You Don’t Know what an Emoji is? OMG--SMH
Intergenerational Relationships in the Workplace

Disentangling the Connections between “The Generations” and Adult Developmental Tasks and Why It Matters
Setting the Foundation

THE “GENERATIONS”
The Generations

• The Greatest Generation
  – 1901-1924
• The Silent Generation
  – 1925-1942
• The Baby Boomer Generation
  – 1943-1960
• Generation X
  – 1961-1981
• Generation Y---The Millennials
  – 1982-2004
• Generation Z
  – 2005-2014
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generation name</th>
<th>Birth years, Ages in 2010</th>
<th>% of total adult population*</th>
<th>% of internet-using population*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gen X</td>
<td>Born 1965-1976, Ages 34-45</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Younger Boomers</td>
<td>Born 1955-1964, Ages 46-55</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older Boomers</td>
<td>Born 1946-1954, Ages 56-64</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silent Generation</td>
<td>Born 1937-1945, Ages 65-73</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.I. Generation</td>
<td>Born 1936, Age 74+</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For Your Consideration

• Think for a moment about individuals you may know or what the conventional wisdom (or stereotypes) may be about people in these generations.

• List----
  – The commonly ascribed characteristics defining this generation.
  – Identify the forces present in the lives of these generations that contributed to the formation of these qualities.
Some Broad Generalizations

TRADITIONALS
Born before 1945, they grew up dealing with economic hardships made them disciplined and self-sacrificing, with the reward being to live the American Dream. Today, most Traditionals are retired and have done their share in the workplace.

BABY BOOMERS
Born 1945 to 1964, they typically grew up amid economic prosperity, suburban affluence and strong nuclear families with stay-at-home moms. They are currently leading the American workplace, with the youngest Boomer at age 52.

GENERATION X
Born 1965 to 1980, they grew up as “latchkey” kids in a world of divorce and working moms. This led to independence, resilience, adaptability and a “I don’t need someone looking over my shoulder” attitude. As a generation, they are at times overlooked because of the two loud and large generations on their either side.

MILLENNIALS
Born 1981 to 1999, they were raised at the most child-centric time in our history. Due to the great deal of attention and high expectations from parents, they are confident and may appear cocky. Also known as Generation Y, they are the largest generation in the US workforce, and are still growing.

iGENERATION
Born since 2000, they are expected to be exceptional future employees due to their natural skills with technology and easy acceptance of new ideas. Also known as Generation Z.
# Generation Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Veterans</th>
<th>Baby Boomers</th>
<th>Generation X</th>
<th>Millennials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Major Cultural Events</strong></td>
<td>• World War II</td>
<td>• Vietnam War</td>
<td>• AIDS Epidemic</td>
<td>• Columbine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Great Depression</td>
<td>• Civil Rights Movement</td>
<td>• Internet Revolution</td>
<td>• 9/11</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• The New Deal</td>
<td>• Woodstock</td>
<td>• MTV</td>
<td>• 2004 Presidential Election</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Qualities</strong></td>
<td>• Straightforward</td>
<td>• Desire to please</td>
<td>• Adaptable</td>
<td>• Multi-taskers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Thorough</td>
<td>• Service-oriented</td>
<td>• Independent</td>
<td>• Tolerant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Reluctant to change</td>
<td>• Social</td>
<td>• Creative</td>
<td>• Tenacious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Uncomfortable with conflict</td>
<td>• Driven</td>
<td>• Openly speak opinions</td>
<td>• Highly involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communication</strong></td>
<td>• Formal</td>
<td>• In-person</td>
<td>• Direct</td>
<td>• Limited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Memo</td>
<td>• Telephone</td>
<td>• Immediate</td>
<td>• In-person</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Email</td>
<td>• Texting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Social Media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Work Ethic</strong></td>
<td>• Hard work</td>
<td>• Workaholics</td>
<td>• Work-life balance</td>
<td>• Looking for meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Respect authority</td>
<td>• Question authority</td>
<td>• Self-reliant</td>
<td>• Dedicated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Duty</td>
<td>• Driven to succeed</td>
<td>• Entrepreneurial</td>
<td>• Goal-oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Adhere to rules and policy</td>
<td>• Team player</td>
<td>• Telecommuting OK</td>
<td>• Desire to ‘do it all’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INSIGHTS FROM DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY
What Does Developmental Science Suggest?

• Life-span Psychology

• Human development from conception to death

• Examines the forces that impact development across the life-cycle.
Forces on Human Development

• Development occurs across one’s entire life,
• Multidirectionality and multidimensionality,
  – Think: biology, environment, interaction and beyond
• Development as growth and decline,
• The role plasticity plays in development,
  – Change can happen anytime in the life-course
• The influence of socio-cultural conditions on development,
• The interactions of age-graded, history-graded, and nonnormative
  historical influences on development, and
• The multidisciplinary nature of human development.
Why is This Important?

