

# Multi Generational Workforce: An Introduction

A LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE

# Course Information

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Ceil Wloczewski: Leadership in the Multi-Generational Workplace, April 14, 2014

AARP, Leading a Multigenerational Workforce, 2007; and Human Capital Institute, The Silent Generation Meets, Generation Y; and Greg Hammill, "Mixing and Managing Generations of Employees," FDU magazine Online, Winter/Spring 2005

Robin Flax; Development Generational Comparison Chart, 2012

Bonni Yordi, The Pathway to Becoming and Employer of Choice May 4, 2007 and Are Your Employees Satisfied or Are They Engaged; Why the Difference Matters, April 2010

PEW Research Center, May 8, 2015

Copyright Clearance: Obtained from all required

# Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course the participant will be able to:

- Identify characteristics of the four generations in the workplace
- Distinguish between the learning styles of the four generations
- Describe how those styles might be accommodated
- Distinguish between the communication preferences of the four generations and how those styles might benefit the organization
- Identify what may be sources of conflict between multi generational employees and ways to resolve them
- Decide the benefits of a multi-generational workforce

# Introduction

Simply stated, generational theory explains that the era in which a person was born affects the development of their view of the world. Our value systems are shaped in the first decade or so of our lives, by our families, our friends, our communities, significant events and the general era in which we are born.

The field of corrections offers many challenges and one of those challenges is a multi-generational workforce. The goal of this presentation is to increase awareness of the multi-generational workforce and the unique characteristics of each. Keep in mind these are generalizations and there are exceptions to every “rule.” Moving past stereotypes while keeping an open mind are keys to success when managing a multi-generational workforce.



# Generational Humor

Cam Marston a Humorous Look at the Four Generations in Today's Workplace

(June 26, 2012, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4bJPY1B6T1w> paste URL into your web browser, view and continue with the presentation)

# Traditionalists

## Significant Events:

- 1937 Hindenburg tragedy
- 1937 Disney's first animated feature
- 1941 Hitler invades Russia
- 1941 Pearl Harbor
- 1947 Jackie Robinson joins major league baseball
- 1954 World War II Ends



Technology that shaped them:  
Radio

Compelling messages from  
their formative years:

- Make do or do without
- Stay in line
- Sacrifice
- Be heroic
- Consider the common good

# Baby Boomers

## Significant Events:

- 1954 First transistor radio
- 1960 Birth control pills introduced
- 1963 MLK Jr. leads march on Washington
- 1963 President Kennedy assassinated
- 1965 U.S. sends troops to Vietnam
- 1967 World's first heart transplant
- 1969 U.S. Moon landing
- 1969 Woodstock
- 1970 Women's liberation demonstrations

Compelling messages from their formative years:

- Be anything you want to be
- Change the world
- Work well with others
- Live up to expectation



Technology that shaped them:  
Television

# Generation X

## Significant Events:

- 1976 Tandy and Apple market PC's
- 1979 Margaret Thatcher becomes first female British Prime minister
- 1979 Massive corporate layoffs
- 1980 John Lennon killed
- 1981 AIDS identified
- 1986 Challenger disaster



Compelling messages from their formative years:

- Don't count on it
- Heroes don't exist
- Get real
- Take care of yourself
- Always ask "why?"



Technology that shaped them:  
The personal computer

# Millennials

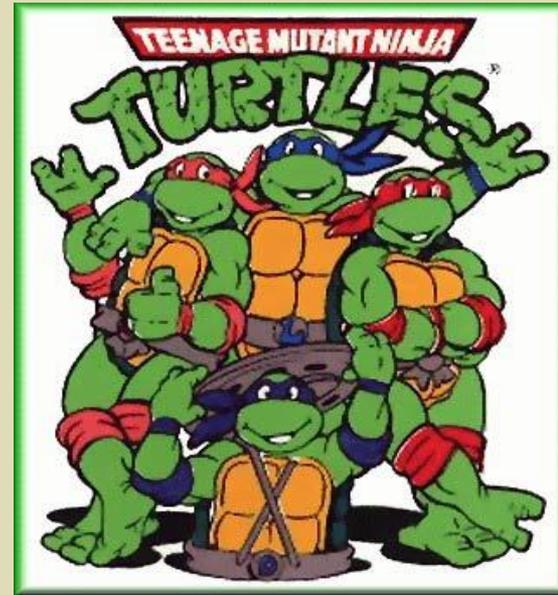
## Significant Events:

