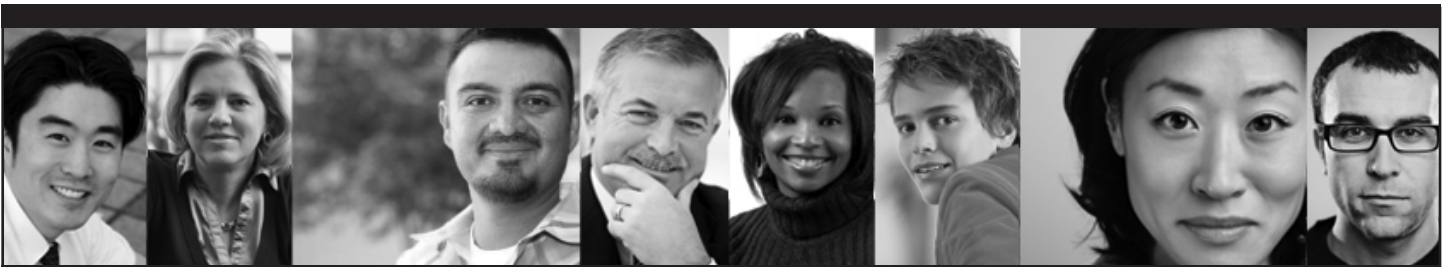


Generations and Work



Leader's Guide

Produced by Claire Raines & Tarek Chacra | Generations in the Workplace, LLC | www.generationsatwork.com

For
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Only

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Welcome

Generations and Work consists of a DVD with four interactive video programs—**Engaging All the Generations**, **Connecting Across Differences**, **Working with Millennials**, and **Succeeding with Younger Workers**—and a CD with leader’s guide, four sets of reproducible handouts, and four PowerPoint presentations.

At its heart, **Generations and Work** is about accepting people who are different and interacting with them in ways that increase satisfaction and productivity. If, together, we can influence people to be less judgmental and more supportive of differences, we will have done something truly worthwhile.

Engaging the Adult Learner

We’ve done everything possible to keep this program from being what we call a “sit-and-watch video.”

We know that engaged learners:

- have more fun,
- gain a deeper understanding of what they learn, and
- are better able to apply their insights and understanding to workplace situations.

That’s why, for each of the four programs on the DVD, we’ve suggested a warm-up activity, incorporated a facilitator who gets participants involved, and included real-time interviews and experiences. Each program stops three to five times after the facilitator has assigned an activity. We recommend that, for maximum effectiveness, you pause at each of these points so that participants can make notes, reflect on what they’ve seen and heard, engage in conversations with their colleagues, and participate in activities. In the pages that follow, we’ve included program overviews, copies of the facilitator’s instructions, and supplemental information for you, the leader, so that you can use these programs to maximize learning and assist viewers in finding real-life application for what they’ve seen on-screen.

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About Us

Produced by Claire Raines and Tarek Chacra, **Generations and Work** synthesizes our research and all we've learned from clients and workshop participants over the last twenty-five years.

Claire Raines has been a pioneer in the study and discussion of generations since 1985 and is recognized as the leading expert on generations in the workplace. She first became interested in generational differences as a teenager. In the midst of arguments over the dinner table with her father, she began to realize that growing up in the 1960s had influenced how she viewed the world. Claire has written eight books, including the best-selling *Generations at Work*, co-authored with Ron Zemke and Bob Filipczak and published by the American Management Association. Her books have sold over 150,000 copies. She has shared her findings in a generations boardgame, videos, speeches, and workshops.

Tarek Chacra is an award-winning writer, director, and producer of media projects for the business and broadcast markets. He holds an MA in mass communication from the University of Colorado, and his work has been shown at film festivals and on national television. Owner of Media Dynamics in Denver, Tarek's broadcast credits include "Unsinkable Elegance: Denver's Molly Brown House," "By His Own Request," and "Music Is My Life, Politics My Mistress," shown on PBS. In 2001, Tarek directed "Generations in the Workplace," which he co-produced with Claire Raines. He grew up in Beirut, Lebanon where the generations mirror those of the U.S. in a number of ways. He has a son who is a member of the Millennial Generation.

Tammy Hughes, President of Claire Raines Associates, is featured in *Working with Millennials*. Tammy delivers speeches and workshops about the generations and teaches the Connecting Generations Certify-the-Trainer program.

Speaker and workshop leader **Arleen Arnsperger** shares findings from research she conducted for *Millennials@Work: Engaging the New Generation on Succeeding with Younger Workers*. Arleen is the co-author of two books about the generations: *4genR8tns* and *Millennials@Work*.

