

When Generations Collide- Working with Four Different Generations in the Workplace

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Higher Performing People

What is a Generation??

A society-wide peer group born over approximately 20 years, who collectively, possess a common persona.

Generations are shaped by history and events, technological advances, social changes and economic conditions, popular culture etc.

In general, members share beliefs and behaviors and a common location in history. They also perceive themselves to be part of a common generation.

Individuals, of course, differ greatly within a generation.

Generation Timeline

| Generation Timeline | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|---------------------------|--|
| 1922-1945 | 1946-1964 | 1965-1976 | 1977-1998 |
| Veterans, Silent, Traditionalists | Baby Boomers | Generation X, Gen X, Xers | Generation Y, Gen Y, Millennials, Echo Boomers |

Personal and Lifestyle Characteristics by Generation

| | Veterans (1922-1945) | Baby Boomers (1946-1964) | Generation X (1965-1976) | Generation Y (1977-1998) |
|----------------------|---|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| Core Values | Respect for Authority, Conformers, Discipline | Optimism Involvement | Skepticism Fun Informality | Realism Confidence Extreme Fun Social |
| Family | Traditional, Nuclear | Disintegrating | Latchkey kids | Merged Families |
| Education | A dream | A birthright | A way to get there | An incredible expense |
| Communication /Media | Rotary phones One-on-One Write a memo | Touchtone phones, Call me anytime | Cellphone Call me only at work | Internet, Smart phones e-mail |
| Dealing with Money | Put It away, pay cash | Buy now, pay later | Cautious, conservative, Save, save, save | Earn to spend |

Workplace

| | Veterans (1922-1945) | Baby Boomers (1946-1964) | Generation X (1965-1976) | Generation Y (1977-1998) |
|------------------------|---|---|--|--|
| Work Ethics and Values | Hard Work, Respect Authority, Sacrifice, Duty before fun, Adhere to Rules | Workaholics, work efficiently, Crusading causes, Personal fulfillment, Desire Quality, Question authority | Eliminate the task, self-reliance, want structure and direction, skeptical | What's next, multi-tasking, tenacity, entrepreneurial, tolerant, goal-oriented |
| Work is... | An obligation | An exciting adventure | A difficult challenge, a contract | A means to an end, fulfillment |
| Leadership Style | Directive, command and control | Consensual, collegial | Everyone is the same, challenge others, ask why | *TBD |
| Interactive Style | Individual | Team Player, loves to have meetings | Entrepreneur | Participative |

Workplace

| | Veterans (1922-1945) | Baby Boomers (1946-1964) | Generation X (1965-1976) | Generation Y (1977-1998) |
|------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| Feedback and Rewards | No news is good news Satisfaction in a job well done | Don't appreciate it Money Title recognition | Sorry to interrupt, but how am I doing? Freedom is the best reward | Whenever I want it at the push of a button Meaningful work |
| Messages that motivate | Your experience is Respected | You are valued You are needed | Do it your way Forget the rules | You will work with other bright creative people |
| Communications | Formal Memo | In person | Direct Immediate | Texting |
| Work and Family Life | Ne'er the twain shall meet | No balance Work to live | Balance | Balance |

Who are the Millennials?

- Born between 1977 and 1994
- First wave graduated high school in 2000
- They are the most wanted/planned/watched-over generation in history*

“Baby on Board”

home-schooling, car seats, helmets, etc.

- They are optimists . . .
- They are team players
- They accept authority
- They are rule followers
- They are smart (like school and learning)
- They are technologically sophisticated

*Millennials Rising: The Next Great Generation by Neil Howe and William Strauss

Who are the Millennials?

- Big and heterogeneous
- Giant of a generation
 - 76 million strong at the end of 2000
 - Could grow to 100 million (1/3 more than Boomers)
- America's most ethnically and racially diverse generation
- One in five has at least one immigrant parent
- One in ten has a non-citizen parent
- 35% are non-white or Latino ("minority")
- One in ten does not speak English at home

Source: Millennials Rising: The Next Great Generation by Neil Howe and William Strauss

Who are the Millennials?

