



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Employee Assistance Program Multigenerational Workforce Cultivating the Energy



Objectives

- Increase awareness of labels.
- Identify characteristics of the different generations.
- Share best practices for working with all generations.



The Challenge

The four generations have:

- Unique work ethics.
- Different perspectives on work.
- Distinct and preferred ways of managing and being managed.
- Varied views on work-world issues such as quality, service, and just showing up for work.

Important Points to Remember

- A generation is defined by what they think, feel, and experience together, and not just by their collective dates of birth.
- Guidelines only – Be careful about overgeneralizations.



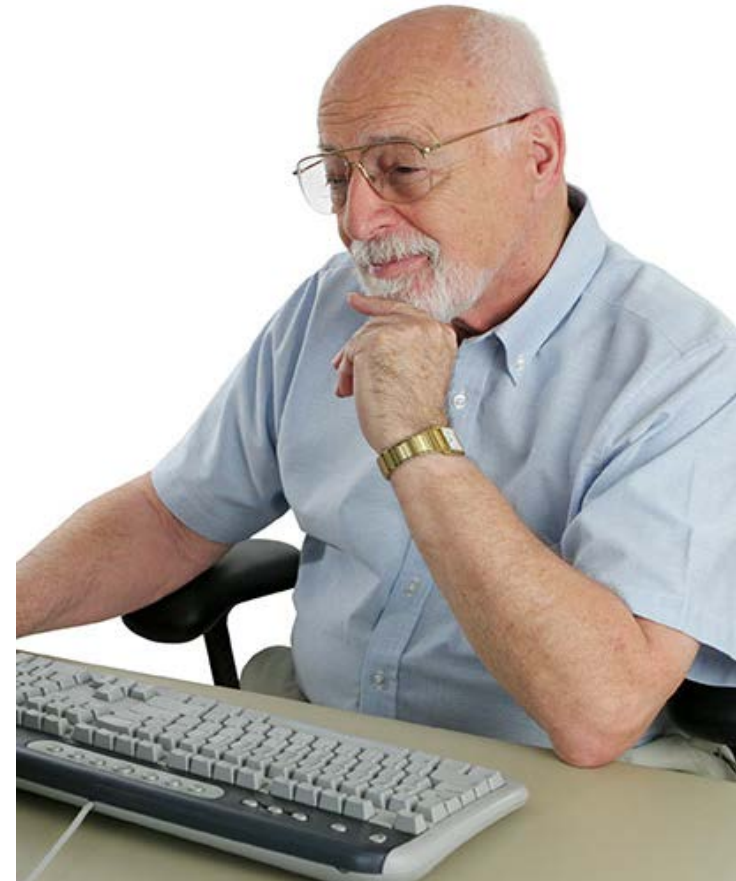
Identify Your Generation

- **Silent/traditional Generation (1925-1945)**
 - Approximately 10% of workforce
- **Baby Boomer (1946 – 1964)**
 - Approximately 45% of workforce
- **Generation X (1965 – 1981)**
 - Approximately 45% of workforce
- **Generation Y or Millennial (1982 – 1999)**
 - Now emerging into the workforce

Characteristics of the Silent Generation

(Over 65 years of age)

- Lived through a world war.
- Traditional, conforming.
- Happy to have a job.
- “These are the rules.”
- Creative innovators (e.g., created vaccines).
- Patriotic, respect for authority.
- May be dealing with loss and medical issues.



The Silent Generation at Work

- Stable, loyal, hard-working, past-oriented.
- Appreciates hierarchical style of leadership.
- Holders of organizational knowledge.
- May be less comfortable with change, conflict, teamwork, and diversity.
- May feel disrespected if roles are unclear.
- May be at higher risk of absenteeism or presenteeism because of medical or personal issues.

Working with the Silent Generation

- LISTEN. Ask for his/her insight and feedback.
- Most comfortable with face-to-face communication, often least with e-mail.
- Find ways employee can share experiences and organizational wisdom through mentoring or writing articles.

Characteristics of Baby Boomers

(between 45 and 64 years of age)

- Vietnam, civil rights movement, women's movement, space program.
- Optimistic and hopeful.
- Have high expectations.
- Largest living generation.
- Individualistic and goal oriented.
- Prefer learning classroom style.



The Baby Boomer at Work

- Good with relationships; like face-to-face interactions.
- Focus on process; service oriented.
- Sometimes self-absorbed and may be judgmental of others, but also have a social conscience.
- Problems with work/life balance.
- Leadership – consensus decisions; want to please; less comfortable with conflict.
 - May micro manage; don't like surprises.
 - Like to talk things through – many meetings/open door policy.

Working with the Baby Boomer

- Most comfortable with face-to-face communication.
- Conversation seen as part of a warmer, friendlier workplace.
- Social interactions as well as work-related (e.g., going out to lunch together, after work get-togethers).