Leader Guidelines

Generations and Work is effective for small and large groups. Although each of the four programs is less than ten minutes long, they are most effective when you allow plenty of time for participants to get involved before, during, and after they view the videos. To engage viewers fully, take time at the pause-stops to allow participants time to engage in the suggested activities—or optional activities you have developed to maximize the learning and customize the content to your particular work environment.

It's a good idea to watch the programs yourself before you show them, to review the facilitator's directions, and to prepare for frequently-asked questions.

We recommend that, as the leader, you remain generation-less so that you don't appear to be biased. Avoid using "we" to refer to your own generation. Use "they/them" for all four generations.

Speak in generalizations about the generations. No one fits the profile of their generation completely. Use qualifiers like, "typically," "characteristically," and "many." Avoid saying things like, "Gen Xers are independent." Instead, try something like, "Gen Xers often work well on their own."

Encourage viewers to take notes, ask questions, and make comments.

Only one of the programs—**Engaging All the Generations**—includes a general overview of the four generations with their names, birthdates and brief description. You may wish to show a PowerPoint slide—there's one in each of the four PowerPoint presentations—and present an overview to your group.

If you want background materials on all the generations, see *4genR8tns: Succeeding with Colleagues, Cohorts and Customers* by Susan Murphy and Arleen Arnsperger, Claire Raines Associates, 2008, available at www.generationsatwork.com.

4 Generations

The rich mix of generations in the workplace has come about because of the rising demand for a skilled workforce, fewer younger workers with sufficient skills and experience to fill available positions, and the rising average age of retirement. As a result, three well-represented generations and one smaller one share the workload. This division of power and labor is unprecedented in the history of business.

The challenge for company leaders is, and will continue to be, how to attract, retain, engage and harness the power of a diverse group of employees who bring different strengths and perspectives to their jobs.

The chart below shows four generations, birth years, and percentage of the U.S. workforce they comprise. (Based on U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics. Statistics on the global workforce are not available.)

Generation	Birth Years	% of Workforce • Number
Millennial Generation	1980-2000	24% • 35 million
Generation X	1960-1980	45% • 67 million
Baby Boom Generation	1940-1960*	28% • 41 million
WWII Generation	before 1940	2% • 2 million

*Birth rates boomed between 1946 and 1964 in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United States. But those born in the early 1940s grew up with Boomers and probably have more in common with them than with the WWII Generation. Those born in the early 1960s grew up with Gen Xers and tend to have similar characteristics.

Preview

Engaging All the Generations

Overview

The program begins with an on-the-job interview and introduction to employee engagement by Claire Raines. Joe Tabano, the on-screen facilitator, then asks viewers to think of a time they felt especially engaged at work. Employees from three generations talk about times they've felt engaged and the contributing factors. Claire Raines gives a brief overview of four generations. Person-on-the-street interviews show how engagement varies subtly depending on generation. The facilitator asks viewers to estimate the percentage of their organization that each generation accounts for. Then he asks about the type of work environment in which each generation thrives. For the final activity, participants plan a project team that would engage members of all the generations.

Objectives

- define the benefits of employee engagement
- discover subtle differences in the way each generation experiences engagement
- analyze the generational demographics of your organization
- apply knowledge about the generations and engagement to a work situation

Background Reading for Leaders

4genR8tns: Succeeding with Colleagues, Cohorts & Customers:

"To Engage or Not Engage," pages 19-20

"Tapping the Potential of Each Generation," pages 35-46

Length of Video: 8:29

Total Time with Activities: approximately an hour and a half

Mid-Screening Activities

Activity 1: A Time You Were Engaged.....

On-Screen Facilitator Instructions: "Think of a time when you felt fully involved at work...when you were really contributing...a time when your job felt meaningful. That would be a time when you

were engaged. Make some notes about that experience. When was it. What were you doing? What was it that really engaged you?"

Leader Notes: Use Handout C (A Time You Were Engaged). This activity works well when participants work on their own, reflecting and writing. Give them about 5 minutes. Then take 5 minutes to debrief by saying to the group, "That time when you were especially engaged in your work...what was it like? Throw out a word or two." When you're ready to resume viewing, hit "Go."

Related Handouts: A (Employee Engagement)

Handout C (A Time You Were Engaged): Typical Responses

Think of a time when you felt particularly engaged in the work you were doing...when you felt fully involved and like you were really contributing...when your work felt like it made a difference.

What was the experience like? What was it that made you feel so engaged?

- I was very focused
- productive
- everything I did contributed to the mission
- I believed we were the best
- my leader had faith in me & brought out my best

Activity 2: Generational Demographics.....

