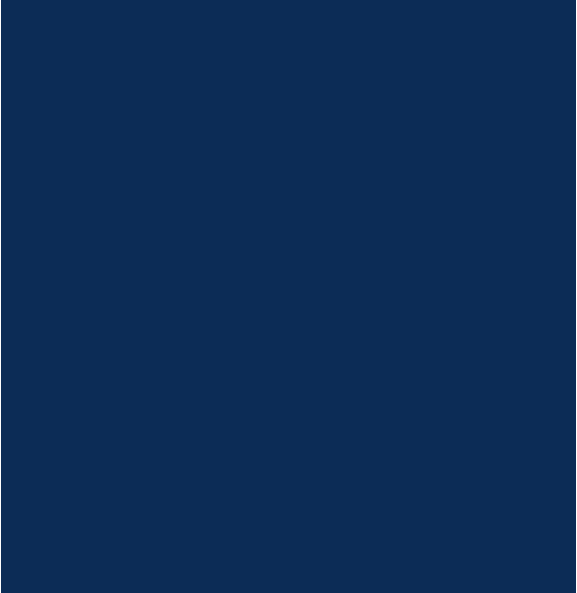


# Managing a Multigenerational Workforce

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“I see no hope for the future of our people if they are dependent on the frivolous youth of today.”

- Hesiod, 8<sup>th</sup> Century B.C.



# DEFINITION OF GENERATION

- Group defined by common values, attitudes, ambitions, and experiences
- Group “programmed” at the same time by shared experiences
- Group whose values, beliefs, and work ethics are formed by the same political, social, and economic realities

# INTRODUCTION

- For the first time in history, we have six (6) generations working side-by-side
- What are they?

# INTRODUCTION

- We are encountering “generational diversity” in the workplace
- Each generation tends to be shaped or influenced by its environment and experiences
- It is important to narrow any “generation gaps” in order to work well with others

# GENERATIONS IN THE WORKPLACE

- Traditionalists (born before 1945)
- Baby Boomers (1945 – 1964)
- Generation X (1965 – 1980)
- Millennials / Generation Y (1981 – 2000)
- Micro Generation – Xennials (77’-85’)
- Generation Z (2001-2012)

# EXERCISE 1

- What were some of the historical and cultural factors that influenced people during the ... 30s & 40s, 50s, 60s, 70s, 80s, 90s, 2000s?
- Write down for the decades assigned to you:
  - Historical Events, Famous People, Movies, TV Shows, Music, Influences (U.S./Global)

# EXERCISE 1

- My factors:
  - Historical – Oklahoma City Bombing, Columbine, 9/11, Iraq War, Virginia Tech, Great Recession, Obama
  - Famous People – Mark Zuckerberg, Conan O’Brien, Steve Jobs, Obama, Taylor Swift (although, TBO, she transcends all generations to create a loyal following, Swifties)
  - Pop Culture – Napster, Myspace, Facebook, AOL, AIM, Will Ferrell/Amy Poehler/Tina Fey/Adam Sandler, Reality TV, Blink 182, Weezer, Eminem, Jay Z, Drake, Kendrick Lamar, Outkast, Dave Matthews Band, Beyonce



# TRADITIONALIST

- Born before 1945
- Characteristics:
  - Loyalty
  - Respectful of rules / authority
  - Frugal
  - Reserved
  - Usually won't speak their minds, question instructions, or abuse privileges

# TRADITIONALIST

- Work Ethic
  - Conformer – work is an obligation
  - Hard working, stable, loyal
  - Avoids conflict
  - Dislikes change
  - Enjoys one-on-one communication
  - Technology is cold and impersonal, confusing
  - Feels “no news is good news”

# TRADITIONALIST

- How to Communicate/Motivate
  - Respect their experience
  - Reward and value perseverance
  - Use expert endorsements or testimonials of those they trust
  - Promote patriotism, teamwork
  - Allow time for decisions
  - Use “top-down” chain of command approach
  - Provide detailed directions
  - Communicate face-to-face

# BABY BOOMERS

- Born between 1945 – 1964
- Characteristics:
  - Optimism and involvement
  - Respect for power and accomplishment
  - Team orientation (holds lots of meetings)
  - Serious about work (works long hours and feels you should, too)
  - Not afraid of confrontation
  - Prefers traditional office environment

# BABY BOOMERS

- Work Ethic:
  - Competitors
  - Driven
  - Workaholic
  - Work is a source of personal identity
  - Rewarded with “tangibles”
  - Live to work – career first
  - Must develop technological skills before they can progress
- Stereotypes
  - Live to work
  - Can't text / Out of sync with technology
  - Can't tolerate change

# BABY BOOMERS

- How to Motivate/Communicate:
  - “You are valued, worthy, and needed”
  - Enjoy and need human interaction
  - Provide them with knowledge (the “big picture”)
  - Offer new ideas / proposals as a new experience
  - Provide multiple choices
  - Communication should focus on the future
  - Communicate through one-on-one or meetings
  - Seek them out as mentors
  - Use them as “sounding boards”