- 1995 Bombing of Federal Building in Oklahoma City
- 1997 Princess Diana dies
- 1999 Columbine high school shooting
- 2001 World Trade Center attacks
- 2001 Enron, WorldCom corporate scandal
- 2003 War begins in Iraq
- 2005 Hurricane Katrina



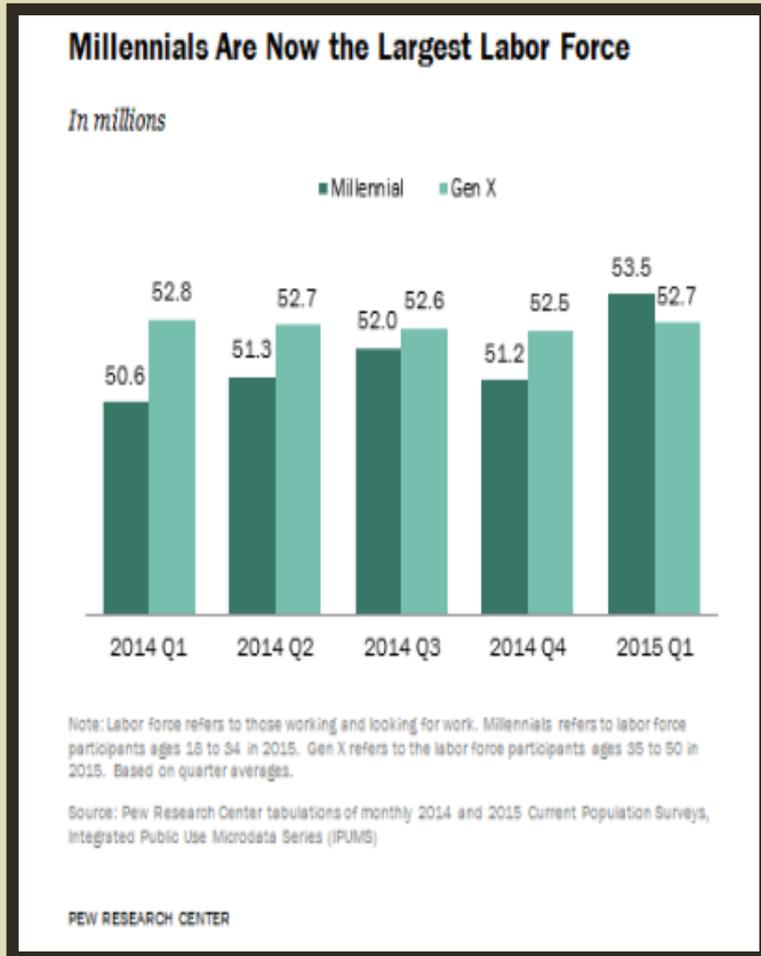
Compelling messages from their formative years:

- You are special
- Leave no one behind
- Connect 24/7
- Serve your community



Technology that shaped them:  
The internet

# Workforce



More than one-in-three American workers today are Millennials (adults ages 18 to 34 in 2015), and this year (as of May 8, 2015) they surpassed Generation X to become the largest share of the American workforce, according to new Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data.

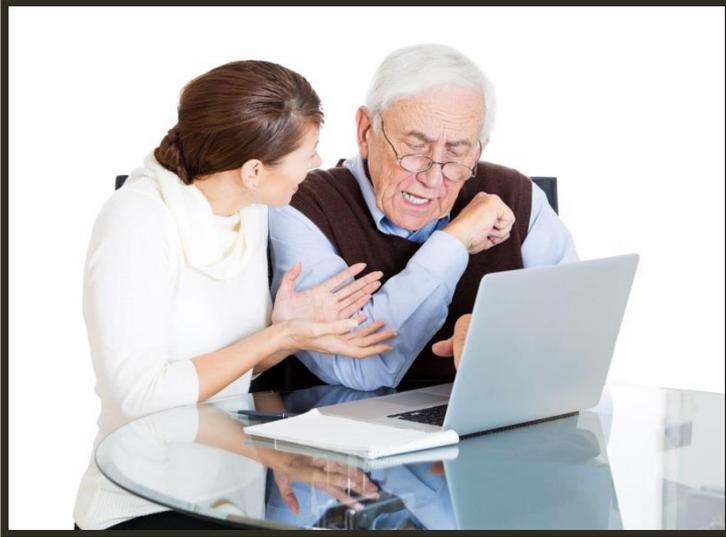
(May 8, 2015 PEW Research Center)

Who Are They and What Are They About?

