



GENERATIONAL DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE

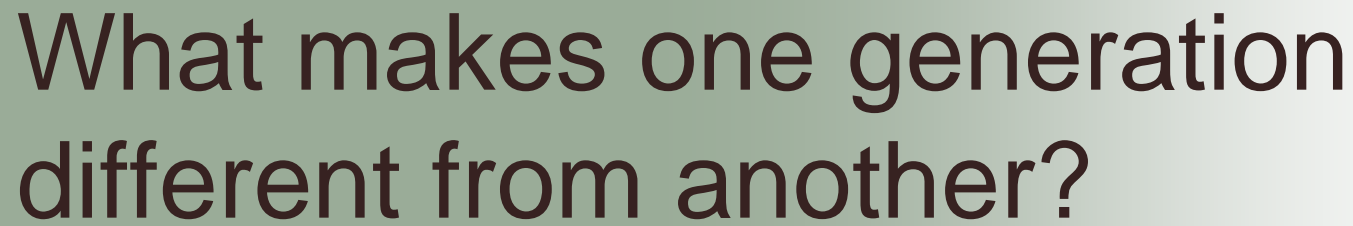
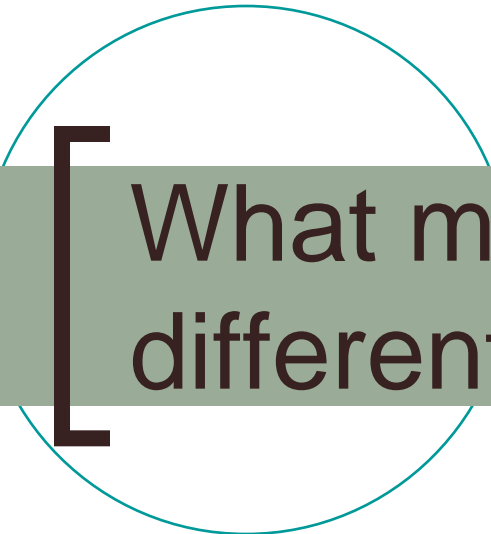


Objectives


- Identify characteristics and gain a better understanding of the four generations
- Improve communications and teamwork
- Accept personal responsibility in working together
- Provide tips and suggestions for overcoming generational differences

Generations

- Traditionalists/Silent Generation/Matures
 - 1925 – 1945 (88– 68 years of age)
- Baby Boomers
 - 1946 – 1964 (67 – 47 years of age)
- Generation X/Baby Busters/13th Generation
 - 1965 – 1984 (46 – 29 years of age)
- Millennials/Generation Y
 - 1985 – 2000 (28 – 13 years of age)



What makes one generation
different from another?



Shared life experiences

Events and Experiences that Shaped Generations

■ Traditionalists

- Great Depression
- New Deal
- Attack on Pearl Harbor
- World War II
- Korean War
- Radio and telephone

■ Baby Boomers

- Civil rights
- Feminism
- Vietnam
- Cold War
- Space travel
- Assassinations
- Scientific advances
- Credit cards
- Television

Events and Experiences that Shaped Generations

■ Generation X

- Fall of the Berlin Wall
- Challenger disaster
- Desert Storm
- Personal computers
- Working mothers
- MTV
- Divorce
- Energy crisis

■ Millennials

- School shootings
- 9/11
- OKC bombing
- Internet
- Child-focused world
- Social networking
- Continual feedback
- Enron/WorldCom
- Iraq/Afghanistan

Traditionalists



- Born 1925 to 1945
- 49 million people
- Grew up with many rules and pressure to conform
- Increased prosperity over their lifetime; however, they remember the Depression
- “Work First!”
- Children should be seen and not heard
- Expected lifetime career with one employer
- Prefer communication in writing
- Desire to leave a lasting legacy

Common Values



- Traditionalists
 - Hard work
 - Dedication and sacrifice
 - Respect for rules
 - Duty before pleasure
 - Honor
 - Conformity
 - Loyalty
 - Frugality