• The “Generational” approach is a blunt instrument. There may be more heterogeneity within the generation than between the generations.

• Designed initially for marketing to these “generations.”

• Obscures the common or universal features of adult life to instead emphasize peculiarities of time-bound influences on adult life.
Adult Life Stages

• Adolescence
• Emerging Adulthood
• Young Adulthood
• Middle Adulthood
• Late Adulthood

Generations

• Generation Z + Millennials
• Millennials
• Millennials + Gen X
• Gen X + Baby Boomers
• Baby Boomers + Silent + Greatest
Basic Developmental Tasks of Adulthood

• Identity
• Intimacy
• Career consolidation
• Generativity
• Keeper of the meaning---Wisdom
• Integrity
Bringing Life-span Theory to the Workplace

• Helps place possible “generational differences” into developmental context.

• Provides a foundation for understanding common development tasks that transcend generation.

• Brings focus to creating work environments that emphasize strengths and common goals.
Behaviors, Strengths, and Struggles

GENERATIONS IN THE WORKPLACE

HOW GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES IMPACT ORGANIZATIONS & TEAMS

2016, BIRKMAN INTERNATIONAL, INC.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizational Behaviors</th>
<th>Workplace Strengths</th>
<th>Workplace Struggles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Baby Boomers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boomers tend to be optimistic, ambitious, competitive, and focus on their accomplishments. They believe in working long hours and expect the younger generations to adopt this approach. They have ruled the workplace for years and are comfortable in the culture they created.</td>
<td>Team Perspective Dedicated Experienced Knowledgeable Service-oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Generation X</strong></td>
<td>Having seen their parents laid off or face job insecurity, they’ve redefined loyalty. Instead of remaining loyal to their company, they’re committed to their work and people they work with. They are skeptical, risk-takers and want fun in the workplace. They seek more work-life balance.</td>
<td>Independent Adaptable Creative Techno-literate Willing to challenge the status quo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Millennials</strong></td>
<td>Typically team-oriented, and work well in groups, as opposed to individual endeavors. Also, they’re used to tackling multiple tasks with equal energy, so they expect to work hard. They’re good multitaskers, having juggled school, sports and social activities.</td>
<td>Optimistic Able to multitask (?) Tenacious Tech Savvy Driven to learn and grow Team oriented</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What Matters

Differences
• Management Preferences
• Team Culture
• Motivation

Similarities
• Flexible Schedules
• Make an Impact
• Motivation
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workstyle</th>
<th>Baby Boomers</th>
<th>Generation X</th>
<th>Millennials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strong work ethic, good communication, and emotional maturity. Strong team players, insist on involvement in decision making and influencing direction of the organization. Uncomfortable with conflict, process over results.</td>
<td>Prefer to work independently, work best when given a goal and not told how to accomplish it. Loyal to the work and people, not the organization. Skeptical, risk-takers, want fun at work. Seek work-life balance.</td>
<td>Able to multitask and expect to be able to social network on the job. Prefer to work in teams, may need structure and supervision. Reject “paying dues,” give input immediately. Flexible workplace, work anywhere any time to focus on outside interests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Preferences</td>
<td>Conversations over coffee or lunch. Intertwine business and relationships. Share mutual interests, seek input, connect message and team to mission, vision, values. Personal interaction.</td>
<td>Direct and straightforward communication, don’t want time wasted, may seem abrupt. No jargon. Email or voicemail. Give clear direction.</td>
<td>Be positive. Text-message or F2F. Tie message to GenY personal goals or team goals. Don’t be condescending, avoid cynicism and sarcasm. IM, blog, text, email.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tech</td>
<td>Worry technology is replacing human interaction and they are being left behind.</td>
<td>Techno-literate worry about being outpaced by younger colleagues.</td>
<td>Tech-savvy, can be impatient with those who are not and can not keep up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values</td>
<td>Identity is wrapped up in work. Seek consensus, process. Personalize workplace. Struggle with nontraditional work styles. Work-life balance.</td>
<td>Independent, self-reliant, challenge status quo, reluctant loyalty. Adaptable, thrive in chaos and change. Seek measurable results, streamlined processes, efficiency.</td>
<td>Community-oriented, value diversity, see world as global, connected and 24/7. Achievement-focused, confident, may seem cocky. Informal style may see off-putting.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What’s the Take-away?

- Discuss generational differences
- Seek common ground regarding communication
- Mentoring programs
- Create flexible workplace
- Respect strengths and areas of competence
- Teams are important