# THE GENERATIONS

<b>Traditionalists</b>	95% of this generation is retired. They are an adaptive generation because they had to be. They have a practical outlook and a dedicated work ethic, respectful of authority and believe in personal sacrifice.
<b>Baby Boomers</b>	An idealistic generation, often stressed out; experienced the pop media revolution and the ideal of peace in our times; are optimistic, driven and team oriented. Often people from that generation have their self-image tied to doing a good job. They are competitive and loyal, value individual freedom and dedication.
<b>Generation X</b>	A reactive generation, street wise. Both parents likely to work (latchkey kids). Grew up questioning their parents and are now questioning their employers. They do not know how to shut up, which is great, but aggravating to the 50 year old manager who says “do it and do it now.” Less likely to have cooperate loyalty; value self-reliance and work-life balance; technology is an important part of their lives. This generation is more informal, fun loving and independent.
<b>Millenials</b>	<p>A civic generation, inner driven within the information revolution striving to get ahead. They have been pampered and nurtured and programmed with in a range of activities since they were toddlers, meaning they are both high-maintenance and high-performers. They also believe in their own worth. Drawn to their families for safety and security.</p> <p>Does not mind change and do not expect to stay in a job or even a career very long. This is a generation of multi –taskers who can juggle e-mail while talking on their cell phones while trolling Facebook or Twitter. They are ambitious, hopeful, relaxed, polite, collaborative, and tend to enjoy working alongside their friends. Much less likely to respond to the traditional command and control type of management still popular. Socially sensitive, optimistic, technology adept, and easily bored.</p>

# Traditionalists (Born:1922-1945)



***Engagement strategies for traditionalists should focus on their needs for control, connection, significance, learning, and accomplishment.***

Traditionalists comprise only about 4% of the workforce. Some are in the upper echelons of the corporate world and many work because they want to, so it is not surprising that this is the most engaged segment of the workforce.

Traditionalists follow the rules, show more discipline, respect authority, and are loyal to the company. They are accustomed to working in hierarchical organizations, respect the chain of command, and believe that tenure counts for a lot.

This group is a treasure trove of perspective, wisdom, and institutional memory.

**Control:** Traditionalists are comfortable with a directive style of leadership, expect it, and may not respond well to other styles. Many are sticking around voluntarily, but they don't necessarily want to exert themselves. Offer flexible work options such as part-time schedules, contract and temporary work. Let them choose when to work and the kind of work they will do.





Robert De Niro and Anna Hathaway in 'The Intern' Warner Bros

**Connection:** The draw of relationships at work helps keep traditionalists around, so avoid disrupting long-standing relationships if possible. Relate and express appreciation to them in “old fashioned ways – in person, with handwritten notes, plaques and awards.

## ***Significance and Learning:***

Encourage traditionalists to engage in two-way mentoring relationships with younger employees. Place traditionalists on committees as advisors so they can share their hard-earned wisdom. Be sure to clearly define their role, and explain how the team will operate.





### ***Accomplishment:***

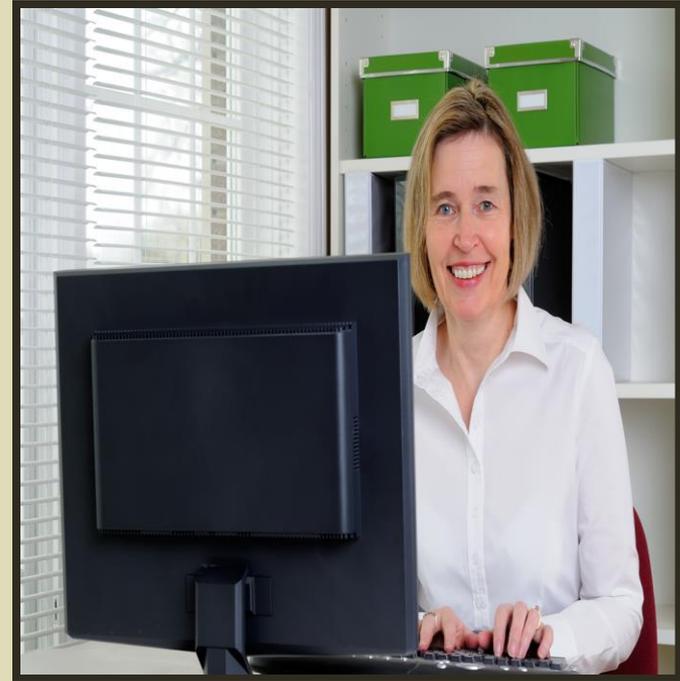
Though many are fully engaged, a few are hanging on just to collect a paycheck.