Baby Boomers



- Born 1946 to 1964
- 79 million people
- Grew up with fewer rules and a more nurturing environment
- Lived in generally prosperous times, but experienced layoffs
- Women entered workforce in record numbers
- “Live to Work!”
- Spend “quality time” with children
- Excelling in their career is important
- Prefer telephone or face-to-face communication
- Desire challenge and opportunity

Common Values



- Baby Boomers
 - Optimism
 - Team orientation
 - Personal gratification
 - Involvement
 - Personal growth
 - Workaholics
 - Competitors

Generation X



- Born 1965 to 1984
- 49 million people
- Grew up as latchkey or day-care children
- Turbulent economic times – downturn in 80s, upswing in 90s
- “Work to Live!”
- Friends with their child, want to spend quantity time
- Expect their careers to keep moving forward or they will leave
- Prefer electronic communication
- Change from job security to career security

[Common Values]



- Generation X
 - Diversity
 - Techno-literacy
 - Fun and informality
 - Self-reliance
 - Pragmatism – realists
 - Results-oriented
 - Individualism
 - Challenge the system

Millennials



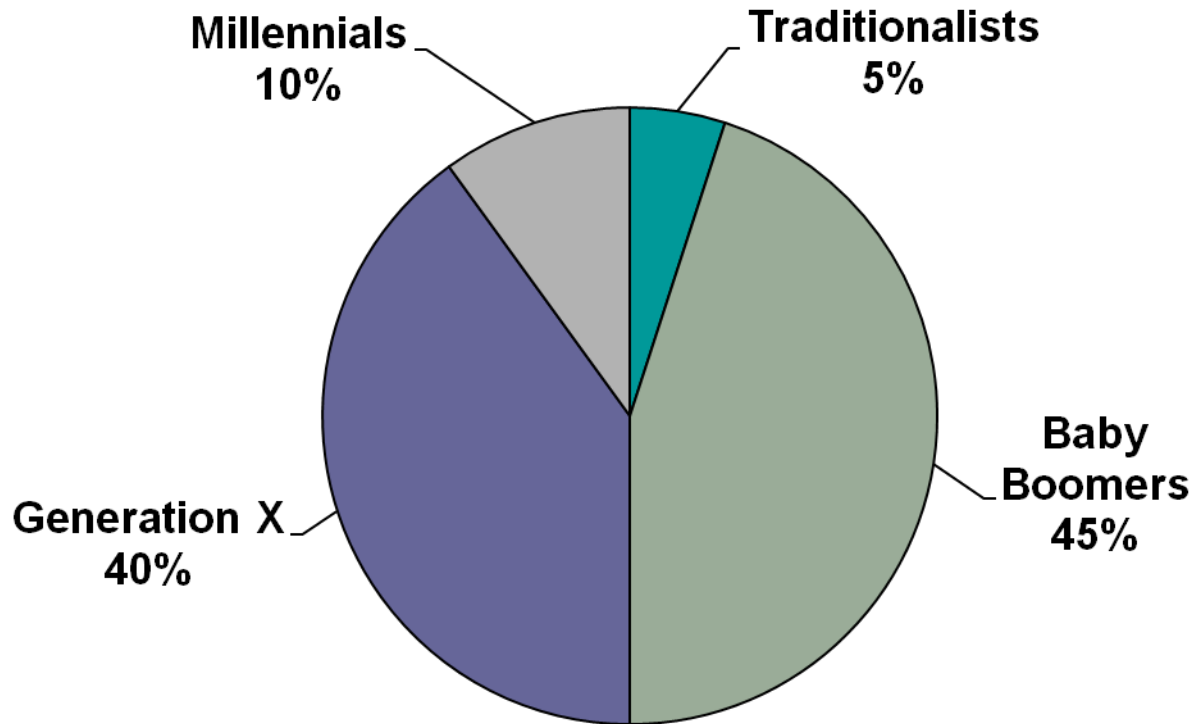
- Born 1985 to 2000
- 75 million people
- Attended day care, very involved “helicopter” parents
- Prosperity has increased over their lifetime
- “Live, then Work!”
- Achievement-oriented
- Prefer instant or text messaging
- Want to build parallel careers – experts in multitasking

