Conquering the Generational Challenge

Creating a Harmonious and Productive Workplace
Generational Categories

• Traditionalist   Born 1925-1944
• Boomers          Born 1945-1964
• Generation X     Born 1965-1981
• Millennials      Born 1982-1997
• Generation Z     Born 1998-2014
What defines a generation

- Collective perspective
- Similar values, thought processes and behavior patterns
- Impact of significant historical circumstances
- Gradual transition
- Broad range of disparity in exhibiting generational characteristics
What defines a generation

• Historical events

• Family Constellation

• Technological Advancements
What defines a generation

- Traditionalist
- Historical events
  - Great depression
  - World War II
  - Korean War
- Child Rearing
  - Authoritarian
  - Dominant maternal influence
- Family
  - Close nuclear families
  - Conservative family values
  - Family support in child rearing
- Technology
  - Radio
  - Polaroid camera
  - Party line telephone
What defines a generation

• Boomers
• Historical events
  – Civil Rights Movement
  – Vietnam War
  – Space race
  – Woodstock
• Child Rearing
  – Parental expectation for compliance
  – Education is paramount
  – Introduction of different philosophy of accountability
• Family
  – American dream
  – Close family systems
  – Sexual revolution
• Technology
  – Telephone
  – Air travel
  – Interstate highways
What defines a generation

- Generation X
- Historical events
  - Energy Crisis
  - Watergate
  - Iran hostage crisis
  - End of the cold war
- Child rearing
  - Expectations to achieve
  - Substantial increase in substitute care providers/latch key
  - Emphasis on post secondary education
- Family
  - Dual wage earner families
  - Increased divorce rate/single parent families
- Technology
  - Computers
  - Atari
  - Mobile phone transition – bag phones to wireless
What defines a generation

• Millennial
• Historical events
  – 911
  – Columbine
  – Desert storm
  – Great recession
• Child Rearing
  – Reduced structure and limit setting/inconsistency in accountability
  – Participation trophies
  – Increasing use of digital amusement
• Family
  – Divorce/single parent/blended families
  – Change in boundaries/broader definition
• Technology
  – Smart phones
  – Laptop computers
  – I pad
What defines a generation

• Generation Z
• Historical events
  – Iraq war
  – War on terror/ISIS
  – Political scandal
  – Border security
• Child rearing
  – Wide disparity in child rearing philosophy
  – Less structure/greater independence
  – Sporadic accountability
• Family
  – Blurring of gender identity
  – Alternate family lifestyles
  – Entitlements
• Technology
  – You tube
  – Drones
  – Interactive devices – Seri
  – Artificial intelligence
Generational Challenges in the Modern Workplace

• Cost of recruitment, hiring, training and retention
• Structuring the workplace to accommodate individual differences
• Development and supervision of staff
• Employee relations in a multi-generational work culture
• Keeping pace with advancements in technology
Work life values and ethic

• Boomers
  – Loyal to career and employer
  – Hard work will pay dividends
  – Ambitious/value gratification
  – Workaholics
  – Respect hierarchy
  – Play by the rules
  – Anticipating retirement
Work life values and ethic

• Generation X
  – Outcome oriented
  – Do whatever it takes
  – Work to live
  – Values education and the opportunities it creates
  – Self-starter
  – Focus on results
  – Entrepreneurial
Work life values and ethic

• Millennial
  – Tech savvy
  – Technology creates flexible workplace rules
  – Wants continual feedback
  – Prefers learning through mentoring
  – Highly educated
  – Seeks recognition
  – Sense of entitlement
  – Struggles with work hierarchies/structure
Work life values and ethic

• Generation Z
  – Digitally connected
  – Multi-tasker
  – Want to plan their own future
  – Wants to make an impact
  – Opportunists
  – Financial security is important
  – High rate of loneliness/feelings of depressed mood
Blending Generational Potentials

• More the same than different
  – Physical development
  – Intellectual development
  – Emotional development
  – Hierarchy of needs
Blending Generational Potentials

• Physical development
  – Biological functions
  – Human growth
  – Physical needs
Blending Generational Potentials