Appeal to their sense of responsibility. Assert authority tactfully and sensitively, and explain they are still expected to contribute fully.

Tolerating loafing drags the team down and sets a bad example.

# Baby Boomers (Born: 1946-1964)

Though they still occupy many of leadership positions, early boomers are into their retirement years and many more are headed there shortly. Despite round after round of layoffs and scandals, their inner idealists yearn for the good old days when tenure and loyalty counted – a lot. Though they are known for their competitiveness, goal-orientation, ambition and work-centric lifestyle, boomers invented the idea of work-life balance. Now, 20 years after coining the term, many are starting to learn what it means. Still, they expect others to keep the pace they kept in their younger years.



***Engagement strategies for boomers should revolve around the need for: control, connection, significance, challenge and accomplishment.***

**Control:** Boomers should be afforded the freedom to exercise their skills and behave responsibly. Give them plenty of freedom of supervision and the opportunity to work on teams. Provide them with the chance to set their own hours and telecommute as desired.

**Connection:** This is the last generation to identify with the team and the organization. Be sure to tell them how valued they are and how important they are to the team.





***Significance:*** Titles, offices and official recognition can be important to boomers. More than others, they want jobs that recognize their experience, offices that reflect a respectable status, monetary rewards, and formal recognition from the organization. Acknowledge people who are not in formal leadership positions by giving them lead roles on teams, positions as technical advisors, and encouraging them to mentor younger colleagues – according to their talents.

**Challenge:** Even the youngest boomers have a tremendous amount of experience, so it can be hard to challenge them. Meet with boomer employees to chart a career plan that focusses on what they still want to accomplish.





## ***Accomplishment:***

Boomers are an idealistic and goal-oriented generation. Appeal to their ideals and set challenging goals for them. Friendly competition between teams can also be especially motivating for this generation.

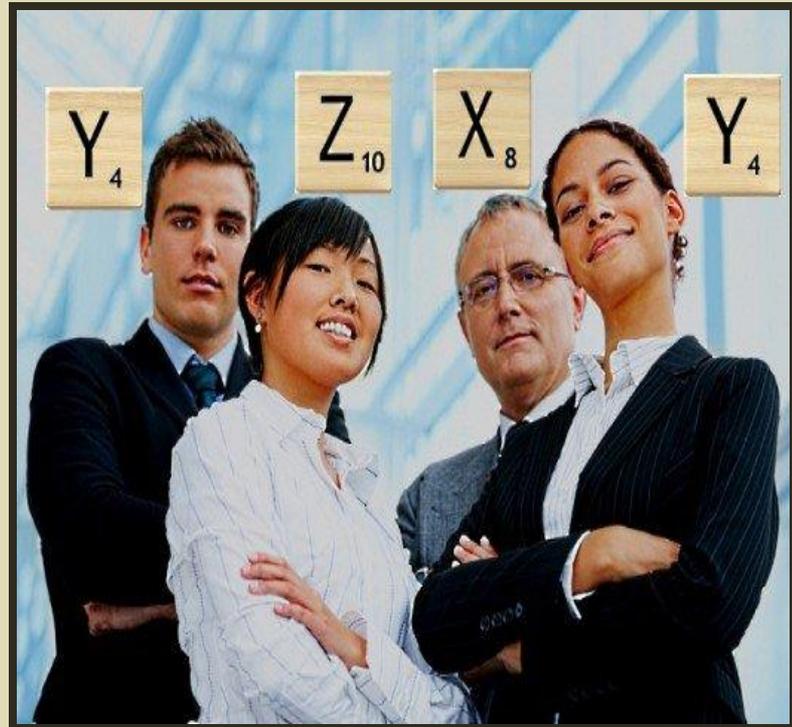
# Generation X (Born:1965-1980)

