

MBACC Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council  
EVOLVE Series



## Multigenerational Workplaces



1

### Sound Familiar?

- 🗨️ “They just don’t have the same work ethic!”
- 🗨️ “She wants to know her career path?! I’m not even sure what we’ll look like next week, let alone year?”
- 🗨️ “If I hear ‘we tried that two years ago’ one more time, I’m going to throw something at him!”
- 🗨️ “He just finished training and he wants a promotion already!?”
- 🗨️ “I don’t attend meetings after 5:00.”
- 🗨️ “I can’t believe they didn’t wear a suit jacket!”
- 🗨️ “OK... BOOMER!”



2

### Multigenerational Perspectives – Inevitable Conflict

- 🗨️ Differences in values
- 🗨️ Varying viewpoints
- 🗨️ Differences in upbringing
- 🗨️ Ways of working
- 🗨️ Ways of talking
- 🗨️ Ways of thinking
- 🗨️ Distinct turn offs



3

### The Impact of when Generations Fail to Communicate

- 🗨️ Turnover rates
- 🗨️ Tangible costs (recruiting, hiring, marketing, training, retention)
- 🗨️ Intangible costs (morale, culture, collegiality)
- 🗨️ Grievances and complaints
- 🗨️ Loss of productivity
- 🗨️ Lack of motivation
- 🗨️ Unclear expectations
- 🗨️ Perceptions of fairness and equity



4

## Learning Objectives:

With five generations working together in the workplace, it is important that all generations communicate successfully with each other for productivity and teamwork.

- 🕒 Review the five generations in the workplace;
- 🕒 Identify defining moments, common values for each generation and how this affects behavior of the generations; and
- 🕒 Develop a plan to implement leadership strategies to adapt to and leverage generational diversity within the workplace.



5

## Generations

- 🕒 A group of people defined by age boundaries (those who were born during a certain era; 20 yrs),
- 🕒 They share similar experiences growing up, and
- 🕒 Their historic experiences, values, attitudes, behaviors, habits and expectations tend to be similar.

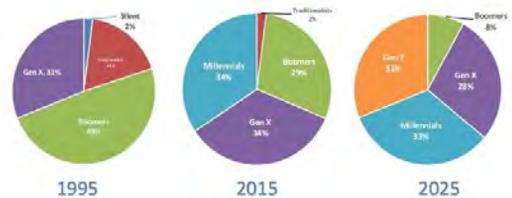


6



7

## Generations in the Workplace



8

## What generation do you represent in the workplace?



9

## Traditionalists/Veterans

### Defining Moments:

- ☒ First transatlantic flight
- ☒ Stock market crash
- ☒ Social Security system established
- ☒ US prepares for World War II
- ☒ Pearl Harbor
- ☒ D-day in Normandy
- ☒ Korean War



### Traditionalists/Veterans Core Values:

- Dedication and Sacrifice
- Hard Work
- Conformity
- Law and Order
- Respect for Authority
- Duty before Pleasure
- Honor



10

## Traditionalists/Veterans

### As such, Traditionalists tend to embrace:

- A direct leadership style (top down)
- Formal communications
- Respect for tenure and experience
- Loyalty to employer
- Neat and conservative attire
- Work ethics measured on timeliness, productivity and not drawing attention



### Approach:

Let them know that you value their experience and loyalty to the organization, spend adequate time in orientation and training activities (including the use of technology & diversity), and respect common norms of courteous behavior. Rewards come from the satisfaction of job well done.



11

## Boomers

### Defining Moments:

- ☒ First nuclear power plant
- ☒ Civil Rights Act passes
- ☒ Martin Luther King leads march on D.C.
- ☒ US troops enter Vietnam
- ☒ JFK assassinated, King and Robert Kennedy assassinated
- ☒ Woodstock (1969)



### Boomers Core Values:

- Optimism
- Team Orientation
- Personal Growth
- Loyalty
- Health and wellness through attention to self
- Hard Work



12

## Boomers



### As such, Boomers tend to embrace:

- Consensus, collegial leadership style
- Teamwork and personal interaction
- Strong work ethic (hard work measured in hours)
- In person meetings and phone calls
- A comfortable, affluent lifestyle (willing to go in debt for it)

### Approach:

Show them how they can be an organizational star, provide them with training and developmental opportunities, and involve them in operational matters. The best rewards are money or title recognition.



13

## Generation Xers

### Defining Moments:

- ☒ Women's liberation movement
- ☒ Watergate
- ☒ Energy crisis began
- ☒ John Lennon killed
- ☒ Challenger disaster
- ☒ Fall of Berlin Wall



### Generation X Core Values:

- Diversity • Thinking Globally • Techno Literacy • Fun • Structured Informality
- Self-Reliance • Cautious



14

## Generation Xers



### As such, Gen Xers tend to embrace:

- Leadership that respects everyone (diversity)
- Immediate communication
- Self-reliance and independence ("latch key kids")
- Fiscal cautiousness and conservatism
- Challenge (most educated generation)

### Approach:

Partner them with mentors (ideally Boomers) whom they can respect, promote work/life balance; refrain from giving them too much extended hands-on supervision. Freedom and autonomy are the best rewards.