On-Screen Facilitator Instructions: "Which generations are represented in your department? How about in the entire organization? Make some guesses about the percentage that each generation comprises."

Leader Notes: Use Handout D, Generational Demographics. Allow 3 or 4 minutes first for participants to answer the two questions on paper, urging them to simply estimate the numbers. (The actual numbers are less important here than that participants boost their awareness of the generations by thinking through the numbers.) Put participants into groups of 5 or 6. Give them about 5 minutes to compare notes and come up with their best guesses on question 2—what percentage of the whole organization each generation composes. Then bring the whole group together and have each small group call out their estimates for each generation. Have fun with this. You can average all the numbers if you wish. (You may be able to get these numbers—the official version—from your HR department. If so, you might want to share those numbers last. But allow them to think it through first. It's much more engaging that way.)

Activity 3: Work Environment & Generational Preferences.....

On-Screen Facilitator Instructions: “Under the names of each of the generations represented in your workplace, brainstorm and jot down a few things about the work environment that engages them.” **Leader Notes:** Use Handout E, Work Environment & Generational Preferences. This activity works best when a group of 4 to 6 can brainstorm together. Provide them with the related handouts. Give them about 15 minutes to work as a small group. Then spend 10 to 15 minutes with the whole group talking through the work environment each generation thrives in.

Related Handouts: H (Strengths & Assets) and I (Building on Strengths)

Handout E (Work Environment & Generational Preferences): Typical Responses

Below, make a heading for each of the generations represented in your workplace. Then brainstorm and jot down a few descriptive words for the environment each generation thrives in.

Millennials

- open & casual
- constant feedback
- web-like

Generation Xers

- freedom to work independently
- flexible
- results-oriented
- lots of options

Boomers

- focused on the vision
- teamwork
- democratic

Activity 4: A Multi-Generation Project Team.....

On-Screen Facilitator Instructions: “Imagine that you are putting together a project team that includes people from all the generations. You want to create a work environment that engages every member of the team. What is the work environment like? How is the work structured? How does the team communicate? What are you as the leader doing and saying? What is the one most important element each generation needs to feel engaged, and how do you incorporate those elements?”

Leader Notes: Use Handout F (A Multi-Generation Project Team). Refer participants to related handouts. This activity is effective when individuals have 10 minutes to work independently, looking

through their notes and jotting ideas. Then, put them into pairs and give them 5 minutes each (10 minutes total) to share their ideas.

Related Handouts: A (Employee Engagement), H (Strengths & Assets), I (Building on Strengths), J (6 Principles for Managing All the Generations)

Handout F (A Multi-Generation Project Team): Typical Responses

Imagine that you are putting together a project team that includes people from all the generations. You want to create a work environment that engages every member of the team.

What is the work environment like?

How is the work structured?

How does the team communicate?

What are you as the leader doing and saying?

What is the one most important element each generation needs to feel engaged, and how do you incorporate those elements?

- lots of options, lots of communication
- structured so things get done as smoothly as possible
- with people constantly improving our work processes
- lots of communication options: meetings, emails, texts, phone calls
- I'm asking people how I can help them do their best, what they need to do their jobs
- Millennials: challenge them; Xers: give them freedom to choose how their work gets done;
Boomers: opportunities to lead; WWII Gen: use their knowledge of the history of our industry
- appreciate their differences; learn about each person's strengths

For
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Only

Connecting Across Differences

Overview

Facilitator Joe Tabano opens this program asking viewers how it would benefit them and the work they do to connect more effectively with people of different generations. Then two back-to-back monologues illustrate just how dramatic generational perspectives can be. Claire Raines shares findings from research she and Lara Ewing conducted for their book *The Art of Connecting*. Three vignettes illustrate typical intergenerational work challenges, and viewers are asked to develop communication strategies based on the Titanium Rule and Principles for Connecting.

Objectives

- assess the benefits of connecting across generations
- apply communication preferences for different generations to work situations
- develop strategies for working more successfully with people of other generations
- identify principles by which masterful connectors operate

Background Reading for Leaders

The Art of Connecting: How to Overcome Differences, Build Rapport, and Communicate Effectively with Anyone:
Chapter 2, "The Core Principles," pages 39-67

4genR8tns: Succeeding with Colleagues, Cohorts & Customers:
Chapter 3, "Tapping the Potential of Each Generation," pages 35-46

Length of Video: 8:59

Total Time with Activities: about an hour and a half

Mid-Screening Activities

Activity 1: Benefits of Connecting Across Differences.....

On-Screen Facilitator Instructions: "If you were Jaime's coach helping him prepare for the presentation, what would you tell him? What do his clients want to see and hear? What should he avoid?"