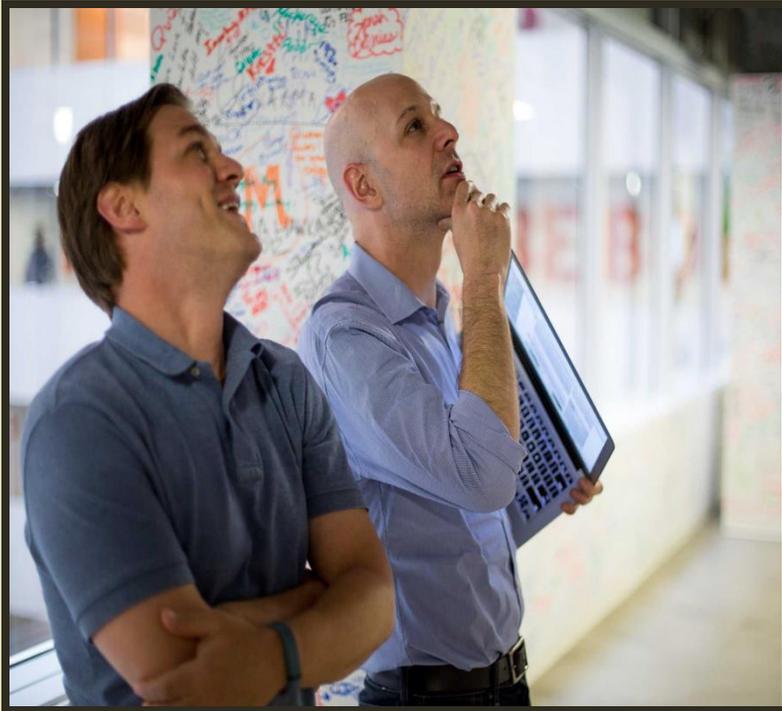
Early on, Xers learned to rely only on themselves. They are independent, pragmatic, resourceful, innovative, results-focused and thrive on challenges. They tend to distrust institutions and are loyal only to people and results. As teens and young adults, they lived through corporate mergers, downsizing and scandals. In response, they became the earliest entrants in the free agent economy.



***Engagement strategies for Xer's should revolve around the need for: control, challenge, learning and accomplishment.***

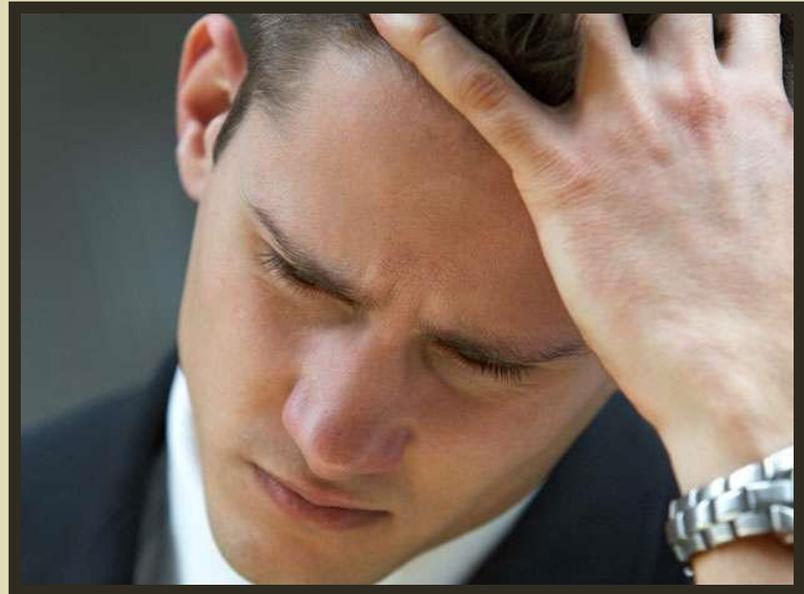
**Control:** Treat Xers as individuals and allow them the freedom to manage themselves. Give them control over their work, learning and schedule. Provide freedom to pursue their own interests by setting time apart for personal projects and/or by allowing them to choose their assignments. When assigning must-do work, be sure to explain why it is important.