- Parental education
- One in four has at least one parent with a four-year college degree
- Children born in the late '90s are the first in American history whose mothers (by a small margin) are better educated than their fathers
- Gender gap narrowing
- Spreading economic gap between rich and poor
- Haves and have nots

Source: Millennials Rising: The Next Great Generation by Neil Howe and William Strauss

Who are the Millennials?

- Three childhood afflictions that have grown dramatically during the Millennials' childhood:
 - ✓ Asthma
 - ✓ Obesity
 - ✓ Early onset Type II Diabetes
- Huge implications for U.S. healthcare system
- Attention Deficit Disorder

Source: Millennials Rising: The Next Great Generation by Neil Howe and William Strauss

“Without a doubt, Gen Y is the highest maintenance workforce in history. They want feedback now, they want training now, they want recognition now, and they want to create the lifestyle they desire now. If managers can learn how to harness their energy and coach them effectively, these young employees have the potential to be the highest producing generation ever.”

Carolyn A. Martin, Ph.D.

Generational Survey Report: Who's in the workplace right now?

| <u>Generation</u> | <u>Percentage working</u> |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| GI and Silent | 5% |
| Boomers | 38% |
| Gen Xers | 32% |
| Millennials (Gen Y's) | 25% |

Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Household Data, Not Seasonally Adjusted: Table A-13: Employment Status of the Civilian Noninstitutional Population by Age, Sex, and Race" (2012)

Intergenerational Workforce Issues

Common Areas of Generational Conflict: SHRM Survey

- Work Ethic
- Organizational Hierarchy
- Dealing with Change
- Managing Technology

Intergenerational Workforce Issues

Work Ethic

- Attitudes, practices, and perceptions differ
- Work hours
- Number of hours of work put in vs. quality/quantity of work accomplished
- Punctuality
- What does it mean to be “on time”?
- Salary expectations
- Professional dress
- “Paying dues” (i.e., expectations for pace of advancement vs. experience/seniority)

Intergenerational Workforce Issues

Hierarchies

- Acceptance of organizational hierarchies
- Older employees tend to accept hierarchies
- Younger generations resist formal structures
- Tend to have more informal relationships with supervisors and department heads than in previous generations
- Older employees can resist/resent supervision by younger employees

SHRM Survey

Intergenerational Workforce Issues

Dealing with Change

- Younger employees tend to adapt to change more easily than older employees
- Using rapidly changing technologies
- Accepting different ways of accomplishing work
- Adapting to organizational restructuring
- Changing career paths and moving among organizations
- SHRM Survey

Intergenerational Workforce Issues

Technology Issues

Generations have different levels of comfort with technologies:

- E-mail
- Cell phones/Text messaging
- Blackberries/Smart phones
- Web
- You Tube
- Facebook/MySpace/Twitter
- Variety of communication forms necessary for transmitting important information broadly

SHRM Survey

So how do we deal with all of
this diversity amongst
generations in the workplace??

Managing Four Generations

- Leadership
- Reverse Mentoring
- Organizational Assessments
- Cross Generational Teams

Leadership

- Coaching versus Managing
- Offer more development (career, professional, personal)
- Accept the fact Gen Xer's and Y's aren't staying in the same organization 10, 15 or 20 years.

Reverse Mentoring

- Set up reverse mentoring programs
 - Structure and support systems need to be in place
 - People need to be eager to be in the program
 - Clear about what the relationship of the mentor and mentee looks like

Organization Assessment

- Score your organization in these areas:
 1. Freedom and Flexibility
 2. Job Customization
 3. Entertainment (is it a fun place to work?)
 4. Innovation

Organization Assessment

5. Speed-response time
6. Collaboration
7. Integrity (authenticity of your company/Leadership Brand)
8. Experiential Training
9. Diversity

Cross Functional Team

Take results from the survey and form a cross functional team with a goal to:

- Come with ideas
- Create transition plan/Leadership development

What comes after the Millennials?

Generation 2020

Highly educated-born shortly before 2000

Words being used to describe: connected, concerned, careful and collaborative.

“Instead of trying to figure out why each generation is different, figure out the common denominators. If we do that, we’ll have a workforce that’s not prideful or discriminating based on age. We will be embracing each other rather than living in conflict”

James Sun, CEO Zoodango.com

Questions?

Thank you for attending!!