Characteristics of Generation X

(between 25 and 44 years of age)

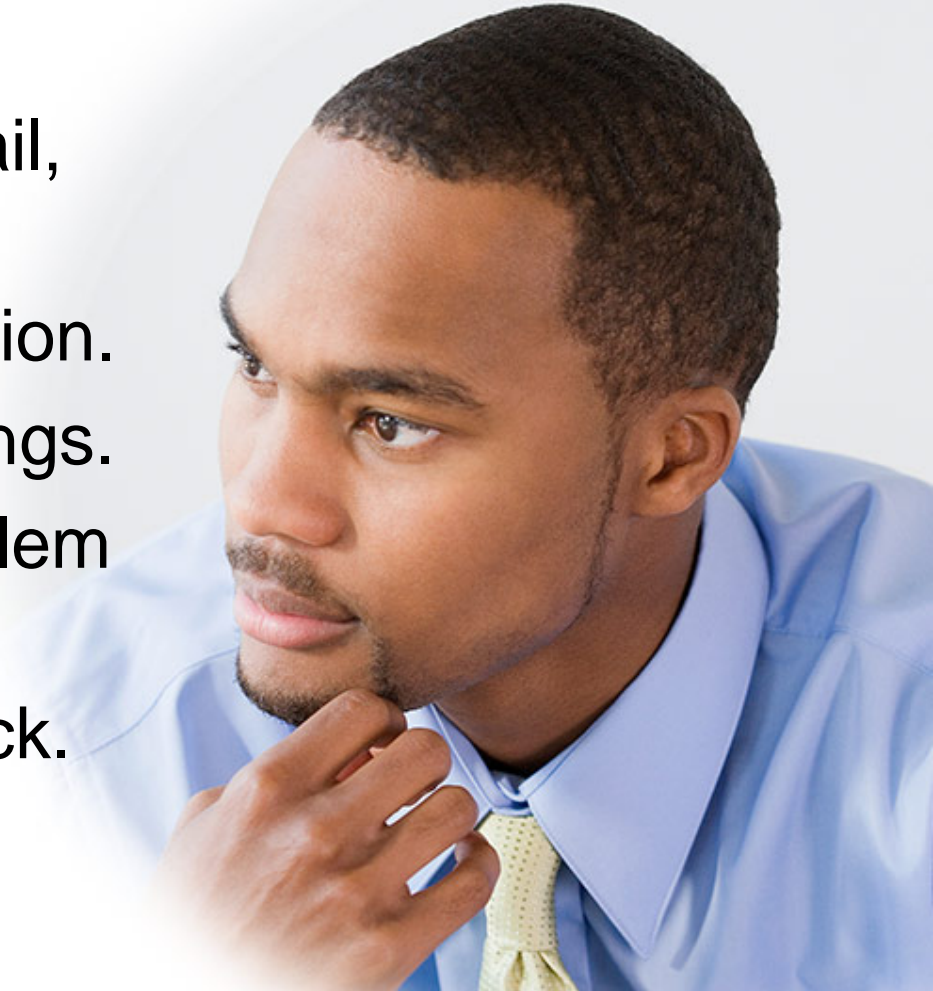
- Watergate, Three Mile Island, Iran-Contra, 9/11, declining economy.
- Latch key kids – seek a sense of family.
- More single parents and blended families.
- More autonomy; less respect for authority.
- Grew up with technological advances – savvy.
- Entrepreneurial, diverse, fun, work to live.
- Unimpressed by authority, skeptical.
- Self reliant, learn on their own through Web courses.

Generation X at Work

- Reduced job security, skeptical.
- Independent, outspoken, impatient.
- Adaptable, willing to take risks.
- Good at project management.
- May have trouble with conflict management and people skills.
- Want their contributions recognized.
- Leadership issues: little patience for office politics, not impressed by titles, respect is earned.

Working with a Gen X'er

- Most comfortable with email, less with face-to-face.
- Wants to minimize discussion.
- Doesn't like "chatty" meetings.
- Wants to explore and problem solve on own.
- Thrives on "FAST" feedback.



Characteristics of Millennials

(between ages 5 and 24 years of age)

- Street smart, Columbine, September 11, AIDS, global warming.
- Even more and faster technological advances.
- Confident, live for today, take risks.
- Sense of immediacy.
- Expect reward and recognition.
- Accustomed to diversity and teamwork.
- Self expression is important.
- Learn with others through the internet – blogging, discussion rooms.



Millennials at Work

- Need to see how they fit into the big picture.
- Want feedback and praise.
- Good at multi-tasking and teamwork.
- Want a flexible, relaxed environment.
- Reluctant/unwilling to sacrifice life for work.
- Want everything instantly.
- Inexperienced in handling setbacks.
- May be quick to judge others regarding their technical competency or lack thereof.

Working with a Millennial

- Having been reared by highly communicative parents, they are accustomed to sticking up for themselves.
- Authority is not a threat.
- Ready to contribute and collaborate right from the start.
- Like to train across different functions.



Having an Engaged Workforce

- Emphasize open communication; encourage collaboration.
- Build challenge in work assignments.
- Create opportunities for involvement and learning.
- Recognize individual efforts – give praise frequently.
- Demonstrate mutual respect for different values.



Tips for Success

- Understand yourself and how your generational experiences impact your ideas.
- Know your work group and the generations into which they belong (or think they belong).
- Avoid assumptions.