15

## Millennials

### Defining Moments:

- ☒ Tylenol scare of 1982
- ☒ Technology advances
- ☒ September 11
- ☒ Fall of Saddam Hussein
- ☒ War in Afghanistan and Iran
- ☒ Violence (Oklahoma City Bombings, Columbine shooting)



### Millennial Current Core Values:

- Optimism • Civic Duty • Confidence/Independence • Achievement
- Sociability • Street Smarts • Diversity



16

## Millennials

**As such, Millennials tend to embrace:**

- Global causes; socially conscious
- Teamwork
- Multi-tasking
- Active involvement
- Impatience with instant gratification
- Parental involvement



### Approach:

Capitalize on their technological skills, provide them with structure, allow them to work in a collaborative & creative manner, be generous with professional development. Meaningful work and cool perks are rewarding for Millennials.



17

CATEGORY	BUILDERS	BABY BOOMERS	GENERATION X	GENERATION Y	GENERATION Z	GEN ALPHA
	Born: 1946-1964 Age: 55-73	Born: 1946-1964 Age: 55-73	Born: 1965-1979 Age: 41-55	Born: 1980-1994 Age: 26-40	Born: 1995-2012 Age: 8-25	Born: 2013-2025 Age: 0-7
Social markers	World War II (1939-1945)	Moon landing (1969)	Stock market crash (2007)	September 11 (2001)	GFC (2008)	Typh / Brexit (2016)
Iconic cars	Chevy Corvair (1962-1967)	Ford Mustang (1964)	Holden Commodore (1975)	Ford Focus (1997)	Tesla Model S (2012)	Autonomous cars (2020)
Iconic toys	Robot kits (1950s)	Frabee (1960s)	Rubik's cube (1974)	BMX bike (1970s)	Folding scooter (2010s)	Fidget spinner (2017)
Music devices	Record player (1940s)	Audio cassette (1960s)	Walkman (1970s)	iPod (2001)	Spotify (2009)	Smart speakers (2010s)
Leadership style	Controlling	Directing	Coordinating	Guiding	Empowering	Inspiring
Ideal leader	Commander	Thinker	Doer	Supporter	Collaborator	Co-creator
Learning style	Formal	Structured	Participative	Interactive	Multi-modal	Virtual
Influence/advice	Officials	Experts	Practitioners	Peers	Forums	Robo-advice
Marketing	Print (traditional)	Broadcast (mass)	Direct targeted	Online (targeted)	Digital (local)	In situ (real-time)

18

## Fundamental Differences: Generational Work Views

1. Traditionalists – an obligation
2. Boomers – an exciting adventure
3. Gen Xers – a difficult challenge, a contract
4. Millennials – a means to an end; fulfillment



19

## Fundamental Differences: Generational View on Authority

Traditionalists and Boomers respect authority and hierarchy; don't tend to challenge status quo.

Gen Xers and Millennials want a more collaborative environment; independence is a priority; were taught to speak up.



20

## Fundamental Differences: Generational Feedback

1. Traditionalists – “No news is good news.”
2. Boomers – “Feedback once a year and lots of documentation.”
3. Gen Xers – “Sorry to interrupt but how am I doing?”
4. Millennials – “Feedback whenever I want it at the push of a button.”



21

## Fundamental Differences: Generational Motivation

1. Traditionalists – “Your experience is respected.”
2. Boomers – “You are valued and needed.”
3. Gen Xers – “Do it your way.”
4. Millennials – “You will work with other bright creative people.”



22

## Leadership Strategies

1. Follow and lead by the Platinum Rule.
2. Set Clear Expectations.
  - Identify standards, short term goals & actively monitor results and progress
  - Affirm values of each generation through results
  - Allow flexibility/alternatives after standards are set
  - Realize workplace etiquette, professionalism, and respect varies



23

## Leadership Strategies

3. Communicate Effectively
  - Include the WHY
  - Tailor messaging for the receiver, not the sender
  - Facilitate (reverse) mentoring btw the generations
  - Avoid assumptions and ask for clarification
  - Performance issues, describe the gap
    1. We have a problem – and I need your help.
    2. Here is what we are expecting...
    3. Here is what we are experiencing...
    4. We need to close the gap between those two points.



24

## Leadership Strategies

4. Provide or take advantage of development opportunities
- DEI Council trainings, events
  - Professional development workshops, webinars
  - Books and resources

1. [Clash of the Generations: Managing the New Workplace Reality](#) by Valerie Grubb
2. [Dare to Lead](#) by Brenee Brown
3. [Generations at Work](#) by Ron Zemke, Bob Filipczak, Claire Raines
4. [Now What? Integrating Generational Diversity into your Workplace](#) by K. Scroggin
5. <https://jeopardylabs.com/play/generational-differences>
6. <https://jasondorse.com/>



25

## Leadership Strategies

5. Lead by Example
- Listen
  - Conduct surveys to understand generational needs
  - Provide a voice/seat at the table for all employees
  - Treat everyone fairly
  - Be inclusive of all generations
  - Ensure that all generations are present to leverage diversity, equity, and inclusion advantages



26

## Conclusion:

**With five generations working together in the workplace, it is important that all generations communicate successfully with each other for productivity and teamwork.**

- ☞ We recognize that there are five generations in the workplace;
- ☞ We acknowledge that defining moments and common values for each generation affects generational behavior; and
- ☞ We must use this knowledge to implement effective leadership strategies to adapt to and leverage generational diversity within the workplace.



27

## MBACC Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council EVOLVE Series

- ☞ Thank you for attending!
- ☞ Next session – September 17, 2020;  
Unconscious Bias and Implicit Bias
- ☞ Involvement in DEI Council



28