Leader Notes: Use Handout B (Benefits of Connecting Across Differences). Ask participants to spend 3 or 4 minutes on their own thinking through the questions and jotting down their responses. Then bring the group back together and ask 5 or 6 people to share one of the benefits they came up with. When you're ready to resume viewing, press "Go."

Handout B (Benefits of Connecting Across Differences): Typical Responses

How would it benefit you and the work you do to connect more successfully with colleagues or customers from other generations?

- I could get different perspectives when I'm "stuck"
- I could relate better to older clients...maybe enlarge my client portfolio
- team could be more productive because we work better together

Activity 2. Sales Presentation to Generation Xers.....

On-Screen Facilitator Instructions: "If you were Jaime's coach helping him prepare for the presentation, what would you tell him? What do his clients want to see and hear? What should he avoid? Include every detail you can think of, including things like where he might sit or stand for his presentation and what kind of support materials would work best."

Leader Notes: Use Handout C (Sales Presentation to Generation Xers). Review the Titanium Rule with the group. (There is good background reading in *The Art of Connecting*, pages 30-34.) Have participants work with 4 or 5 others so they can collaborate and tap into their own experiences. Ask them to list at least five ideas and urge them to be as detailed as possible with their recommendations. Allow about 15 minutes so they can refer to the related handouts and pool their ideas. Then get the whole group back together and spend about 5 minutes hearing some of the best ideas from each group.

Related Handouts: G (Communication Preferences by Generation) and H (Persuasive Language)

Handout C (Sales Presentation to Generation Xers): Typical Responses:

As Jaime's coach, how would you help him prepare for his presentation?

What do his clients want to see and hear from him?

What should he avoid?

- keep your presentation short; tell them up front how long it will take and stick to your timetable
- speak to bottom-line results, using numbers and statistics
- avoid overstatement, buzzwords, sales lingo
- make your presentation paperless

- get right to the point; spend a minimum amount of time “schmoozing”
- support your presentation with computer graphics/LCD projector, if possible, using clean, simple, up-to-date graphics

Activity 3: Texting in the Meeting.....

On-Screen Facilitator Instructions: “As Denielle’s advisor, what would you tell her? Does she need to create a policy about texting? How do you think her new hire wants to be treated? How should she approach him? Should she send him a text message? What should she say? Be as specific as you can. Jot down some of the words you would suggest.”

Leader Notes: Use Handout D. You might want to talk about this situation, which is sure to generate lots of discussion, for a few minutes before participants work on specifics in the small group.

For example, you might ask the group what the disadvantages could have been had Denielle simply disciplined the new hire in front of her team. (• It’s better to give this kind of feedback privately; could have been awkward for the whole group. • The new hire may honestly not know it’s inappropriate to text during Denielle’s meetings. • This new employee may have great potential. It’s worth it to take a few minutes to give him feedback and coaching.)

Another topic you might want to discuss with the whole group is whether Denielle should create a new policy. It’s an interesting question with no simple answer. Could the text message have been business-related and relevant to the meeting? Isn’t another policy the last thing most organizations need? Instead, Denielle might want to consider establishing an agenda, defining outcomes, and setting guidelines at the beginning of all her meetings, especially those that include a new team member.

Ask groups of 5 to 6 participants to work together and list at least 5 recommendations for Denielle, being as specific as possible. Allow at least 10 minutes. Then get the whole group back together and spend about 5 minutes hearing some of the best ideas from each group.

Related Handouts: G (Communication Preferences by Generation) and H (Persuasive Language)

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Handout D (Texting in the Meeting): Typical Responses

Denielle is frustrated. The new hire—a member of the Millennial Generation—was texting during the meeting this morning.

As Denielle’s advisor, how would you counsel her about this situation?

Does she need to create a policy about texting?

How do you think her new hire wants to be treated?

How should she approach him?

What should she say?

- treat new employee as if he has valuable contributions to make (and urge the rest of the team to do the same)
- show him how his work contributes to the team/organizational goals
- work with him on a career plan with goals and timelines
- at the next meeting, set up guidelines; if it’s important that people turn off their cellphones—and it probably is—ask everyone to turn off their phones
- Denielle may want to learn to text; it may be a great way to get the attention of her youngest team members and work more effectively with them (but a text message isn’t the right medium for delivering feedback)

Activity 4. Balancing Life & Work

On-Screen Facilitator Instructions: “How do you think Teresa’s older coworker wants to be treated? How might Teresa approach her about this conflict? Should she send an email or meet face to face? Where and when?”

