



Motivating a Multi-Generational Workforce

Different doesn't mean Deficient!



Quotable Quotes

“The multigenerational workforce offers both challenge and opportunity.” *Rich Paul*

“The diversity of five generations provides a unique opportunity for knowledge sharing. But because employees in the various age groups may not naturally interact with each other on a daily basis, you may need to make a concerted effort to facilitate collaboration.” *Katherine Spencer Lee*



The Predicament?

- Workplaces are matching job roles with skill sets and not necessarily using tenure.
- Workplaces are more horizontal in structure.
- Employees find themselves in work environments with co-workers of different generations.



Why is this an issue?

- Multigenerational work environments can breed misunderstanding and conflict, and can compromise growth.
- Different generations have different values (even if those values share the same word label! For example “respect others”.)
- Concepts in the workplace are understood differently by different generations (like work-life balance, loyalty, and teamwork).



The Good News?

- Multi Generational workplaces can be a source of positive challenge, opportunity, and significant growth if managed effectively.



7 things we all have in common!

1. Everyone wants to succeed.
2. People want to feel valued.
3. No one likes conflict (combat!).
4. All arrows must be moving in the same direction.
5. We all need clear communication.
6. No one likes or is comfortable operating out of a sense of fear.
7. Everyone likes to have fun! (However fun might be described.)



How is a generation defined?

- Generations are defined mostly by the defining moments and events that capture the attention and emotions of the majority of people in their formative years.
- A generation is a group of people that share a place in time with common history of events and experiences.



The Generations

- 1. The Veterans (Traditionalists):**
Born in the years 1922 to 1943
- 2. The Early Baby Boomers:**
Born in the years 1944 to 1954
- 3. The Late Baby Boomers:**
Born in the years 1955 to 1965
- 4. The Gen X-ers:**
Born in the years 1966 to 1979
- 5. The Nexters (Gen Y):**
Born in the years 1980 to 1999



What do they bring to the table?

The Veterans (Traditionalists)

Born in the years 1922 to 1943

Core Values

- Dedication
- Sacrifice
- Hard Work
- Conformity
- Order
- Patience
- Respect for Authority

On the Job

- Stable, Thorough, Loyal, Detail Oriented
- Reluctant to buck the system, Inept with ambiguity and change

The Early Baby Boomers

Born in the years 1944 to 1954

Core Values

- Optimism
- Personal Gratification
- Youth
- Work
- Involvement

On the Job

- Economic Achievers
- Goes the extra mile
- Self Centered
- Doesn't think ahead

The Late Baby Boomers

Born in the years 1955 to 1965

Core Values

- Team Orientation
- Health and Wellness
- Optimism
- Personal Growth

On the Job

- Want to please and are good team players
- Uncomfortable with conflict

The Gen X-ers

Born in the years 1966 to 1980

Core Values

- Fun
- Balance
- Informality
- Pragmatism

On the Job

- Adaptable
- Independent
- Creative
- Impatient
- Cynical

Gen Y-ers (Nexters)

Born in the years 1981 to 1999

Core Values

- Diversity
- Global Thinking
- Change
- Achievement
- Street Smarts

On the Job

- Collective Action
- Tenacity
- Multitasking
- Need for Supervision

	Veterans Traditionalists	Boomers	Generation X	Generation Y
Loyalty to Employer	I'll always work here; will retire from here	I could work my way to the top!	I'll work if I have to.	Jobs are a dime a dozen.
Training	I went to school; I know what, how and why	Tell me WHAT to do.	Show me HOW to do it.	WHY do I need to learn this?
Respecting Elders	Well deserved	Is automatic.	Is polite.	Just because they're older? No way!
Change	Dislike	Dislike	Accept	Demand
Communication	Face to face	Via Parent's Phone	Via Personal Phone	Pager/cell/e-mail/chat rooms
Technology	Necessary evil	Ignorant	Comfortable	Masters



Five hints - Take Immediate Action

1. Develop open communication. Set the standard for open, nonjudgmental communication.
2. Demonstrate knowledge and awareness of the differences that exist in the workplace.
3. Don't stereotype or label – it's a trap!
4. Encourage collaboration. Create opportunities for employees to interact at all levels.
5. Remain flexible. Tailor policies and procedures to meet everyone's needs.



Motivating Veterans

- Provide stability and long term opportunities
- Provide positions of clear-cut authority
- Provide privacy (Ah Hah – they don't thrive in open space technology!)



Motivating Baby Boomers

- Baby boomers are motivated by power and prestige. (Ah Hah – the perks of position matter!)
- Allow boomers to participate in associations and conventions that keep them professionally connected to their peers.
- Offer long-term compensation such as profit sharing and healthcare benefits, including long-term care.



Motivating Gen X

- Provide the flexibility needed for them to manage their other priorities such as dependent children, aging parents and even educational endeavors.
- Provide many opportunities for collaboration and teamwork. (Ah Hah - This is the generation that “fuels their fire” through teamwork.)
- Provide recognition in ways that connect with what they value the most.



Motivating Gen Y

- Provide flexibility in when and where work is done.
- Provide opportunities for change and challenge. (Ah Hah - They will leave a higher-paying good job for the opportunity to experience something new.)
- Let them vent (and be rebellious) and do not take it personally.



Working Well with Others

The Veterans	The Early Baby Boomers	The Late Baby Boomers	The Gen X-ers	The Nexters
Born in the years 1922 to 1943	Born in the years 1944 to 1954	Born in the years 1955 to 1965	Born in the years 1966 to 1979	Born in the years 1981 to 1999
<p>Assist in training them in technology. Speak in longer terms like months and years (not weeks). Use a personal touch like hand written notes. Give the Veteran worker time to prepare for a meeting or discussion. Provide a framework.</p>	<p>Direct your discussion to the future. Get to know workers as individuals. Stress that they will improve the value of the organization. Respect them.</p>	<p>Focus on Challenges Show them how to make a difference. Teach the politics of the organization. Stress they will learn a lot. If you're blaming, they're not listening. Ask Questions</p>	<p>Make it easy for them to ask questions. Err on the side of freedom – provide plenty of elbow room. Help them develop all kinds of new skills. Use headlines, lists and bullets to grab their attention.</p>	<p>Create a clear picture of the work environment. Allow them to be equal team members. Create a strategy for achievement of both personal goals and job performance.</p>
<p>“Your experience is respected here.” “It’s valuable to know what’s worked and what has not worked in the past.” “You will be recognized for your perseverance.”</p>	<p>“You are valued and important to our success.” “Your contribution is unique.”</p>	<p>“We need you.” “I approve your work.” “You’re worthy.”</p>	<p>“We want you to have a life.” “You can have many projects to work on at a time because you are good at juggling priorities.” “Good political savvy and skills may be a way to get around the rules.”</p>	<p>“You’ll be working with other bright creative people.” “You can be a hero around here.”</p>

Ah Hah!

- There are 5 generations of adults in the workplace today.
- All have different personal priorities, growth preferences, financial concerns, and methods for professional accomplishment.
- Different doesn't mean deficient.
- Create approaches appropriate for employee segments that engage and enrich as well as develop capability to achieve organizational brilliance!

