

Managing the Generations

FROM TRADITIONALIST TO MILLENNIAL



Presentation Overview

1. Best practices for bridging the generation gap
2. Specific tips for each generation to address conflicts and create alliances
3. How to run productive meetings where everyone finds value

What creates a positive workplace for you:



Boomer-

- Trust in your company's mission and in your team members.
- Appreciation/respect from your company and from your team members.
- Listening to and implementing ideas from all team members.

Millennial-

- Career growth opportunity
- Opportunity to work with talented people
- Flexibility- clear instructions and concrete targets with the flexibility to reach goals by creating processes and procedures that work best for me.
- Work life balance

Why are the generations so different?

HISTORY & PARENTING



A culmination of forces drove the transformation in the workplace since the early 1990s:

- A shift in parenting styles
- Globalization
- Constantly advancing technology
- The painfully slow death of the myth of job security
- The never-ending ever-expanding information fire hose
- Increasing human diversity in every dimension
- The accelerating pace of everything

Traditionalist



“Waste not- want not”

- Worked in smaller communities or farms
- The Depression (beginning in 1929) left an entire generation cautious, thrifty, and focused on saving.
- Shaped by the depression- With little welfare and no Social Security, millions of people barely fed their families despite sacrifice and hard work.

Baby Boomers



“Building Character”-was the motto with parenting

- Pre-Boomer parenting focused on teaching children humility, diligence, grit, gratitude, and grace
- *What was always simply known as “building character” has become so out of the norm that it is resurfacing now in the form of a “movement” in educational circles.*

Generation X



Dual working parents created “the latch-key kids”

- By the 1970s, the first-wave Boomer parents were tended to be more hands-off with parenting— due in part to rising divorce rates, more dual working parent households, and a general increasing permissiveness.

Millennials



Self-Esteem Parenting, “everyone gets a trophy”

- Mid 1980s, a second-wave Boomer parents shifted toward safety and self-esteem— constant supervision and lots of trophies.
- We barely left children alone for even a minute! The “self-esteem” parenting morphed by the 1990s into “helicopter-parenting.”
- Millennials have been insulated and scheduled and supported more than any other generation before.

Millennials love technology for 4 main reasons



1. Technology makes the Millennials important to the older generations.
2. Technology gave the Millennials freedom.
3. Technology shrank and expanded the Millennials' world.
4. Technology gathers the Millennials into tribes.

Globals/ Gen Z



“Digital Natives”

- By the 2000s, helicopter-parenting reached new heights as relationships blurred as Globals grew accustomed to being treated as customers by authority figures.
- Parents supervise and support the every move of children, validate their differences, excuse (or medicate) their weaknesses, and set them up with every advantage.
- Globals represent a whole new breed of worker. Advances in information technology have made them the first generation of true “digital natives.”

12 Sticking Points- “They just don’t get it”



- Communication
- Decision Making
- Dress Code
- Feedback
- Fun at work
- Knowledge Transfer
- Loyalty
- Meetings
- Policies
- Respect
- Training
- Work Ethic

Getting unstuck



4 approaches

1. Ignore them
2. Fix them
3. Make a deal
4. Lead them
(Leaders love their people)

5 steps for Leading

1. Acknowledge
2. Appreciate
3. Flex
4. Leverage
5. Resolve

Policy vs. Flexibility



Business Necessity

Anything that will make you lose your footing, customer, money, or funding.

Generational Preference

Anything that is not a business necessity.

Communication



Traditionalist: write a memo, send a letter, listen to a speech, and call a meeting.

Baby Boomer: write a memo (with the distribution list alphabetized), pick up the phone, and set up a meeting.

Gen X: send an e-mail or instant message, search online for a summary of the speech, and meet virtually.

Millennial: send a text message (vowels are optional) or instant message, replay the speech online, or connect on a social-networking site. *You really just left me a voicemail?*

Decision Making



Traditionalist: The boss decides

Baby Boomer: We use decision-making processes, and the boss ultimately decides

Gen X: Whoever is the most knowledgeable on the topic decides

Millennial: We work through the options and decide together. If we can't, the boss decides.

Dress Code



Traditionalist: Formal dress shows respect in and out of the workplace.

Baby Boomer: I wear the expected uniform at work, but I'm casual at home.

Gen X: I'd prefer casual at work, but it's not worth the fight.

Millennial: What's the big deal over dress code?

Feedback



Traditionalist: If you do anything wrong, the boss will let you know.

Baby Boomer: Annual performance appraisals and quarterly one-on-one meetings with the boss allow employees to know where they stand.

Gen X: People who respect each other don't need a form or a meeting; they just say what they think.

Millennial: Just put the score on the screen, like a video game, so there's instant feedback.

Fun at Work



Traditionalist: I'll relax once the work is done.

Baby Boomer: The work itself is fun.

Gen X: It's work — quit trying to make it something it's not.

Millennial: I'll get more done if we have fun.

Knowledge Transfer



Traditionalist: Observational and oral

Baby Boomer: Observational and oral

Gen X: Oral and written

Millennial: Written and video

Loyalty



Traditionalist: Job hopping is the kiss of death for your career.

Baby Boomer: Leaving is necessary in some situations.

Gen X: Leaving is often necessary to get ahead.

Millennial: There's nothing wrong with changing careers until you find the right one for you. But if you like your organization, -just do a different job.

Meetings



Traditionalist: We met infrequently, and the boss did most of the talking.

Baby Boomer: Meetings were how we got information, and they created political opportunities for everyone.

Gen X: If meetings are not relevant and do not keep moving, I will multitask. We could do some of this electronically.

Millennial: Meetings are okay, but don't bore me. Make it interactive, or I may interrupt.

Policies



Traditionalist: Everyone needs to do what they're told.

Baby Boomer: Let's create a policy or procedure so everything runs smoothly and is fair for everyone.

Gen X: Rules are made to be broken.

Millennial: If it doesn't make sense, I'll assume it's a guideline.

Respect



Traditionalist: I will figure out the hierarchy and find my place.

Baby Boomer: I can work my way up to a position that gets respect.

Gen X: I will give you respect if you prove to me you deserve it.

Millennial: I will give respect to those who “get it” and will take me seriously.

Training



Traditionalist: We got trained in the “school of hard knocks.”

Baby Boomer: Training is a reward.

Gen X: Training is my security. If I’m not learning, then I won’t be prepared for the future.

Millennial: Who would work for an organization that didn’t provide training?

Training guidelines



1. Don't complain that the younger generations don't have what it takes. Change your training to better prepare everyone for the new demands of the job.
2. Don't assume you know what your people need, even after reading all the research. Ask them how they want to learn.
3. Create hands-on practice opportunities. It doesn't matter what generation your employees are or what learning style they have: learning will stick better if they spend more time practicing in the actual situation.
4. Be clear on the goal post training, and then give challenges of increasing difficulty until mastered. The biggest problem with most training is not the method but that we dump all the content on the learner at once without ongoing assessment and support.

Work Ethic



Traditionalist: I work 9 to 5 and stay late with overtime.

Baby Boomer: I work 8 to 6 and then take it home.

Gen X: I try to get it all done at work; I'll take it home if I have to.

Millennial: It's a 24/7 world, so I'm leaving at 5:00. I can log on tonight.

The Take Aways...



We talk about generational diversity in ways we would never speak of other differences.

Don't take it personally; the other person doesn't mean it personally.

Speak the other person's generational language.

Our past experience mold our ideas about company and work ethic.

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"Sticking Points: How to Get 4 Generations Working Together in the 12 Places They Come Apart" by Haydn Shaw, Stephen M. R. Covey.

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