

**Next Generation Workforce  
Kentucky Digital Government Summit 2009  
May 5, 2009**

***Governmental Services Center  
Personnel Cabinet***

*Academic Services Bldg 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, West Wing, KSU  
400 E. Main Street Frankfort KY 40601  
TELEPHONE: 502.564.7455*

**WEBSITE: <http://personnel.ky.gov/gsc/>**



# Learning Objectives

- Identify four generations in the workplace, and define them by experiences and events.
- Compare and contrast the values and the potential outcomes of generational interaction.
- Consider and identify potential problems for an organization when people from different generations fail to communicate effectively.
- Offer strategies for effective cross generational communication.



# Why understand Generations at Work?

- How does generations affect state government?
  - Overall picture
  - Recruitment
  - Addressing needs within each cabinet
  - Customer service?
  - Other?



# *Impact on Organizations:*

## ■ Corporate Culture

- Educating employees on generational issues boosts understanding, respect and productivity.
- A commitment to retaining corporate knowledge across generations prevents “brain drain” and keeps an organization competitive.

## ■ Employee Engagement

- Managers who know what motivates employees of different generations are more effective in keeping them engaged.
- Engagement supports financial stability. A 2006 Gallup poll estimates the cost of employee disengagement at \$328 billion per year

*“The greatest discovery of any generation is that a human being can alter his life by altering his attitude.” William James*



# Impact on Organizations (cont'd)

## ■ Customer Service

- Each generation has unique service preferences. Organizations that understand and adapt to those preferences will attract and retain customers across the age spectrum.
- Appealing to different generations can open potential new markets and lead to new products and services.

*“We need to teach the next generation of children from day one that they are responsible for their lives. Mankind's greatest gift, also its greatest curse, is that we have free choice. We can make our choices built from love or from fear.” ~ Elizabeth Kubler-Ross*



# When our are formative years?

- Answer?
- The generation we grow up in is just one of the influences on adult behavior
- Next, statistics...
  - What is a civilian noninstitutionalized population?
  - What does this have to do with generations at work?



# Four Generations At Work

- Traditionalists (born 1922-1943) – also known as Veterans
- Baby Boomers (born 1943-1960)
- Generation X (born 1960-1980)
- Millenials (born 1980-2000) – also known as Gen Y



# Surveys say...

- An analysis of the March 1977 and 2007 Current Population Surveys indicate that when the Baby Boomers were entering the workforce in 1977, the vast majority of workers were in one of three generations: The Silent Generation (23.6 percent – born 1902-1925), the Traditionalists (39.6 percent) and the Boomers (36.4 percent).



- Why in 1977 did this significant change occur in the workforce?



- Consider the name of the generation entering the workforce, “Baby Boomers” – they were a generation that was born right after a major war, WWII – one of the largest “booms” in births in modern US history. According to the McKinsey report the “Boomers” will have more influence over the US economy than any other group of 51-70 year-olds in history



# Influencing Factors

- Family Values
- Media
- Technology
- Games
- Music
- Social Mores
- Political Events
- Economic Conditions



# Significant events for each generation:

## Events and Experiences

### Traditionalists:

- Great Depression
- New Deal
- World War II
- Korean War

### Boomers:

- Civil Rights
- Sexual Revolution
- Cold War
- Space travel
- Assassinations



Significant event for each generation  
(cont'd):

## Events and Experiences

### Xers:

- Fall of Berlin Wall
- Watergate
- Women's Liberation
- Desert Storm
- Energy Crisis

### Millennials:

- School shootings
- Oklahoma City
- Technology
- Child focused world
- Clinton / Lewinsky



# Break it down...

- Today, the workforce is broken down as follows: Traditionalists are around 8.5 percent, Baby Boomers are 39.9 percent, Generation X are 35.7 percent and Millennials are around 15.8 percent
- **Question:** Based on this diverse population defined by age, how do you think this affects the workplace?  
Communication? Work relationships?



# What each Generation values:

## Traditionalists:

- Hard work
- Dedication & sacrifice
- Respect for rules
- Duty before pleasure
- Honor

## Boomers:

- Optimism
- Team orientation
- Personal gratification
- Involvement
- Personal growth



# What each Generation values:

## Xers:

- Diversity
- Techno literacy
- Fun and informality
- Self-reliance
- Pragmatism

## Millenials:

- Optimistic
- Feel civic duty
- Confident
- Achievement oriented
- Respect for diversity



# Similarities among Generations

- People of all ages view work as a vehicle for personal fulfillment and satisfaction, yet they want compensation that is in line with the current marketplace
- Workplace culture is important to the job satisfaction of all employees. For all generations, the highest indicator of satisfaction is to feel valued on the job
- More than 70% of all employees want a supportive work environment where they are recognized and appreciated.
- Career development is a high priority. While  $\frac{3}{4}$  of employees rate it highly, only  $\frac{1}{2}$  of employees give their organizations good marks in this area
- Flexibility is important. More than 7 out of ten workers would like to be able to set their own hours, as long as the work gets done.