Leader Notes: Use Handout E (Balancing Life & Work). Ask the group if they have experienced similar conflicts between Baby Boomers (who tend to define themselves by their work) and Generation Xers (who have changed the workplace by appealing for life-work balance). Consider putting participants into pairs or triads, especially if you can include a Gen Xer and a Baby Boomer in each. Ask them to list at least five ideas and urge them to be as detailed as possible with their recommendations. Allow about 10 minutes. Then get the whole group back together and spend about 5 minutes hearing some of the best ideas.

Related Handouts: G (Communication Preferences by Generation) and H (Persuasive Language)

Handout E (Balancing Life & Work): Typical Responses:

Teresa needs to deal with a work challenge involving a coworker who is a Baby Boomer.

How do you think Teresa’s coworker wants to be treated?

How would you advise Teresa to approach her?

Should she send an email or meet face-to-face?

Where and when?

- speak privately, face-to-face
- sit down together over coffee or lunch, if possible
- be friendly; take time to learn more about your coworker
- give sincere appreciation for the older coworker’s strong work ethic and dedication
- explain your work style and schedule, and talk the way you would to a friend who cares about you, non-defensively

Activity 5. Balancing Life & Work, Part 2

On-Screen Facilitator Instructions: “How do the principles for connecting apply to Teresa’s situation with her hardworking colleague?”

Leader Notes: Use Handout F. You may want to introduce this last activity by asking the group what the benefits could be to Teresa if she were to establish a stronger connection with her older colleague. Then ask participants to do this activity independently, taking 5 minutes to review the principles and make notes about how they apply to Teresa’s situation. Then bring the group back together. Go through each principle and ask for responses. Take time to hear two or three responses for each principle.

Related Handouts: A (Principles for Connecting)

Handout F (Balancing Life & Work, Part 2): Typical Responses:

1. There’s always a bridge.

Teresa and her coworker have lots in common, even if it sometimes seems they don’t. It could serve them both to discover some of these commonalities. They may both root for the same sports team or share a passion for bowling or geneology or Oprah. If nothing else, they probably both want their organization to succeed, and each wants to be an active contributor to that success.

2. Curiosity is key.

If Teresa is inquisitive and interested in her coworker, she likely will find creative ways of overcoming their differences and working more effectively together.

3. Expect the best.

Teresa should approach her older colleague as if she has a lot to offer, expecting the best from her, presupposing she has contributions to make and important things to say.

4. Each person is a culture.

Teresa can get some valuable ideas about how to relate to her colleague by knowing she is a Baby Boomer. Maybe her colleague was born in Canada, and Teresa has spent time there, so she can use what she knows about Canadian culture to be more effective. Maybe her colleague is an accountant, and she can use what she knows about accountants to relate more effectively. All this information can be helpful, but ultimately, Teresa's coworker is a culture in and of herself, and Teresa should relate to her as a unique individual.

5. Don't expect reciprocity.

Teresa may put extra time and energy into her relationship with her colleague, being inquisitive and learning more about her. But Teresa should understand from the beginning that her colleague may not reciprocate. Teresa needs to go into this interaction being her best self, with no strings attached.

For
Preview
Only

Working with Millennials

Overview

Younger workers, managers, and people on the street talk about the newest generation in the workplace, the one which comprises nearly a quarter of the world’s population and within the next few years will account for the largest generation in nearly every company in the world. Tammy Hughes, workshop leader and speaker on gender and generations, outlines the cultural forces that shaped Generation Y or the Millennials and explains how those forces impacted their work ethic. A young woman describes a man she sees at the corner bakery every day, offering insight on the way some younger workers perceive older ones. The facilitator appears three times during the program, asking viewers to develop an action plan for becoming more effective with a colleague from the Millennial Generation.

Objectives

- diagnose how generations-friendly your work team is
- identify assets young workers bring to the workplace
- discover the link between young workers’ characteristics and the era they were shaped by
- identify specific ways to work more effectively with colleagues from the Millennial Generation
- predict the impact young workers will have on the world of work

Background Reading for Leaders

Millennials@Work: Engaging the New Generation:
Chapter 2, “The Generational Mix,” pages 16-23
Chapter 3, “Connected at Home, at Play, to the World,” pages 24-31

Length of Video: 8:08

Total Time with Activities: just over an hour

Mid-Screening Activities

Activity 1: “Think of Someone”

On-Screen Facilitator Instructions: “Think of a coworker who is from the Millennial Generation—some

one born between about 1980 and 2000. Then jot down a few words to describe him or her—things like work ethic, strengths, characteristics...anything that comes to mind.”