Common Values



- Millennials
 - Optimistic
 - Civic duty
 - Confident
 - Achievement-oriented
 - Respect for diversity
 - Informal
 - Tenacious
 - Social consciousness

Generational Makeup of the Workplace



Boomers and Generation X dominate the current workforce. However, Millennials are just entering the workplace and have a generational size roughly equal to the Boomers, so they will become a major force in the future.

Traditionalists in the Workplace



- Polite
- Respectful
- Reserved
- Obedient
- Conformers

Boomers in the Workplace



- Uncomfortable with conflict
- Consensus-building leadership style
- Formal
- Follow protocol
- Social
- Politically sensitive
- Idealistic

Gen Xers in the Workplace



- Fast-paced
- Independent
- Confident
- Value personal time
- Challenge the status quo
- Loyal to staff leader

Millennials in the Workplace

- Task-oriented
- Want options & choices
- Expect attention
- Expect feedback
- Multitask through multimedia
- Want to use technology
- Work toward weekend or closing time



[On-the-Job Strengths]

	Trads	Boomers	Xers	Millennial
Job Strength	Stable	Service-oriented/team players	Adaptable and techno-literate	Multitaskers and techno-savvy
Outlook	Practical	Optimistic	Skeptical	Hopeful
View of Authority	Respectful	Love/hate	Unimpressed and unintimidated	Polite
Leadership	By hierarchy	By consensus	By competence	By pulling together
Relationships	Personal sacrifice	Personal gratification	Reluctant to commit	Inclusive

[On-the-Job Strengths]

	Trads	Boomers	Xers	Millennial
Time on the Job	Punched the clock	Visibility is key “face time”	As long as I get the job done, who cares	It’s quitting time – I have a real life to live
Diversity	Ethnically segregated	Integration began	Integrated	No majority race
Feedback	No news is good news	Once a year with documentation	Interrupts and asks how they are doing	Wants feedback at the push of a button
Work/Life Balance	Needs help shifting	Balances everyone else and themselves	Wants balance now	Need flexibility to balance activities

Generational Challenges We Face in the Workplace

- Poor communication
- Decreased productivity, quality and innovation
- Misunderstood attitudes, relationships, and working environments
- Less-engaged volunteers and coworkers
- Lack of motivation, initiative, and teamwork

On-the-Job Challenges

- Traditionalists and Boomers generally do not question or challenge authority or the status quo. Xers and Millennials have been taught to speak up, and therefore do not understand, and may even resent, what they see as a lack of a backbone or initiative.

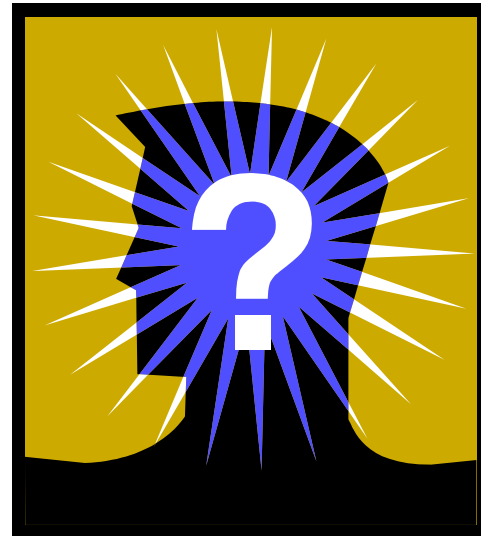
[On-the-Job Challenges]

- Gen Xers and Millennials prefer electronic communication. Therefore, they do not like meetings, and many have not developed listening skills.
- Traditionalists and Boomers prefer face-to-face communication. Boomer bosses like to have at least one meeting each week with employees.