**Challenge:** Xers thrive on challenges. Since they are not as much into teamwork as other generations, try to give assignments that allow them to shine independently. Frame challenges in terms of their value rather than the benefits to the company. Give them lots of assignments, and let them figure out how to prioritize them.

**Learning:** Xers are learners but prefer to choose what, how and when they learn. More than others, they can handle direct constructive feedback, but be sure to be as direct about what to do about it. Point out developmental needs directly and ask how they plan to address them. They may need help in dealing with office politics, so offer coaching and mentoring in this area.





***Accomplishment:*** To this generation, results are what matter and they expect to be rewarded for what they achieve. Resources also matter. Be sure to supply the information and technology tools needed to get the job done. They expect visibility, promotion, and rewards to be based on their results rather than tenure and resent “losing” them to politics and tenured people.

Value prominence in any communications and tie job duties and special projects to that mission.

# Millennials (Born: 1981-1990)

Besides being “connected,” millennials are confident, well-educated, socially conscious, highly collaborative, and savvy learners. They were taught that they are valuable and were invited to express their opinions. Now they want to contribute, and they want to do it now.



*Engagement strategies for millennials should revolve around the need for: connection, learning, significance and accomplishment.*

**Connection:** Time with friends and family are prized by this generation, but they are willing to work remotely and outside the traditional work hours. Give them the technology and freedom to do so, and it is likely that they will stay connected and productive from unusual times and places.



Millennials want to work in teams and expect to work directly with their leaders. Throughout life they worked alongside their peers and developed close relationships with their leaders. Teachers, parents, coaches, friends (and the games they played) all provided them with abundant and immediate feedback and encouragement. Is it any wonder that they expect the same experience in the workplace? Though other generations may be uncomfortable with this kind of feedback and intimacy, the reality is that all people need it and thrive when they have it.

Structure work processes so that millennials can work collaboratively, make time in the schedule to work directly with them, and give them plenty of feedback.



**Learning:** This generation has embraced learning as a way of life. When they don't know something, they consult the Internet. Google, YouTube and countless other sites all have the information they need. Unlike prior generations who realized that information is power and hoarded it, this generation knows that information is power, so they share it. Learning, or anything for that matter, isn't confined to a specific place an time; it takes place in the moment because the world is literally at their fingertips.





Though they are often perceived as “cocky,” millennials want to learn from their leaders and colleagues. Unlike Xers, they want mentors to show them the way. Partner these junior professionals with experienced colleagues on teams and projects and encourage traditionalists and boomers to mentor them. This practice will engage the staff and help to meet critical knowledge management needs.

**Significance:** Millennials have learned a lot from their parents and are seeking to live meaningful, well-balanced lives. Work is an important component, but it is not THE priority in life. While they believe that having a well-paying job is important, millennials readily sacrifice money to live the life they want.



- ***Accomplishment:*** Because of their youth and their generation, millennials want to make a difference. They want to solve problems and make the world a better place. Consequently, they are attracted to organizations with a socially minded mission who invest in good causes. Give the company mission and its societal value prominence in any communications and tie job duties and special projects to that mission.



# Methods of Communication

Generation	Preferred Methods of Communication	Suggested Ways to Communicate
<b>Traditionalists</b>	Memos Letters Personal Notes Individual Interactions	Words and tone of voice should be respectful, with good grammar, clear diction, no slang or profanity. Language should be formal and professional, and the message should relate to organization history and long-term goals.
<b>Boomers</b>	Face-to-Face Phone Calls Personal Interaction Structured Networking	Conversations should be more informal, perhaps over coffee or lunch. Boomers tend to see relationship and business results as intertwined. Ask about mutual interests (e.g. "How is your son doing in college?"). Make the conversation participative by getting the other's input, and link the message to the team or individual vision, mission, and values.
<b>Gen Xers</b>	Voice Mail E-mail Casual Direct and Immediate	Don't waste the person's time. Be direct and straightforward. Avoid corporate-speak. Send an e-mail or leave a voice mail that states clearly what you want, how it will serve the Gen Xer, and when you want it.
<b>Millennials</b>	Digital (Instant Messages, Blogs, Text Messages) Collaborative Interaction	Be positive. Send a text message or meet face-to-face. Tie the message to the Millennial's personal goals or to the goals the whole team is working toward. Don't be condescending. Avoid cynicism and sarcasm.

