WORKING WITH THE GENERATIONS

Alabama City County Management Association

Introduction

- Owner: Smith Consulting, LLC
- Former Fortune 500 employee
- Supervised all four generations in workplace
- Combined 15 years of experience in business and education

Icebreaker

- You are assigned the task of creating a blueprint for the perfect employee. What knowledge, skills, experiences, and attitudes would he or she possess?
- Draw a stick figure with all extremities. Write your ideas on the stick figure in the appropriate place. (Multiples are ok)
  - Head   =   Knowledge
  - Hands   =   Skills
  - Heart   =   Attitudes
  - Feet   =   Experiences
- You have two minutes to write your characteristics.

Why Understand Generations

- Leadership Approach
- Communication Style
- Motivational Buttons
- How They Interact with Others

Defining A Generation

Each generation imagines itself to be more intelligent than the one that went before it, and wiser than the one that comes after it.

George Orwell

- What is the definition of generation?

- What makes one generation different from another?

Generations

- Silents — 1927-1945
- Baby Boomers — 1946-1964
- Generation X — 1965-1980
- Generation Y — 1981-2000
- Generation Z — 2001-

Silent/Traditionalist/Veterans

- Age 72-90
  - Great Depression
  - Attack on Pearl Harbor
  - World War II
  - Korean War

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Baby Boomers

- Age 53-71
  - Baseball Heroes
  - Civil rights Movement
  - Feminism
  - Space travel
  - Assassinations
  - Credit cards
  - Television

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Generation X

- Age 37-52
  - AIDS
  - Personal Computers
  - Evolution of Internet
  - Video Games
  - Latchkey Generation

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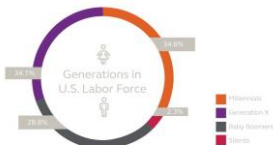_____

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Generation Y

- Age 17-36
  - September 11th
  - 75 million
  - Internet- Technological integration
  - Berlin Wall
  - Columbine
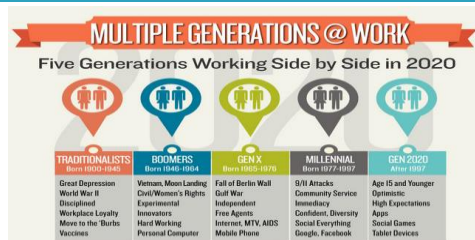 - Attended day care, very involved "helicopter" parents

By the numbers

Generations in U.S. Labor Force

- Millennials
- Generation X
- Baby Boomers
- Silents

- 3.6 million Baby Boomers potentially retired in 2016.
- The labor force is at the lowest rate since the 1930's and the US birth rate continues to decline.
- By 2019, Generation Z will make up over 20% of the workforce.
- By 2025, 1 in 5 workers will be over age 55. The slowing of the workforce translates to an estimated shortfall of 20 million workers over the next 20 years.

Recap......

MULTIPLE GENERATIONS @ WORK

Five Generations Working Side by Side in 2020

TRADITIONALISTS Born 1900-1945	BOOMERS Born 1946-1964	GEN X Born 1965-1976	MILLENNIAL Born 1977-1997	GEN 2020 After 1997
Great Depression	Vietnam, Moon Landing	Fall of Berlin Wall	9/11 Attacks	Age 15 and Younger
World War II	Civil/Women's Rights	Gulf War	Community Service	Optimistic
Disciplined	Experimental	Independent	Immediacy	High Expectations
Workplace Loyalty	Innovators	Free Agents	Confident, Diversity	Apps
Move to the 'Burbs	Hard Working	Internet, MTV, AIDS	Social Everything	Social Games
Vaccines	Personal Computer	Mobile Phone	Google, Facebook	Tablet Devices

Why should we understand the four generations?

- This is the first time in American history that we have had four different generations working side-by-side in the workplace.
- Each generation has distinct attitudes, behaviors, expectations, habits, and motivational buttons.
- These four generations often collide, as their paths cross.
- They have different values, different ideas, different ways of getting things done, and different ways to communicating in the workplace.

Why should we understand the four generations?

- Generational context may affect the way we work
- Diverse workforce
- The PSY and SOC of managers

Working with Traditionalist   5%

Assets	Liabilities
Adhere to rules	Inflexible
Respect Authority	Resist change
Loyal	Lectured style vs web based
Formal	Technology-challenged
Rewards later	
Work the hours needed to get the job done	
Team players	

Working with Baby Boomers   45%

Assets	Liabilities
□ Responsible and Dedicated	□ Uncomfortable with conflict
□ Confident and Independent	
□ Loyal	□ Technology-challenged
□ Team player	□ Adaptability
□ Workaholic	□ Sensitive to feedback
□ Well-educated	
□ Very competitive	

Working with Generation X   40%

Assets	Liabilities
□ Fast-paced	□ Believes in 40-hours work for 40-hours pay
□ Independent	□ Skeptical
□ Confident	□ Loyalty
□ Value personal time	□ Motivation
□ Challenge the status quo	□ Push back on ideas
□ Flexible	

Working with Generation Y   10%

Assets	Liabilities
□ Tech savvy	□ Impatient
□ Innovative	□ Lacks focus
□ Creative	□ Impulsive
□ Works well in a team environment	□ High cost to the company
□ Goal-oriented	□ Loyalty
□ Work the hours to get the job done.	□ Not happy with long working hours. Set their own working hours. I want Saturdays off.

