## The Four Generations in the Workplace

**With a Lens on Diversity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generation</th>
<th>Birth Dates</th>
<th>Ages</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditionalists</td>
<td>1922 - 1945</td>
<td>64 – 87 yrs.</td>
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<td>(Veterans)</td>
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<td>Boomers</td>
<td>1946 - 1964</td>
<td>45 – 63 yrs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Next or Millennial)</td>
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</table>
‘Generation Y thinks Generation X is a bunch of whiners.

Generation X sees Generation Y as arrogant and entitled.

And everyone thinks the Baby Boomers are self-absorbed workaholics.’

Gelston, 2008
Did You Know?
The Four Generations In The Workplace

How do generational differences affect the way employees prefer to work?

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<td>Generation Y (Next or Millennial)</td>
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| GENERATION Ages | 64 – 87 yrs. | 45 – 63 yrs. | 29 – 44 yrs. | 9 – 28 yrs. |

How can we work most effectively together?
Traditionalist / Veteran

- Respectful of authority
- Hierarchical
- Loyal to institutions
- Rule makers and conformists
- Motivated by financial rewards and security

I’m 64 – 87 years old

1922 - 1945
Traditionalist / Veteran

I grew up in a world where...

- Pride of allied military success
- Booming post-war economy
- Growth of suburbs
- Increased availability of consumer goods
- Growth in white collar jobs

64 – 87 years old

Joiners ◆ Institutional Loyalty ◆ Acceptance of Hierarchy & Rules
Boomer

- Anti-authoritarian
- Idealistic
- Motivated by changing the world
- Competitive

I’m 45 – 63 years old

1946 - 1964
Boomer

- Vietnam
- Civil Rights
- Widespread protests
- Assassinations of Kennedy brothers and MLK
- Watergate and Nixon’s resignation
- Lots of other boomer teens

I grew up experiencing...

Competitive ◆ Anti-authoritarian ◆ Idealistic
A Chorus of Corporate Concerns
About Generation Y (and X too)

64 – 87 yrs.

They spend too much time on-line

They don’t respect tenure

They’re not willing to pay their dues

They want time off for everything!

They’re too impatient

45 – 63 yrs.

They have no loyalty - they only stay a short time

They’re communication skills are lousy

They send messages to the President

They don’t respect tenure

They want time off for everything!

They’re too impatient

They don’t respect tenure

They have no loyalty - they only stay a short time

They don’t respect tenure

They want time off for everything!
Generation X

I’m 29 – 44 years old

- Self-reliant
- Anti-institution
- Rule-morphing
- Tribal
- Information-rich

1965 - 1980
Generation X

- Troubled economy
- Challenger disaster
- Widespread layoffs from re-engineering
- Women becoming omnipresent in the workforce
- Rising divorce rates
- Introduction of electronic games and the internet

29 – 44 years old

Self-Reliance ◆ Mistrust of Institutions ◆ Dedicated Parent
Generation Y (Millennial or Next)

- Confident and full of self-esteem
- Impatient and eager to live “now”
- Pro-education and goal-oriented
- Socially conscious
- Value things other than income and status as being primary in life: family and planet
- Willing to make trade-offs to live their values
- Highly tolerant
- Plugged-in and parallel thinkers

I’m 9 – 28 years old

1981 - 2000
Generation Y (Millennial or Next)

- Terrorism: 9/11, World Trade Center, Oklahoma City
- School Violence: Columbine, Virginia Tech
- Ubiquitous technology
- Working mothers
- Unprecedented bull market (followed by a severe recession)
- Pro-child culture (soccer moms)

Trustful of authority ♦ Parents as role models ♦ Near-zero generation gap
An Echo of Concerns in Return

What is it with these people and 8am?

They spend way too much time in meetings

They don’t use technology to make our job easier

They don’t respond in a reasonable timeframe

They assume I’m interested in the path they chose

They’re obsessed with “face time”

They’re inefficient!

They don’t treat me with respect

29 - 44 yrs.

9 - 28 yrs.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>TRADITIONALISTS</th>
<th>BOOMERS</th>
<th>GEN X</th>
<th>GEN Y</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Loyalty to</td>
<td>I will retire from my first job.</td>
<td>I could work my way to the top!</td>
<td>I’ll work if I have to.</td>
<td>Jobs are a dime a dozen*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>I will learn in any manner I am told.</td>
<td>Tell me WHAT to do.</td>
<td>Show me HOW to do it.</td>
<td>WHY do I need to learn this?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respecting</td>
<td>Demanded.</td>
<td>Is automatic.</td>
<td>Is polite.</td>
<td>Just because they’re older? No way!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elders</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change</td>
<td>Fearful</td>
<td>Dislike</td>
<td>Accept</td>
<td>Demand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Coffee with the neighbor</td>
<td>Via Parent’s Phone</td>
<td>Via Personal Phone</td>
<td>PDA/cell/e-mail/twitter/blogs/social</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>networking sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>Ignorant</td>
<td>Question Value</td>
<td>Comfortable</td>
<td>Masters</td>
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*Prior to recent recession
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<th>GENERATION TIMELINE</th>
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<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>The hard way</td>
<td>Too much and I’ll leave</td>
<td>Required to keep me</td>
<td>Continuous and expected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Style</td>
<td>Classroom</td>
<td>Facilitated</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Collaborative and networked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Top down</td>
<td>Horizontal</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Collaborative and now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making</td>
<td>Seeks approval</td>
<td>Team informed</td>
<td>Team included</td>
<td>Collaborative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Style</td>
<td>Command &amp; control</td>
<td>Get out of the way</td>
<td>Coach</td>
<td>Partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback</td>
<td>No news is good news</td>
<td>Once per year</td>
<td>Weekly/daily</td>
<td>On demand, 360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing Jobs</td>
<td>Unwise</td>
<td>Sets me back</td>
<td>Necessary</td>
<td>Keep options open</td>
</tr>
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How to Work Together Effectively

• Communication preferences
• Assignments: Independent vs. Team
• Using Technology
• Work Ethics
• Become an expert
"Well, yes, we could read your blog... or you could just tell us about your school day."
# Supportive Behaviors & Tips

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<th>Traditionalists...</th>
<th>Baby Boomers...</th>
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<tr>
<td>By nature Traditionalists are private, the &quot;silent generation&quot;. Don't expect members of this generation to share their thoughts immediately.</td>
<td>Boomers are the &quot;show me&quot; generation, so your body language is important when communicating.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For the Traditionalist a educator's word is his/her bond, so it's important to focus on words rather than body language or inferences.</td>
<td>Speak in an open, direct style but avoid controlling language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Face to face or written communication is preferred.</td>
<td>Answer questions thoroughly and expect to be pressed for the details.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Don't waste their time, or let them feel as though their time is being wasted.</td>
<td>Present options to demonstrate flexibility in your thinking.</td>
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<th>Generation Y...</th>
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<td>Use email as a primary communication tool.</td>
<td>Use action words and challenge them at every opportunity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk in short sound bites to keep their attention.</td>
<td>They will resent it if you talk down to them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask them for their feedback and provide them with regular feedback.</td>
<td>They prefer email communication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share information with them on a regular basis and strive to keep them in the loop.</td>
<td>Seek their feedback constantly and provide them with regular feedback.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use an informal communication style.</td>
<td>Use humor and create a fun learning environment. Don't take yourself too seriously.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Encourage them to take risks and break the rules so that they can explore new ways of learning.</td>
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