Tips for Success, con't

- Encourage flexible training options
- Value a variety of perspectives;
- Modify your work style to help with the harmony and success of the workplace.
- Include fun.

Attributes of Flexible Supervisors

1. They are thoughtful when matching individuals to a team or an individual to an assignment.
2. They balance concern for tasks and concern for people.
3. They understand the elements of trust and work to gain it from their employees. They are fair, inclusive, good communicators, and competent.

(from: Zempke, Raines, Filipczak. 2000. pg. 157-158)

Best Development Practices

- Include benefits and context when you give staff assignments.
- Encourage employees to teach each other how to do their jobs.
- Have trainers create links that help people apply skills to their personal lives along with their jobs.
- Ask each of your people to develop a career map with your assistance.
- Watch for opportunities to move people into positions where they can learn new skills.

Managing Multigenerational Employees

- Appeal to the younger generations' need for self-reliance and meaning in their work.
- Be respectful of all perspectives.
- Help each of the generations to understand and appreciate each other.



Let EAP Make Your Life a Little Easier!

Contact FOH4You!

1-800-222-0364

1-888-262-7848 (TTY)

www.FOH4You.com

Resources:

- Lynne Lancaster, David Stillman, *When Generations Collide* (New York: HarperCollins Pubs, 2002)
- Ron Zemke, Claire Raines, & Bob Filipczak. *Generations at work: Managing the Clash of Veterans, Boomers, Xers, and Nexters in your Workplace.* (New York: American Management Association, 2000)
- www.gentrends.com
- Chief Learning Officer Magazine, March 2007
- Managing a Multigenerational Workforce, The Diversity Manager's Toolkit, Cook Ross, Inc., 2004.



Employee Assistance Program

Federal Occupational Health's Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Help Available All Day, Every Day
We Care, Just Call

(800) 222-0364 | (888) 262-7848 (TTY)





	Silent Generation Born 1925-1946	Baby Boomers Born 1946-1964	Generation X Born 1965-1982 (approx.)	Millennials Born after 1982 (approx.)
Generational Themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hard Work • Duty • Sacrifice • Thriftiness • Work fast 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal fulfillment • Optimism • Crusading causes • Buy now/pay later • Work efficiently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncertainty • Personal focus • Live for today • Save, save, save • Eliminate the task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “What’s next?” • On my terms • Just show up • Earn to spend • Do exactly what’s asked
Work is . . .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An obligation • Formal, proper • Process oriented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An exciting adventure • Informal • Process oriented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A difficult challenge, a contract • Self reliant • Results oriented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A means to an end, fulfillment • Team player • Results oriented
Loyalty to Employer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committed to long-term employment • I’m needed here 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interested in long-term relationship • I could work my way to the top! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open to job hopping • I’ll work if I have to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committed to long-term employment when it works for them (but not locked in) • Jobs are a dime a dozen
Workplace Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honor • Dedicated to job; hard work • Respectful of hierarchy • Duty before pleasure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workaholics • Entrepreneurial • Generally optimistic about opportunity and challenges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritizes life before work • Entrepreneurial • Sees clear and consistent expectations • Values the chance to contribute • Not threatened by being “fired” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lives in the moment • Confident • Achieve and move on • Contribute and collaborate
Workplace Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stable • Detail oriented • Loyal • Hard working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service oriented • Willing to go extra mile • Good at relationships • Team player 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptable • Techno literate • Independent • Creative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimistic • Multitasks • Tech savvy
Workplace Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inept with ambiguity • Uncomfortable with conflict 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self focused • Puts process ahead of results • Too sensitive to feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impatient • Poor people skills • Inexperienced • Skeptical 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs supervision and structure • Inexperienced handling people • Used to menu driven choices



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Reaction to Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Averse to it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dislikes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accepts and is comfortable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expects and demands it
Feedback/ Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “No news is good news” • Landline phone • One-on-one • Writes memos 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once a year; lots of documentation • Touchtone; cordless • “Call me any time” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cell phone • Pagers • “Sorry to interrupt – how am I doing?” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Instant feedback at the push of the button” • Picture phone • Internet • Chat rooms; email
Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unfamiliar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning basics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comfortable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Masters
Education/ Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell me WHAT to do • Classroom • Academic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell me your expectations • Classroom • Academic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show me HOW to do it • Classroom; group • Computer • Video 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WHY do I need to learn this? • Classroom; group • Computer • Video • Gaming
How to Motivate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Your experience is respected” • Personal touch (e.g., handwritten note) • Allow socialization between tasks • Recognize with plaques or tangible rewards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “You are valued and needed” • Lots of public recognition – tell them how valued they are • Give chance to prove themselves • Perks with status (e.g., parking space) • Reward work ethic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Do it your way” • Give many projects and let them control and prioritize • Give ongoing constructive feedback • Provide with latest technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “You’ll work with other bright people” • Learn about personal goals and see how they mesh with employer • Establish mentor program
Leadership Style	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directive • Instructional with control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consensus • Collegial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone is the same • Challenge others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be determined – not enough data