

Managing Generations in the Workplace

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Disclaimer

This presentation contains broad generalizations that are guaranteed to annoy everyone in this room at least once in the next 60 minutes.

Please don't shoot the messenger!



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Agenda

- Defining the Generations
- The Clash of Generations in the Workplace
- Managing and Working with Different Generations

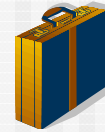


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Four Generations

- Traditionalists
(1922-1945)
- Baby Boomers
(1946-1963)
- Generation X
(1964-1980)
- Millennials
(1980-2000)



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Four Generations

- The events and conditions each of us experience during our formative years help define who we are and how we view the world.



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Traditionalists



Formative Events

- The Great Depression
- The New Deal
- Social Security established
- Pearl Harbor
- WW II
- Korean War



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Traditionalists



Heroes

- Superman
- FDR
- Eisenhower
- Winston Churchill
- Babe Ruth

Memorabilia

- Mickey Mouse
- Golden Era of Radio
- Wheaties
- Tarzan
- Jukeboxes
- The Lone Ranger



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Traditionalists



Core Values

- Dedication and sacrifice
- Hard work
- Conformity
- Law and order
- Respect for authority
- Fiscal responsibility
- Delayed rewards
- Honor



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Traditionalists



What Most Shaped Your Belief System?

- Parents' views
- Community values
- Views of respected political leaders



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Traditionalists in the Workplace



- Loyal to their employer and expect the same in return
- Superb interpersonal skills
- Detail oriented
- Believe promotions, raises, and recognition should come from job tenure
- Work ethic measured on timeliness, productivity, and not drawing attention



Traditionalists in the Workplace



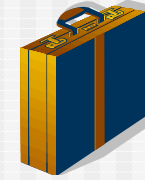
- Uncomfortable with ambiguity and change
- Reluctant to challenge the system
- Uncomfortable with conflict
- Hesitant to express disagreement



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Baby Boomers



Formative Events

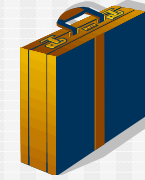
- The advent of television
- Civil Rights Movement
- JFK, Robert Kennedy, MLK Jr assassinations
- Cold War
- Vietnam War
- Woodstock
- First lunar landing
- Kent State
- Roe vs Wade



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Baby Boomers



Heroes

- Gandhi
- Martin Luther King
- JFK
- John Glenn
- The Beatles

Memorabilia

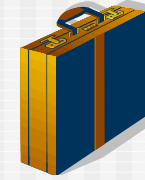
- "The Ed Sullivan Show"
- Fallout shelters
- Slinkies
- TV dinners
- "Laugh-In"
- Peace sign



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Baby Boomers



Core Values

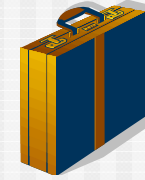
- Personal growth and gratification
- Optimism
- Team orientation
- Involvement
- Health and wellness
- Political correctness
- Work, work, work



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Baby Boomers



What Most Shaped Your Belief System?

- Views of the immediate family
- Friends' values and views
- Political events



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Baby Boomers in the Workplace



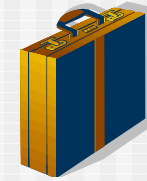
- Believe in, champion, and evaluate themselves and others based on their work ethic
- Work ethic for Boomers is measured in hours worked
- Driven: Willing to go “the extra mile”
- Teamwork is critical to success
- Relationship building is very important
- Expect loyalty from those they work with
- Service-oriented



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Baby Boomers in the Workplace



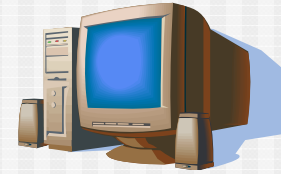
- Politically savvy
- Not naturally “budget minded”
- Uncomfortable with conflict
- Sensitive to feedback
- Self-centered
- Judgmental



