



Cultural Compass: Generations in the Workplace

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GENERATIONS

Generations are social groups of people born within a defined time period that share similar cultural traits, values & preferences

Generational names have existed for years, but their regular use is a fairly recent cultural phenomenon

Most people identify as Millennials, X'ers or Boomers



FAVORITE OR FIRST

Favorite High
School Memory

First Car

First Job

Favorite Cartoon



BABY BOOMERS 1946-1964

- ❖ A.K.A. Greatest Generation
- ❖ Twilight years of their careers
- ❖ 71.6 million people
- ❖ A little less loose on structure than previous generations
- ❖ Prefer some sort of structure with an organization
- ❖ Cautious about change & somewhat resistant

“Not afraid to challenge rules”



Generation X 1965-1979

- ❖ A.K.A. Latchkey, MTV, Forgotten, Invisible Generation
- ❖ Prime years of their careers
- ❖ 65.2 million people
- ❖ Prefer flexibility, aren't afraid to challenge or change rules
- ❖ Lived through an age of disruption & likely bring an element of this into the workplace
- ❖ Cautious about change & somewhat resistant

“Change is an opportunity, not a problem to fix”



Generation Y 1980-2000

- ❖ A.K.A. Millennials
- ❖ Beginning or middle of their careers
- ❖ 72.1 million people
- ❖ Steer the workplace into a more flexible & fluid place
- ❖ Enjoy autonomy & independence
- ❖ Favor creating new rules when they don't like existing ones

“Motivated by purpose & impact”



Generation Z 2001-2014

- ❖ A.K.A. Gen Z
- ❖ Just entering the workforce
- ❖ 68 million people
- ❖ Still learning their behaviors in the workplace
- ❖ Need agility, flexibility & independence

“Change is welcome & expected”



Generation A
2015-Present

❖ A.K.A. Gen Alpha

❖ 48 million people



Back in My Day...

Previous Generations

When I was coming up...

The way things used to be...

Music was good when...

Current Generations

That doesn't excite me...

I don't care...

No one does it like that any more...



What is the Same?

All generations have similar values...

Family tops the list for all, of the generations.

Everyone wants respect. Generations define respect differently.

Older generations view respect as “giving my opinions the weight I believe they deserve”

Younger generations view it as “listen to me, pay attention to what I have to say”



What is the Same?

Nobody likes change...

There is a belief that older people resist change while younger people embrace it

Actually all generations are uncomfortable with change

Resistance to change has nothing to do with age; it has to do with how much you stand to gain or lose as a result of the change



What is the Same?

Loyalty depends on context...

Younger generations are not as loyal to their organizations as older workers

For example, that the amount of time a worker puts in each day has more to do with their level in the organization than with age

The higher the level, the more hours worked



What is the Same?

Everyone wants to learn...

Learning & development is a topic among all generations

Everyone wants to learn and to ensure they have the training to do their job well

Everyone likes feedback...

Everyone wants to know how they are doing and to learn how they can do better



What is
the Same
to
YOU?



What is Different?

Generational gap

Wealth of
knowledge

Proof/visuals

Speed of info
traveling

Appears to be differences
in the values, beliefs &
opinions

Some believe strongly in
the differences, others
believe they are a myth

Those believing in the
differences assert that
they are important to
recognize & accommodate



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Motivating All 5

Team members rally around a common vision, purpose or goal.

There is often a greater sense of unity that, in turn, translates into a better customer experience.

Self-awareness is the key to effectively managing generational differences.

Managers must be in touch with their own beliefs, values & work attitudes & understand that these may be different from the people they manage.



Motivating All 5

Flexible in your ways, keep the end goal in mind

Flexible work schedules, office space arrangements, ways of engaging

Recognize employees, moments of acknowledgement



Bridging the Gap

Acknowledge – Can't solve a problem if you don't acknowledge it exist

Appreciate – Focus on the why, not the what

Flex – Agree on how to accommodate different approaches & viewpoints

Leverage – Maximize strengths of everyone

Resolve – Determine what options will yield the best results



Mentorship & Learning Opportunities

We all can learn from each other

Mentoring isn't a one-way street

Create learning pathways & growth opportunities

Helps with employee retention



Mentorship & Learning Opportunities

Younger workers may be able to share some little-known features about a computer program

Older workers can give industry tips and tricks they've learned over the years

Encourage cross generational collaboration



Make Room

The Biggest Room is the Room for Improvement!

Older generations have wisdom, younger generations have energy & information.