*Source: Adapted from AARP, Leading a Multigenerational Workforce (Washington, DC: AARP, 2007); and Human Capital Institute, The Silent Generation Meets Generation Y; and Greg Hammill, "Mixing and Managing Four Generations of Employees," FDU Magazine Online, Winter/Spring 2005, <http://fdu.edu/newspubs/magazine/osws/generations.htm> (accessed July 2, 2010).*

Demographic Group	Born: Age Range	Values, Traits, Characteristics	Learning Styles
Traditionalists	1928-1945 (71+ years old)	Hierarchical, loyal to institutions, motivated by financial rewards and security	Traditional, instructor-led, reading, homework “teach me”
Boomers	1946-1964 (70-52 years old)	Idealistic, competitive, striving to achieve	Traditional, group effort, expert-driven, self-driven, “lead me to information”
Generation X	1966-1980 (50-36 years old)	Self-reliant, willing to change rules, tribal and community oriented	Team-driven, collaborative, “wisdom of crowds,” peer-to-peer “connect me to people”
Millenials	1980-2000 (36-16 years old)	Confident, impatient, socially conscious, family centric, technology savvy	Give context and meaning, make it fun, search and explore, entertain me “connect me to everything”

# Generational Similarities

- People view work as a vehicle for personal fulfillment and satisfaction.
- The highest indicator of satisfaction is to feel valued on the job. More than 70% of employees want a supportive work environment where they feel recognized and appreciated.
- Career development is a high priority.
- Flexibility is important.

# Multigenerational Benefits

- Traditionalist bring knowledge, loyalty, experience, consistency, and stability.
- Baby Boomers will go the extra mile, work hard, great team players, and mission oriented.
- Generation Xers adapt well to change, eager to learn, highly educated, multitaskers, want feedback and value information.
- Millennials are optimistic, goal oriented, tenacious, and technically savvy.

# Multigenerational Conflict

- Age differences and communication
- Belief systems and values
- Work ethics and attitudes
- Race, gender, and sexuality
- Culture and language
- Organizational goals and change
- Work–life balance issues
- Technology-use differences

# Managing Conflict

- Provide all generations with a clear organizational vision
- Provide increased performance feedback to Generation Y employees
- Use cross-generational team problem solving for all generations that promotes shared work values
- Use social media and mobile devices to communicate with Millennial employees
- Utilize Millennials and Generation X employees for internet-based information collection
- Use Generation Y employees for multitasking projects
- Generation X, Baby Boomers, and Traditionalists are more effective with projects requiring face-to-face tasks
- Provide mentoring, including reverse mentoring, to all generations
- Implement a knowledge-management (retention) system for all generations including the current Baby Boomer retirees

# Reducing Communication Barriers

Foster logical discussion of multigenerational behaviors.

Strategically mix and place employees in positions to facilitate cross generational dialogue.

Develop cross generational teams to work on projects that requires extensive interaction and interpersonal communication.

Plan team activities that is mission oriented and specific.

# As a Leader

***Adapt your attitudes about rewards, work styles, communication preferences and motivators to match generational expectations***—be open about different generations in the work place and make an effort to start conversations about it.

***Understand what makes each generation tick***—offer different options to best meet the needs of a multi-generational work place.

***Leverage the strengths of each generation***—pursue and encourage a multiplicity of perspectives and ideas. This leads to innovation.

***Build bridges between generations***—build on strengths and encourage people to become more of who they are rather than pushing them to conform.

***Communicate uniquely with each generation***—observe and discover ways to meet the different communication styles of your team.

***Support the values of each generation***—make a point to ask people about their individual needs, views and preferences.

Ceil Wloczewski: Leadership in the Multi-Generational Workplace, April 14, 2014

# Summary

When the leadership embraces diversity and recognizes the dynamics of a multigenerational workplace an opportunity is presented for the organization to improve operations, processes, increase productivity, and enhance efficiency.

A multigenerational workplace is a challenge for leadership. The attitudes and behaviors of a cross generational workforce should be examined to accentuate the positive and suppress the negative.