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Gen Xers



Formative Events

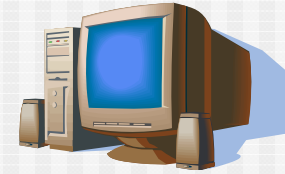
- Watergate
- Three Mile Island
- Reagan presidency
- Exxon Valdez
- Fall of the Berlin Wall
- Challenger explosion
- Gulf War
- AIDS
- Rise of the PC
- “Downsizing” and “rightsizing”



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Gen Xers



Heroes



Memorabilia

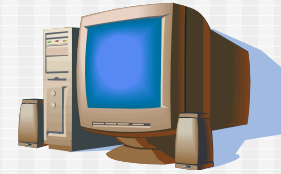
- "The Brady Bunch"
- Pet Rocks
- "The Simpsons"
- "Dynasty"
- "ET"
- Cabbage Patch dolls



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Gen Xers



Core Values

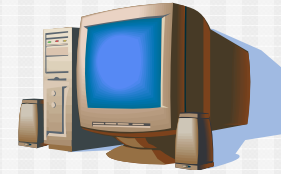
- Balance
- Techno-literacy
- Fun
- Informality
- Self-reliance
- Pragmatism
- Diversity



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Gen Xers



What Most Shaped Your Belief System?

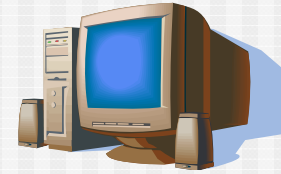
- World events as seen on TV
- Friends' values and views
- A handful of respected coworkers



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Gen Xers in the Workplace



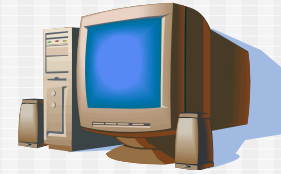
- Think globally
- Reject the hard-core, “do or die” Boomer work ethic
- Unintimidated by authority
- Respect production over tenure
- Value control of their time
- Look for a **person** to whom they can invest loyalty, not a company
- Adaptable
- Creative



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Gen Xers in the Workplace



- Independent
- Impatient
- Less-than-stellar people skills
- Cynical



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Millennials



Formative Events

- Oklahoma City bombing
- Columbine
- 9/11
- Virginia Tech shootings
- Internet boom
- “Child-focused” world



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Millennials



Heroes

- Michael Jordan
- Princess Diana
- Mother Teresa
- Bill Gates
- Mia Hamm
- Tiger Woods

Memorabilia

- Barney
- Beanie Babies
- American Girl dolls
- Oprah and Rosie
- The X Games



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Millennials



Core Values

- Optimism
- Civic duty
- Confidence
- Achievement
- Street smarts
- Morality
- Diversity
- Social consciousness



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Millennials



What Most Shaped Your Belief System?

- Community values and lifestyles
- Grandparents' views
- World events as seen on TV



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Millennials in the Workplace



- Search for the individual who will help them achieve their goals
- Want open, constant communication and positive reinforcement from their boss
- Search for a job that provides great, personal fulfillment
- Want to make a difference
- Search for ways to shed the stress in their lives
- Multitask
- Take technology as a “given”



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Millennials in the Workplace



- Need supervision and structure
- Need to develop “people skills”
- Expect lots of positive reinforcement



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Change in Philosophy

Live to Work

VS

Work to Live

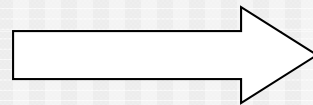


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Change in Loyalty

Loyalty to
Institution



Loyalty to
Individual



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Impact on the Workplace



Build a legacy



Build a stellar career



Build a portable career



Build parallel careers



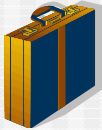
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Job Changing



A stigma



A setback



A necessity



A daily routine



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Management



Chain of command



Change of command



Self-command



Don't command, collaborate!



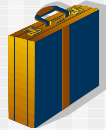
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Training



I learned it the hard way, you can too!



Train 'em too much and they will leave



The more they learn, the more they stay



Continuous learning is a way of life



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Feedback



No news is good news



Feedback once a year, with lots of documentation



Sorry to interrupt, but how am I doing?