# GENERATION X

- Born between 1965 – 1980
- Characteristics:
  - Independent & Resourceful
  - Accepting of Change
  - Comfortable with diversity
  - Expect a balanced lifestyle
  - Dedicated to people, ideas, and tasks

# GENERATION X

- Work Ethic:
  - Not looking for longevity or lifetime employment (free agent)
  - Technology literate
  - Flexibility – work whenever, just get it done
  - Want to be developed, engaged, and appreciated
  - Challenger (a.k.a. skeptic)
  - Enjoys discretion
  - “Work hard, play hard”
- Stereotypes
  - Apathetic
  - Cynical
  - Disengaged



# GENERATION X

- How to Communicate/Motivate:
  - Cutting edge technology
  - Continuing education and development
  - Freedom to use their own resourcefulness
  - Involve them in projects of significance
  - Avoid micro-managing (offer to be a mentor)
  - No “hard sell” techniques – let them make a decision at their own pace
  - Provide a range of choice
  - Keep your promises
  - E-mail communication is expected
  - Suggest rather than order (but get to the point, no hinting)

# MILLENNIALS / GENERATION Y

- Born between 1981 – 2000 (Nation's largest living generation)
- Characteristics:
  - E-learners
  - Used to instant communication (a.k.a. impatient)
  - Optimistic; confident in self
  - Sense of civic responsibility
  - Achiever
  - Family-centered
  - Concerned for environment
  - Most educated, most diverse, most tolerant
  - Wants balance of family, hobbies, and work

# MILLENNIALS / GENERATION Y

- Work Ethic:
  - Technocrats
  - Work is a way to fill time between weekends
  - Not likely to seek out additional responsibilities
  - Difficulty understanding and accepting rules and protocols
  - “I’ll do the job you hired me to do, that’s all”
  - Goal/achievement oriented
  - Need mentorship
- Stereotypes
  - Lazy
  - Entitled
  - Over eager
  - Technology obsessed

# MILLENNIALS / GENERATION Y

- How to Communicate/Motivate:
  - Allow communication online for convenience
  - Consider using blogs, social media, text, IM-ing
  - Give PROMPT feedback on their ideas
  - Find ways to include and make them feel valued (but manage expectations)
  - Make sure YOU have researched the issue – expect that they have done so

# GENERATION Z

- 2001-2012
- Emerging generation – The youngest cohort of Generation Y
- Global, well-connected, and have encountered a lot of uncertainty
- World's first true digital natives
- Entrepreneurial spirit

# GENERATION Z

- Work Ethic
  - Prefer their own workspace than share it with other people.
  - Realistic due to growing up during a recession with skeptical parents.
  - Born into the digital age and 24/7 connectivity.
  - More cautious and selective about what information they share online.
  - Prefer education alternatives like on-demand learning, YouTube tutorials, or on the job development training and are wary of college debt.
  - Interested in role hopping and learning different tasks or taking on projects outside of their designated job role.
  - Concerned with innovation.
  - Want flexibility in how they work
- Stereotypes
  - Highly skeptical
  - Fact-check anything and everything
  - Short attention span
  - Technology obsessed

# GENERATION Z

- How to Communicate/Motivate:
  - Choosing video calls over phone calls.
  - Opting for recurring meetings to give Gen Z the human connection they crave.
  - Not skimping on feedback. Gen Z's constantly seek validation and want daily communication. Managers should check-in often, offer thoughtful critique, and set up weekly feedback and performance reviews.
  - Encouraging team bonding with social activities.
  - Reviewing your communication channels. Gen Z prefers email, text, and social media for day-to-day communication.
  - Give Gen Z ownership of a project that they can implement from start to finish.
  - Encourage the use of wearables, and use virtual reality in onboarding or training.

# DEALING WITH WORKPLACE DIFFERENCES

- Don't label or stereotype
- How do you want to be perceived?
- You're a coworker (or a boss), not a parent
- Focus on job performance
- Praise in public, punish in private



# COMMON ATTRIBUTES

- Everyone is comfort seeking
- Most people resist change, but don't like status quo either
- Everyone wants information, to be kept “in the loop”
- Everyone likes some level of control

# CLASH POINTS

- Agency loyalty
  - From organizational to individual
- Chain of command
  - From rigid to freedom
- Work ethic
  - From corporate to individual
- Workplace diversity
  - Diversity in the classic sense (race, religion, gender, etc.)
- Feedback and mentoring
- Differences in communication styles

# HOW TO BRIDGE THE GAP

- Use the A List
  - Accept your “mutual rightness”
  - Acknowledge your interdependency on each other/generation
  - Appreciate what you have in common
  - Assume responsibility for making your relationships better
  - Adopt the “Platinum Rule”
- Remember that all generations want:
  - To be treated fairly
  - Work that provides personal satisfaction
  - Employers who understand personal lives are important
  - Work that is valued
  - A clear sense of purpose

# WHAT IS THE “PLATINUM RULE”?

- The “Golden Rule”:
  - Treat others the way YOU want to be treated
- The “Platinum Rule”:
  - Treat others the way THEY want to be treated

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