# Potential Interaction Challenges for Managers / Colleagues

	<b>Traditionalists</b>	<b>Baby Boomers</b>	<b>Gen X</b>	<b>Millenials</b>
<b>Outlook</b>	Practical	Optimistic	Skeptical	Hopeful
<b>Work Ethic</b>	Dedicated	Driven	Balanced	Ambitious
<b>View of Authority</b>	Respectful	Love / Hate	Unimpressed	Relaxed / polite
<b>Leadership by</b>	Hierarchy	Consensus	Competence	Achievement / pulling together
<b>Relationships</b>	Self-sacrifice	Personal Gratification	Reluctance to commit	Loyal / inclusive
<b>Perspective</b>	Civic-minded	Team-oriented	Self-reliant	Civic-minded
<b>Turn-offs</b>	Vulgarity	Political incorrectness	Clichés / hype	Cynicism, condescension

Generation	Channel	Text/Graphic Messages
<b>Traditionalist</b>	Print media—newsletters, brochures  In-person, lecture-oriented workshops	Honor and dignity Respect for institutions Family security and protection Salute to American values Nostalgic embrace of “how it used to be” Emphasize quality and history
<b>Baby Boomer</b>	A mix of print and electronic media	Cutting-edge services / prestige Material rewards Demonstrate value for money
<b>Generation X</b>	Electronic, visual media—videos, televisions ads, CD- or Web site-based  Include opportunities to register online for Web-based seminars or order free information or self-help kits	Motivated by family themes, health and fitness Promote benefit to family Provide a mix of options/services More is better
<b>Millenials</b>	Immediate information / feedback Electronic, visual media—videos, televisions ads, CD- or Web site-based  Include opportunities to register online for Web-based seminars or order free information or self-help kits  In-person, lecture-oriented workshops and opportunities that allow for practice and role playing—particularly for enhancing relationship skills both at work and at home  Information taken from Value Options at <a href="http://www.valueoptions.com/spotlight_YIW/strategy.htm">http://www.valueoptions.com/spotlight_YIW/strategy.htm</a>	Create takeoffs of popular movie scenes and scripting Use sports-related analogies Have an ethnic orientation, particularly borrowing from African-American, Hispanic and Asian/Pacific Islander culture

# Communication Strategies Across Generations

People from different generational groups may want the same things, but they want them delivered in different packages, depending on when and how they grew up. Generally, people want to be:

## ■ Respected

- To have interesting and meaningful work to do and to enjoy it in the process.
- To have the opportunity to learn, grow, and improve one's prospects in life.
- To work and live in positive/friendly environments, free from prejudice and favoritism.
- To have some flexibility in schedules and some control over one's life.
- To be trusted and to be able to trust one's leaders.
- To be loyal and have that loyalty returned in equal
- measure.



# Communication Strategies Across Generations (cont'd)

- **Recognized** for accomplishments (both monetarily and non-monetarily).
- **Remembered** as having made a difference and associated with businesses that care about their people, community, and environment.
- **Coached** rather than subjected to fault-finding.
- **Consulted** on actions that will affect them.
- **Connected** to their employer and its mission (to understand the mission and where and how they fit into it, and to feel a meaningful part of the whole ... personally as well as professionally).





# Check for Understanding

# Who's Who?

## Question

- I have a definitive sense of right and wrong and of good and bad. I respect authority.



# Who's Who

Answer

## ■ Traditionalist

- Think American values, civic pride, respect for authority, loyalty
- WWII was a time of chaos and depression – this taught us the value of law and order
- More likely to favor stricter laws
- More comfortable in the bureaucracy
- Function best in structure
- LIKE law and order!



# Who's who

## Question

- I believe in balance and work to live (not the other way around – not, live to work)



# Who's who

Answer

## ■ Generation X

- Parents devoted to work – some / many latch-key kids
- Since parents live to work, I work to live
- Frightened by high price parents paid for success (stress, divorce, various health issues)
- Committed to balance
- Learned that you CAN'T have it all



# Who's Who

## Question

- Motto regarding performance appraisals could be “Feedback whenever I want it at the push of a button”



# Who's who

Answer

## ■ Millennial

- Want to know how I am doing – consistent and frequent feedback
  - **Traditionalists** – “no news is good news”
  - **Baby Boomers** – “Feedback once a year, with lots of documentation”
  - **Generation X** – “Sorry to interrupt, but how am I doing?”



# Who's Who

## Question

- Question authority. Every question can have a field of correct answers



# Who's who

Answer

## ■ Baby Boomer

- Part of the legacy of events that took place during their formative years / sixties
- Don't trust anyone over 30
- Depends on what the meaning of "is" is



# Summary

- Identify four generations in the workplace, and define them by experiences and events.
- Compare and contrast the values and the potential outcomes of generational interaction.
- Consider and identify potential problems for an organization when people from different generations fail to communicate effectively.
- Offer strategies for effective cross generational communication.



**Thank you**



# Resources

- Zemke, Ron, Raines, Claire and Flipczak, Bob. Generations at Work: Managing the clash of Veterans, Boomers, Xers, and Nexters in Your Workplace. New York. AMACOM, 2000.
- Lancaster C., Lynne, Stillman, David. When Generations Collide. Harper Collins, 2002
- Lancaster C., Lynne, Stillman, David. When Generations Collide. For About.com  
<http://humanresources.about.com/od/conflictresolution/a/generationquiz2.htm?p=1>
- National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Association Office of Diversity (taken May 30, 2007).  
<http://honolulu.hawaii.edu/intranet/committees/FacDeveCom/guidebk/teachtip/intergencomm.htm>
- AARP Leading a Multi-Generational Workforce (2007).  
[http://assets.aarp.org/www.aarp.org/\\_articles/money/employers/leading\\_multigenerational\\_workforce.pdf](http://assets.aarp.org/www.aarp.org/_articles/money/employers/leading_multigenerational_workforce.pdf)
- Value Options (September, 2008)  
[http://www.valueoptions.com/spotlight\\_YIW/strategy.htm](http://www.valueoptions.com/spotlight_YIW/strategy.htm)
- Ranstad USA, The World of Work 2007
- Bureau of Labor Statistics, CPS, 2008

