Dude - Where's the Meeting??

Or… Managing Multiple Generations in the Workplace
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Generations at Work

- First time in history that there have been 4 (some say 5!) generations in the workplace at the same time:
  - Traditionalists
  - Baby Boomers
  - Generation X
  - Millennials/Gen Y
  - Gen Z
Generation Gaps – Not a New Complaint!

They think they know everything, and they are always quite sure about it.
- Aristotle, 400 BC

...that there is, as never before, an attitude on the part of young folk which is best described as grossly thoughtless, rude, and utterly selfish.
- Hull Daily Mail, 1925

...the ancient are scorned, the honourable are contemned, the magistrate is not dreaded.
- Thomas Barnes, 1624

...the morals of children are tenfold worse than formerly.
- Anthony Cooper, 1843
Generation Gaps – Not a New Complaint!
Traditionalists

The Silent Generation
Traditionalists

- AKA WWII, Silent Generation
- Born Before 1946
- 70s and up
- Defining Events:
  - Great Depression
  - WWII
  - Stock Market Collapse
  - A-Bomb
Traditionalists- General Characteristics

- Reliable
- Frugal
- Patriotic
- Respectful
- Adhere to rules
- Hardworking
- Strong set of moral obligations
Traditionalists - Workplace behaviors

- Loyal to employer
- Effective and warm interpersonal skills
- Work ethic = timeliness, putting in the hours, working hard
- Very willing to learn
- Accept “command and control” management style
How to Panic a Baby Boomer

1960's

There are reports of bad acid.

Today

Wall Street

There are reports of bad assets.

Arrgh!

Sell!

My retirement?
Baby Boomers

- 1946-1964
- Early 70s to late 50s
- Defining Events:
  - JFK, MLK
  - Woodstock
  - Civil Rights
  - Vietnam
  - Feminist Movement
  - TV
  - Cold War
Baby Boomers - General Characteristics

- Optimistic and Driven
- Used to being the focus of attention; want their opinion to count
- Value individuality “Me Generation”
- Resisting traditional aging
- Try to “have it all”
Baby Boomers - Workplace Behaviors

- Work comes first
- Loyal to the company
- Work ethic= working long hours, hard, and being observed while doing it
- Believe in, champion, and evaluate others on their “work ethic”
- Focus on teamwork and relationship building
- Work hard to advance; “put in your time”
Generation X
The MTV Generation
Generation X

- AKA Post Boomers; MTV Generation
- Born between 1965 and 1976
- 30s to early 50s
- Defining Events
  - Challenger explosion
  - STDs, AIDS
  - Energy Crisis
  - Computers
  - Latch-key kids
Generation X - General Characteristics

- Balanced
- Independent
- Adaptable
- Cautiously optimistic
- Skeptical and hesitant
- Comfortable with technology
Generation X - Workplace Behaviors

- Work to live NOT live to work
- Reject Boomer and Traditional definition of “work ethic”
- Work ethic= getting the job done fast and right
- Value talent and ability over longevity
- Loyal to a person not a job or company
Jason was a late bloomer... He didn't start text messaging till 18 months...
Millenials

- AKA Gen @, Gen Y; Generation Next
- Born between 1977 and 1997
- 21 to 41
- Defining Events
  - Columbine
  - Technology – Internet, Texting, Cell phones, IM
  - 9/11 and Iraq War
Millenials - General Characteristics

- Optimistic
- Value freedom and autonomy
- Global outlook; want to make the world better
- Immediate gratification
- Relate well to Traditionalists
Millenials - Workplace Behaviors

- Value meaningful and fun work
- Loyal to people they work and play with
- Want to learn and grow, but want rewards NOW!
- Achievement oriented
- Technology is a necessary part of the work environment
- Work ethic—value work insofar as it creates the results, or the acknowledgment or the growth they desire
Gen Z

“No, you weren't downloaded. Your were born.”

How do you "THINK" my first day of kindergarten went?!?

They didn't even have Wi-Fi...
Gen Z

- AKA Gen Z
- Born after 1997
- 21 and younger
- Defining Events
  - Boston Marathon bombing, Sandy Hook
  - Technology – Internet, Texting, Cell phones, IM
  - Iraq and Afghanistan
Gen Z - General Characteristics

- Optimistic
- Demand to be engaged - highly satisfied and able to contribute to their fullest potential
- Be flexible and drive change - change agile
- Embrace diversity and inclusion
- Process information at lightning speed and want and need to share information on-demand
Gen Z- Workplace Behaviors

- Hyper-connected: even more “wired” than the Millennials, recommendations of peers carry enormous weight
- Concerned: the most sensitive of the five groups to environmental problems and related social issues
- Careful: coming of age in economic austerity, so cautious with economic and career decisions - share some important values with Traditionalists
- Collaborative: like the Millennials, they are likely to be comfortable with collaborative endeavors, either face-to-face or virtual
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Traditionalist</th>
<th>Boomer</th>
<th>Gen X</th>
<th>Millennials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rewards</strong></td>
<td>Plaques, pins, certificates</td>
<td>Promotion, Recognition, Money</td>
<td>Money, Time away from work</td>
<td>Time off, Flexibility, INSTANT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Acknowledge</strong></td>
<td>Loyalty, Experience</td>
<td>Skills, Hard work, Time served</td>
<td>Speed, Accuracy</td>
<td>Knowledge, Creativity, Ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Say Thanks</strong></td>
<td>Handwritten notes</td>
<td>Public recognition</td>
<td>With actions, Individually</td>
<td>Quick email or IM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communicate</strong></td>
<td>Face to face, Formal, Proper</td>
<td>Collaborate, More formal, Groups</td>
<td>Computer oriented, Direct, Honest</td>
<td>Positive, Friendly, Electronic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Work Environment</strong></td>
<td>Clear policies, Structure, Hierarch</td>
<td>Team oriented, Recognition</td>
<td>Flexible, Casual, fun, Individual</td>
<td>Flexible, Collaborative, Positive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gen X, Gen Y, Baby Boomers...
STOP THE GENERACISM!
Workforce By the Numbers

- 2% Traditionalists
- 25% Baby Boomers
- 33% Generation X
- 35% Millennials
- 6% Gen Z
Millennials became the largest generation in the labor force in 2016

U.S. labor force, in millions


Pew Research Center, 4/11/2018
Seven Values That Matter Most Across Generations

- Feeling respected.
- Being listened to.
- Having opportunities for mentoring.
- Understanding the big picture.
- Receiving effective communication.
- Receiving positive feedback.
- Experiencing an exchange of ideas.
Everybody Wants…

- To be appreciated for the qualities that they bring to a group
- To feel respected by their coworkers
- Flexibility!
- To be seen as a person: unique, valued, important, and special!