Leader Notes: Participants can use Handout B (“Think of Someone”) for their notes. You might want to have them do this first activity on their own. Give them about 5 minutes to reflect and write. There are two additional questions on the handout that the on-screen facilitator doesn’t ask. If time allows, ask participants to write brief answers. Then take about 5 minutes with the whole group to hear 3 or 4 responses to each question. When you’re ready to resume viewing, hit “Go.”

Related Handouts: G (Generations & Millennials)

Handout B (“Think of Someone”): Typical Responses

1. Think of someone at work who is from the Millennial Generation. Jot down a few words here that describe him or her—things like work ethic, strengths and assets, and general traits.

- multi-tasker
- uses cell phone a lot
- confident
- tech-savvy
- busy life

2. Why is it important to better understand the Millennial Generation?

- their workforce numbers are growing
- they represent the future
- they have strengths we can use

3. How might it benefit you and the work you do to better understand this generation?

- they have knowledge & skills our organization needs
- I might be more effective with customers of this generation

Activity 2: “Think of Someone, Part Two”.....

On-Screen Facilitator Instructions: “First, which of the characteristics you observed about your colleague were mentioned in what you’ve heard so far? Secondly, Tammy Hughes talked about the era that shaped the Millennial generation. She discussed scheduling, heroism, the economy, parent advocacy, globalism, and technology. How do you think the characteristics you wrote down might reflect the times your coworker grew up in?”

Leader Notes: Participants can use Handout C (“Think of Someone, Part Two”). Give people 5 minutes on their own to reflect and write. Participants from the Millennial Generation might want to make notes here about someone they think is especially representative of their generation. Their perspectives will be especially valuable in the activities that go with this program and **Succeeding**

with Younger Workers. When participants have finished making their notes, put them into triads to work through their answers together. This should take about 15 minutes. Then the group can resume viewing.

Related Handouts: H (Messages that Influenced Millennials)

Handout C (“Think of Someone, Part Two”): Typical Responses

1. Which of the characteristics you observed about your colleague were mentioned in the video?
 - connected
 - instant gratification
 - involved with parents
2. How might those characteristics reflect the times the Millennial Generation was shaped by?
 - first generation of digital natives, so they use cell phones naturally
 - raised by involved parents, so it makes sense parents would still be involved

Activity 3: “Think of Someone, Part Three”

On-Screen Facilitator Instructions: “How about that coworker you made notes about earlier? Can you think of any changes you or your organization could make to develop that colleague? And to capitalize on their strengths and assets?”

Leader Notes: Participants can use Handout D (“Think of Someone, Part Three”). Give them 5 minutes on their own to reflect and write. Then put them back with the triads they worked with for the last activity. This will take about 15 minutes. Then, since this is the actionable part of the experience, debrief for 10 minutes with the whole group, hearing action plans from as many people as possible.

Related Handouts: I (Millennials and Work Environment), J (Working More Effectively with Millennials)

Handout D (“Think of Someone, Part Three”): Typical Responses

What changes might you, your work team, or your organization make to:

1. ...develop your colleague?
 - help her find a seminar on dealing with difficult customers
 - offer to help him with his career development plan
 - give her more regular feedback
2. ...capitalize on his or her strengths and assets?
 - set up a two-way mentoring program for the two of us
 - encourage her to give me her ideas for streamlining our work process
 - give him a more challenging project

Succeeding with Younger Workers

Overview

In lively on-the-street interviews, younger workers describe practices that help and hinder their productivity. Arleen Arnsperger, author of *4genR8tns* and *Millennials@Work*, makes the business case for being intentional in our actions so we bring forward the best young workers' have to offer. Arleen shares findings from research she and Claire Raines conducted on what younger workers need in order to succeed. Younger workers and their managers speak openly about work challenges and successes. The facilitator appears three times during the program, asking viewers to create and then enlarge upon lists of successful and unsuccessful work practices. At the end, he asks viewers to create an action plan for capitalizing on the assets and energies of younger workers.

Objectives

- identify the business case for contributing to the success of younger workers
- list practices that help and hinder younger workers' on-the-job success
- collect an expanded list of practices based on Arnsperger/Raines research
- construct an action plan for capitalizing on younger workers' strengths and assets

Background Reading for Leaders

Millennials@Work: Engaging the New Generation:

Part 2, Chapter 2, "Nine Keys to Engaging Millennials," pages 40-48

Part 2, Chapter 3, "Strategies that Work," pages 49-53

Part 2, Chapter 4, "Best Practices," pages 54-57

Length of Video: 9:39

Total Time with Activities: about an hour

Mid-Screening Activities

Activity 1: What Younger Workers Need.....

On-Screen Facilitator Instructions: "Make two quick lists—just a few ideas in each column will do—of what you think today's younger workers want—and don't want—on the job...practices that help or hinder their success."