Bridging the Generation Gaps

- What characteristics does the “perfect employee” have?

- Knowledge
- Skills
- Experiences
- Attitudes



[Bridging the Generation Gaps]

- For all employees
 - Appreciate differences
 - Acknowledge your interdependency

[Bridging the Generation Gaps]

“We have absolutely nothing in common!”

[Bridging the Generation Gaps]

- For all employees
 - Appreciate differences
 - Acknowledge your interdependency
 - Appreciate what you have in common

[Bridging the Generation Gaps]

We rarely get to choose the people we work with.

What bugs you?

Drives you crazy?

YOU make it happen!

[Bridging the Generation Gaps]

- For all employees
 - Appreciate differences
 - Acknowledge your interdependency
 - Appreciate what you have in common
 - Take responsibility for making your relationships better
 - Accept and appreciate another's perspective

[Bridging the Generation Gaps]

■ For all employees

- Discuss expectations. Find out what others expect and let them know what you expect.
- Inquire about immediate tasks. How does doing “A” get you to “B”?
- Look for ways to cut bureaucracy and red tape.
- Keep up with technology.

Bridging the Generation Gaps

■ For Managers

- Focus on goals to resolve problems without dampening enthusiasm.
- Make everyone feel included. Keep an open mind. Encourage each generation to mentor the others.
- Break the bonds of tradition. If there is a better way to do something, take the suggestion.
- Show employees the future. Tell them where the organization is going, how they fit in, and how to prepare.
- Encourage balance. Employees of all ages place a high value on balancing their work and personal lives.

Bridging the Generation Gaps

- Getting along with Traditionalists
 - Honor the chain of command.
 - Value the legacy they have built.
 - Value their experience. Use them as a resource to learn what has and hasn't gone right.
 - Appreciate their dedication. Thank them in writing.
 - Communicate one-on-one.
 - Learn the corporate history. Find out what has gone wrong and right in the past before making suggestions for changes.

Bridging the Generation Gaps

■ Getting along with Boomers

- **Show respect.** Acknowledge that you have less experience and can learn from their experience.
- **Choose face-to-face conversations.**
- **Give people your full attention.** Stop multitasking while someone is talking.
- **Play the game.** Workplace politics are a fact of life, so learn to be polite and respectful in these situations.
- **Learn the corporate history.** Find out what has gone wrong and right in the past before making suggestions for changes.

Bridging the Generation Gaps

■ Getting along with Gen Xers

- **Get to the point.** Avoid jargon and buzzwords that obscure your point.
- **Use e-mail and texting.** Take advantage of technology and only have face-to-face meetings when required.
- **Give them space.** Don't micromanage but have an open door. Xers crave autonomy.
- **Get over the notion of dues paying.**
- **Lighten up.** Remember, it's OK for work to be fun.

Bridging the Generation Gaps

■ Getting along with Millennials

- Challenge them. They want to do work that really matters.
- Ask them their opinion. They love to collaborate and be a team player.
- Help them find a mentor. They have an affinity and respect for Silents.
- Provide timely feedback. They are used to getting feedback instantaneously.
- Lighten up. Remember, it's OK for work to be fun.

[Bridging the Generation Gaps]

Remember the Golden Rule?

“Treat others as you would like
to be treated.”

Change it to the Platinum Rule:

“Treat others as they would like
to be treated.”

[Bridging the Generation Gaps]

- Remember that all generations want:
 - To be treated fairly
 - Work that provides personal satisfaction
 - Employers who understand personal lives are important
 - Work that is valued by employers and customers
 - A clear sense of purpose from employers

[Bridging the Generation Gaps]

“A team that allows choices and openly explores ideas, and whose members value learning, will better accommodate the needs and values of members of different generations.”

-Patterson

[Action Plan]

What changes will you make based upon what you have learned today?

- Relationships
- Work environment
- Rules