with financial investments and policy changes. Creating a CAF brand that both members and Canadians alike can be proud of is also a goal that should be achieved. Increasing the public's awareness of the CAF missions, capabilities and benefits as a career can be realized through the use of influencers and appropriate advertising. However, until the workplace itself is a place where candidates desire to be, feel safe and enjoy the working environment and philosophy, the CAF will continue to struggle with attracting and processing new people regardless of their generational cohort, their gender, their ethnicity or their skill set.

These changes that need to occur in the CAF apply to inclusion of diversity, application of technology and change in policies. The CAF needs to continue to develop a more inclusive environment. Recognizing the strength of an organization stems from its diversity is not sufficient. The members of the CAF need to respect one's differences and embrace them, but also view the potential for operational effectiveness and take full

advantage of this capability. Additionally, the CAF needs to join the 21st century to attract those who grew up surrounded by technology and understand its power. The CAF needs to immediately apply available technology to everyday processes otherwise the attraction towards the military will quickly wane as current and future members become frustrated and discouraged. Finally, it is recommended the CAF permit and encourage job mobility. Having the ability to determine career paths through experience will attract future employees who seek a stable career with job satisfaction.

If the CAF wants to become a Canadian employer of choice for the next generation, changes need to occur in recruiting and within the military now. These changes will not only attract a diverse population but it will also improve the existing working environment and benefit all currently serving members.

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