Leader Notes: Participants can use Handout B (What Younger Workers Need) for their lists. Consider having them do this first activity in pairs. Give them about 5 minutes to write two or three practices in each column. There is no need to debrief here since they will continue adding to their lists. When you are ready to resume viewing, hit “Go.”

Handout B (What Younger Workers Need): Typical Responses

Make two quick lists—just a few items in each column will do—of what you believe today’s younger workers want and don’t want on the job...practices that help or hinder their success.

Younger Workers & Success

Hurt	Help
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • disparaging remarks about digital technology • slow work pace • “because I said so” mentality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • high expectations • encourage them to “think outside the box” • tie into their technology

Activity 2: What Younger Workers Need, Part 2.....

On-Screen Facilitator Instructions: “Keep those lists going. As you listen, make notes about what you’re hearing.”

Leader Notes: Urge participants to make quick notes as they watch the next section of the video. It moves quickly. They will continue to use Handout B (What Younger Workers Need), adding to what they’ve already written.

Handout B Cont’d. (What Younger Workers Need): Typical Responses

Hurt:

- over-control the workplace
- fear & aggression
- punishment

Help:

- ask what they need
- make the first move in interpersonal comm.
- benefit from their technological knowhow
- help them with interpersonal communication
- give them varied tasks
- ask for their ideas
- challenge them
- allow their individuality

Activity 3: Younger Worker-Friendly Practices, Action Plan.....

On-Screen Facilitator Instructions: “Take a few minutes to discuss your ideas with a colleague or two. Talk about your own work environment, maybe even your own work team. Which of these practices are you implementing or not implementing? And, most importantly, what two or three changes might you make to create a work environment that capitalizes on the assets and energies of the younger generations?”

Leader Notes: Take 10 to 15 minutes with the whole group to talk through the lists they made on Handout B (What Younger Workers Need). Then have participants get back into the same pairs they worked in for Activity 1. Give them 10 minutes to talk through their lists, determining which of the practices are or are not being implemented in their own work team or organization. Then guide their attention to Handout C (Younger Worker-Friendly Practices, Action Plan), and ask them to write down two or three changes they might make in their own work setting. This can be in the same pairs and should take about 10 minutes. Finally, bring the whole group together and take about 5 minutes to hear about a few items from their action plans.

Related Handouts: D (Keys to Engaging Younger Workers) and E (Some Info You Can Use About Younger Workers)

Handout C (Younger Worker-Friendly Practices, Action Plan): Typical Responses

After you have reviewed your lists from Handout B and discussed them with a colleague or two, list two or three changes you might make to create a work environment that capitalizes on the assets and energies of the younger generations.

- send text messages to Susana
- ask Garrett if he would like more ongoing feedback on how he’s doing
- ask new project team if I’ve been clear about their goals & if they need anything from me

For
Preview
Only

FAQs

Don't the generations have more commonalities than differences?

Yes. It's important to remember and build upon the commonalities, but it's the subtle differences that cause conflict at work. That's why it's important to understand and work effectively with the differences.

Isn't a focus on generational differences a way of stereotyping?

If we assume that everyone in a particular category has the same characteristics, then we are indeed stereotyping. However, the value of studying generational demographics is to help us develop empathy and understanding, to become better listeners, to improve communications—and ultimately, to make an organization more effective and profitable.

How do race and ethnicity factor in?

All members of a generation grew up in the same era. As a result, most of them saw the same news events on television, read the same headlines in the papers, and listened to the same music on the radio. However, racial and ethnic differences, along with socio-economic differences, are every bit as important, often more important, than generational differences in shaping perspectives.

Do the same generational similarities and differences apply to employees from different countries?

Though our workforce is increasingly culturally diverse, global mass media bring similar experiences to people around the world. This is particularly true for those living in urban, developed areas. For that reason, the younger a person, the more likely he or she is to fit a generational profile. Generational similarities are less apparent in people who grew up in rural and impoverished areas who had limited exposure to global influences, such as television and the Internet. The generational descriptions offered here provide a framework for company leaders, but cannot predict behaviors of individual members of any generation.

Don't generational differences fade as people get older? Don't value systems become similar as people reach milestones in their life cycle?

Worldwide, each generation approaches each stage of life with its own unique style. For example, the Baby Boomers will be different as older adults from the World War II Generation. Aging Boomers are enrolling in far more adult education courses, starting entrepreneurial ventures, and joining sports leagues. Today's Millennial teens and young adults are more optimistic and have more heroes than the Gen Xers before them. And the reliance on communicating through technology is sure to continue at a much greater level within younger generations.

FAQs, cont'd.