Personal & Lifestyle Characteristics by Generation

	Traditionalists	Baby Boomers	Gen X-ers	Millennials
Core Values	Respect for authority	Optimism & Involvement	Skepticism & Fun/Informality	Realism, Confidence, Social
Family	Traditional/ Nuclear	Disintegrating	Latch-key Kids	Merged Families
Education	A Dream	A Birthright	A way to get there	An incredible expense
Communication	Rotary phones, One-on-one, Write a memo	Touch-tone phones, Call me anytime	Cell phones, Call me only at work	Internet, picture phones, email
Money	Put it away, Pay in cash	Buy now, pay later	Save, Save, Save, Conservative	Earn to spend

Adapted from: Mixing & Managing Four Generations of Employees

Workplace Characteristics

	Traditionalists	Baby Boomers	Gen X-ers	Millennials
Work Ethic & Values	Hard work; Duty before fun; rules	Workaholics; desire quality; question authority	Want structure & direction	What's next; multi-tasking; goal-oriented
Work is…	An obligation	An adventure	A difficult challenge	A means to an end
Leadership Style	Directive; command-and-control	Consensual Collegial	Everyone is the same	Take charge
Interactive Style	Individual	Team player; loves to meet	Entrepreneur	Participative
Communication	Formal Memo	In person	Direct & immediate	Email or voicemail
Feedback	No news is good news	Don't appreciate it	Sorry to interrupt, but how am I doing?	Whenever I want it; push of a button
Work & Family Life	Ne'er the twain shall meet	No balance; work to live	Balance	Balance

Adapted from: Mixing & Managing Four Generations of Employees
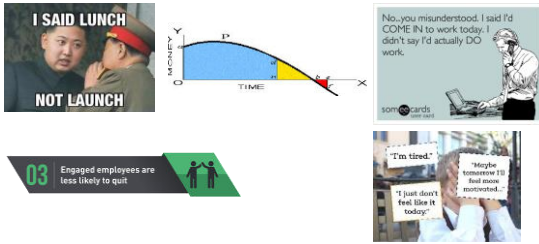
So, where do we go from here?

"If I were given the opportunity to present a gift to the next generation, it would be the ability for each individual to learn to laugh at himself."

~Cartoonist, Charles Schulz

□ Challenges
□ Generational Gap
□ Generational Shift
□ Recruit
□ Retain
□ Simple Techniques

Generational challenges found in the workplace

Generational Gap

How to close the generational gap?

- Groups
  - Maintenance, Secretaries, Mangers, Community Service
- Communicate
  - Professional, adapt, and concise
- Sharing
  - Use idea boxes to keep employees involved
- Motivate
  - Encourage, develop, and empower

What is the generational shift?

- Baby Boomers will exit the workforce
- A whole new set of expectations
- Retention challenges
- Staff shortages

What does the generational shift mean for YOU?

- Managing will become more difficult.
- High degree of anxiety or stress
  - Workers will need more direction, coaching, & guidance.
  - Millennials are being raised by "helicopter parents."
- Severely under-managed with experience

Recruiting a multigenerational workforce

- Understand their motivation
- Job description and social media presence
- Be aware of similarities
  - Baby boomers know they have a lot to contribute
  - 75% of millennials are interested in having a mentor
- People work for people not a company
- Hire the best person for the job
- Equip people with the necessary skills

Retaining a multigenerational workforce

- Older generations like monetary rewards, younger generations like time off work.
- Set goals
- Provide latest technology
- Communicate is key
- Employee learning style
- Professional development
- Respect work-life balance

+ 11 Ways to Minimize Generational Differences in the Workplace

1. Focus on similarities rather than differences
2. Recognize that change does occur
3. Recognize the value and the perils of the "tried and true"
4. Be aware that "new" technology may not be you
5. Develop a curiosity for things unknown to you
6. Ask questions rather than make statements
7. Avoid characterizations based on age
8. Define your acronyms
9. Paraphrase before answering
10. Be careful about cultural or historical references
11. If that other age-group worker was right after all, say so.

Adapted from: Calvin Sun - 1.18.11

+ Ways to Encourage Teamwork

1. Talk about generational differences
   - Generational information awareness/sharing sessions
2. Expand communication strategies
   - Keep in mind each team member's communication preference
3. Offer mentoring programs/focus on team building
   - Ensures critical skills sets and job knowledge is transferred to and from all generations
4. Create workplace choices & accommodate differences
   - Treat employees as you do your customers. Where and when possible, work to meet their working preferences.
5. Respect competence and initiative
   - Treat everyone, from newest to most seasoned employee as if they have the great things to offer & are motivated to do their best.

Adapted from: www.birkman.com

Always Use the ACORN Approach

- **A**ccommodate employee differences
- **C**reate workplace choices
- **O**perate from a flexible management style
- **R**espect competence and initiative
- **N**ourish retention

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