Feedback whenever I want it at the push of a button



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Rewards



The satisfaction of a job well done



Money, title, recognition, the corner office



Freedom is the ultimate reward



Work that has meaning for me



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Work-Life Balance



Support me in shifting the balance



Help me balance everyone else and find meaning myself



Give me balance NOW, not when I am 65



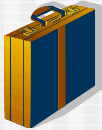
Work isn't everything; I need flexibility so I can balance all my activities



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Generational Stereotypes from the Perspective



They talk about things they ought to keep private.

They are self-absorbed.



They don't respect experience or follow procedures.

They don't know what hard work is.



They have good manners.

They're smart little critters, but they need to toughen up.



Generational Stereotypes from the Perspective



They are dictatorial, rigid, inhibited and narrow.

They are technological dinosaurs.



They are slackers who are rude and lack social skills.

They are always doing things their way.



They're cute.

They need too much attention.

Can they do my web page for me?



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Generational Stereotypes from the Perspective



They're too set in their ways.
Jeez, learn how to use your e-mail, man!



They are self-righteous, political, clueless
workaholics.
They don't walk the talk.



Neo Boomers: another generation of self-
absorbed spoiled brats.
What do you mean, "What's an album?"



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Generational Stereotypes from the Perspective



They are trustworthy and brave.
They are good leaders.



They're cool.
They work too much.



Cheer up, already!



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What Does This Mean in the Workplace?

- The best workplace has a mix of generations
- The challenges
 - To recruit
 - To retain
 - To leverage strengths



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Recruitment

- The generations look for different things in a job
- One-size-fits-all recruitment won't work!



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Recruitment



- Read the help-wanted ads
- Network



- Technology
- Technology
- Technology



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Recruitment: Learn from The Army



"Uncle Sam wants YOU!"



"Join the people who join the army."



"Be all that you can be."



"The power of one."



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Retention



- Respect their experience
- Include them in planning
- Recognize accomplishments – in writing
- Focus on ability, not age
- Ongoing training and education
- Flexibility in benefits



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Retention



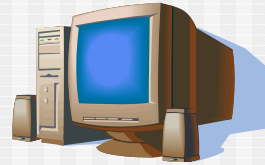
- Career advancement
 - Job enhancement
 - Job rotation
 - Short-term assignments/projects
- Respect = Responsibility
- Flexible work schedules
- Training and development



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Retention



- What's in it for me?
- Ethical workplace
 - Involvement
 - Trust
- Management
 - Mentor
 - Coach
 - Support
- Work environment
 - "Family-like"
 - Fun
- Career Development
 - Variety
 - Technology
- Work-life balance



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Retention



- Value their work
- Develop their career
- Give them responsibility
- Tell them “why”
- Technology
- Recognition



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Advice on Training



Take it slow, especially with technology



Remember **BIG FONTS**



Think variety



Think "sound bites"



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As a Manager

- One size does NOT fit all
- Know whom you are talking to
- Focus on goals
- Make everyone feel included
- Break the bonds of tradition...carefully!



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As a Manager

- Invest in talent
- Show employees the future
- Keep up with technology
- Recognize and focus on generational strengths
- Utilize "Cuspers"



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Advice to Baby Boomers

When working with Gen Xers

- Get to the point
- Use e-mail
- Give them space
- Get over the notion of “dues paying”
- Lighten up
- Give them opportunities for growth



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Advice to Baby Boomers

When working FOR a Gen Xer

- You are NOT his/her parent
- Actively listen
- Expect a laid-back style
- What have you done lately?



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Advice to Gen Xers

When working with Baby Boomers

- Show respect
- Choose face-to-face communications
- Give them your full attention
- Don't make assumptions
- Play the game
- Learn the corporate history



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Working with Traditionalists

- Honor the chain of command
- Offer them job security
- Value their experience
- Appreciate their dedication
- Use them as mentors
- Don't forget them when it comes to training



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Working with Millennials

- Challenge them
- Ask their opinion
- Find them a mentor
- Make sure they know their role and how they contribute
- Provide timely **sincere** feedback



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Retirement



Reward



Retool



Renew



Recycle



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In Conclusion

- Generations have different values...not wrong or right values
- We can't afford to ignore all the talents each generation brings to the workplace
- Learn to celebrate the differences



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References

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