When adapting management styles to the needs of each generation, isn't it also important to get to know people as individuals and treat everyone respectfully across all generations?

Yes, managers should always get to know colleagues as individuals. Learning about generations helps us to better understand people as individuals. What it means to "treat people respectfully" varies from generation to generation. Many Gen Xers would say that respectful treatment means being direct and straightforward, while a member of the World War II Generation might define "respectful" as communicating in a more formal manner, such as using "sir," "ma'am," "please" and "thank you" in conversation.

It's a challenge for a company to meet the expectations of individual staff members who have different needs. For example, long-term employees who are caring for aging parents want flexible schedules. New employees are also asking for flex-time. How can a company be fair?

First of all, the desire for flexibility is not limited to a particular generation. Research tells us that 67% of the U.S. workforce rank flexibility as part of their definition of workplace success. That's a huge representation of the workers inside your organization!

It seems like you're asking companies to bend over backward for employees. What about staff members' part of the bargain?

In a company, each of us has a responsibility to find ways to work effectively with our colleagues. Giving employees an opportunity for honest and open dialogue with one another will lead to greater understanding and agreements about how to work together. For example, if a Baby Boomer better understands the need a Millennial co-worker has to be working on several things simultaneously, and if the Millennial colleague understands how the assigned work fits into the bigger picture and receives clear directions and explanation about each specific assignment and required timelines, the Millennial will work in her own way to complete all assignments and meet deadlines.

In our experience, here's the bottom line: employees need to perform their jobs with excellence. Managers who bend over backwards for their employees – and that does mean "different strokes for different folks" – tend to see increased productivity and better business results. In addition their employees stay longer and speak more positively about the company.

FAQs, cont'd.

Treating everybody differently will surely require a ton of energy from managers. Also, won't managers begin to feel like they're behaving like phonies?

It takes energy to change our style as we go from one person to another. In reality, many of us do this intuitively every single day. Imagine if doctors communicated with nurses in the same way as patients and in the same way as toddlers. They would probably be effective with only one of them. As leaders we need to realize that there are multiple sets of tools to draw upon, depending on the generational lenses worn by the person we work with. We need to adapt as we communicate so we can be effective. However, learning to flex our own style and sync with another person doesn't mean we lose our own unique diverse contribution—we simply gain a vehicle through which we can get our messages across more effectively.

Aren't there a lot of people who don't fit the profile for their generation?

Yes. Generations do not have a start and end date. And generational groupings in different countries, while exhibiting similar characteristics, might have somewhat different political and economic markers that define them. Generations overlap and many people identify with at least two generations. Research on generations is displayed on a bell curve, and the focus of the data is on the millions of people in the middle of the bell curve. That's why it's essential to get to know people as individuals.

How can managers minimize conflict and reap the benefits of a multi-generational workforce?

Managers can help people become more aware and accepting of generational differences. Rather than perpetuating traditional views of different generations – “young people are rude, disrespectful, and ill-mannered,” “older workers are stuck in the past,” – managers can gather their own data and draw upon current research. The facts show that young people today are generally positive, respectful, patriotic, and goal-oriented. Surveys of older workers find that significant numbers are continuing to learn and contribute significantly to the workforce. If managers start the generations' conversation and offer opportunities to learn about generational differences, employees stop judging one another and find the strengths in their differences. Creativity, productivity and morale increase.

Other Resources

Available at www.generationsatwork.com

Board game:

Connecting Generations

Developed by Claire Raines and Sandy Mazarakis

Books:

4genR8tns: Succeeding with Colleagues, Cohorts & Customers

By Susan Murphy & Arleen Arnsperger

Claire Raines Associates, 2007

The Art of Connecting: How to Overcome Differences, Build Rapport, and Communicate Effectively With Anyone

By Claire Raines & Lara Ewing

AMACOM Publications, 2006

Connecting Generations: The Sourcebook for a New Workplace

By Claire Raines

Crisp Publications, 2003

Generations at Work: Managing the Clash of Veterans, Boomers, Xers, and Nexters in Your Workplace

By Claire Raines, Ron Zemke, and Bob Filipczak

AMACOM Publications, 1999

Beyond Generation X: A Practical Guide for Managers

By Claire Raines

Crisp Publications, 1997

The Xers & The Boomers: From Adversaries to Allies

By Claire Raines & Jim Hunt

Crisp Publications, 2000

Twentysomething: Managing & Motivating Today's New Workforce

By Claire Raines & Larry Bradford

Mastermedia, 1992

Claire Raines Associates delivers resources that help people create more effective work relationships and improve business results by applying generational understanding to workplace challenges. Claire Raines Associates offers:

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