- Intellectual development
  - Brain function
  - Response to stimulation
  - Learning patterns
Blending Generational Potentials

- Emotional development
  - Erik Erikson’s stages of man
    - Basic Trust vs. Basic Mistrust
    - Autonomy vs. Shame & Doubt
    - Initiative vs. Guilt
    - Industry vs. Inferiority
    - Identity vs. Diffusion
    - Intimacy vs. Isolation
    - Generativity vs. Stagnation
    - Ego Identity vs. Ego Despair
Blending Generational Potentials

• Hierarchy of Needs
  – Abraham Maslow
    • Basic needs
    • Safety needs
    • Love and belongingness needs
    • Esteem needs
    • Actualization
Blending Generational Potentials

• Mining for riches – exploring individual differences with universal questions
  – Getting to know you
    • Where are you going?
    • What do you expect?
    • What do you have to offer?
Embracing Differences to Develop Cohesion

• Communication
• Leadership
• Individual development
• Cross mentoring
• Flexibility
• Affinity groups
• Technology happens
Embracing Differences to Develop Cohesion

• Communication – the fundamental competency
  – Transfer information
  – Develop understanding
  – Multiple methods
    • Generational preferences
  – Goal: message sent = message received
Embracing Differences to Develop Cohesion

• Leadership
  – Changing the hierarchical landscape
  – Establishing a framework of operation
  – Assure communication reaches all organizational levels
  – Promote collaboration: each worker sharing their talents to achieve a common objective
  – Agree to what is expected, expect to be held accountable
Embracing Differences to Develop Cohesion

• Individual development
  – Highly educated work force
  – Employer/supervisor same page
    • Where are you going?
    • Why do you want to go there?
    • What do you expect when you get there?
  – Different learning styles
    • Book, class, on-line, mentoring
  – Achieving esteem
Embracing Differences to Develop Cohesion

• Cross mentoring
  – Everyone’s a learner
  – Everyone’s a teacher
  – Different skill sets, different generations
  – Opening up to the value of other points of view
Embracing Differences to Develop Cohesion

• Flexibility
  – Adapting the work place to worker strengths
  – Objective driven
  – Intentional flexibility
    • Different styles
    • Specific expectations
    • Established timelines
  – 24/7 worldwide business climate
  – Getting the most from a worker’s effort
Embracing Differences to Develop Cohesion

• Affinity groups
  – Coming together around a common interest or cause
  – Belongingness is one of the personal needs that can be met through the workplace
  – Workers who feel connected and valued develop loyalty to the workplace
Embracing Differences to Develop Cohesion

- Technology happens
  - Technological advancement is a longitudinal process
  - Value of differing communication mediums
  - Creativity in problem solving/marketing
  - Work life enhancement
Generational Blending
Enhancing the Workplace

• Maximizing your investment
  – Hire wisely
    • Generational awareness
      – Know what you are looking for
      – Assess for a productive match
  – Orient completely
    • Understand individual differences
    • Establish clear expectations
  – Avoid turnover of valued workers
    • Proactive retention efforts
Generational Blending
Enhancing the Workplace

• Structuring for success
  – Objective oriented – specific, measurable, time-limited
  – Defined expectations and outcomes
  – Intentional flexibility
  – Clear standards for accountability
  – Collaboration to avoid duplication
Generational Blending
Enhancing the Workplace

• Development and supervision
  – Generational expectations and needs
    • Promotion driven
    • Outcome driven
    • Fulfillment driven
    • Enhancement driven
  – Developing a mutually agreeable plan
  – Reinforcement
  – Mentoring as a resource
    • Generational respect and learning
Generational Blending
Enhancing the Workplace

• Employee cohesion
  – Building proactive cohesions
    • Events
    • Affinity groups
    • Projects/causes
  – Avoiding personnel disconnect/isolation/alienation
  – Exploring the strengths generational differences bring to a workplace
Generational Blending
Enhancing the Workplace

• Keeping pace with technology
  – Appreciate generational attitudes toward technology
  – Cost containment enhancements
  – Extending options and potentials
  – Embracing the future