

A group of four diverse young adults (two women and two men) are sitting on the floor against a brick wall. They are all looking down at laptops or tablets in front of them, and they appear to be engaged in a collaborative activity, smiling and looking at each other. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting an indoor setting like a library or a study area.

Managing the Generational Shift in Higher Education

OBA Fall Conference – October 2, 2019

INTRODUCTIONS



Brian Sponcic
Director, Relationship Management

Five Generations Working Side by Side in 2020



TRADITIONALISTS

Great Depression
World War II
Disciplined
Workplace Loyalty
Move to the 'Burbs'
Vaccines

Born before 1945



BOOMERS

Vietnam, Moon Landing
Civil/Women's Rights
Experimental
Innovators
Hard Working
Personal Computer

Born 1946-1964



GEN X

Fall of Berlin Wall
Gulf War
Independent
Free Agents
Internet, MTV, AIDS
Mobile Phone

Born 1965-1976



MILLENNIAL

9/11 Attacks
Community Service
Immediacy
Confident, Diversity
Social Everything
Google, Facebook

Born 1977-1995



GEN Z

Optimistic
High Expectations
Apps
Social Games
Tablet Devices

Born 1996-TBD



Which types of generations collaborate together in your department?

Describe your team's working dynamic.

- **Traditionalists** – Out of touch
- **Boomers** – Disinterested in learning new things
- **Gen X** – Cynical, negative & poor team members
- **Millennials** – Entitled & lazy
- **Gen Z** – Only focused on technology

What impact can generational stereotypes have on an organization?



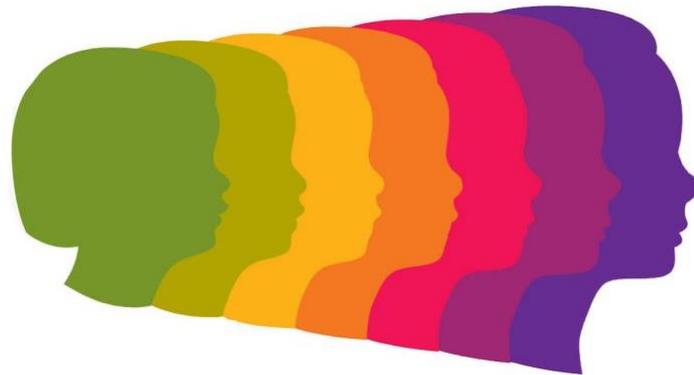
"Just so you know, I only tolerate your generation because you can troubleshoot my technology issues."

BUT WHO ARE THEY

REALLY?

Traditionalists: Personality Characteristics

- Traditionalists are known as the "*silent generation*" because children of this era were expected to be seen and not heard
- They grew up during lean times – The Great Depression and World War II
- Traditionalists tend to be thrifty, determined & willing to go the distance
- May struggle to learn new technology as it evolves and changes
- They value **morals, safety, security, and consistency**



Traditionalists: Work and Education Styles

- **Hardworking** - They consider work a privilege. Traditionalists believe that you *earn your own way through hard work* and promotions should be the result of proven productivity.
- **Loyal Employees** - Many traditionalists have stayed with the same employer throughout their entire working lives. They're less likely to change jobs than younger generations.
- **Respect Authority** - They tend to be good team players and respect Managers as they were taught to respect authority.
- **Technology** - Traditionalists are the slowest to change their work and education habits to adapt to new, more efficient ways of doing things.

Boomers: Personality Characteristics

- Baby Boomers are confident, independent and self-reliant
- Grew up in an era of reform and believe they can change the world
- Not afraid of confrontation
- They can question established authority systems and challenge the status quo
- Define themselves by their professional accomplishments
- They welcome exciting and challenging projects
- **Baby Boomers strive to make a difference**



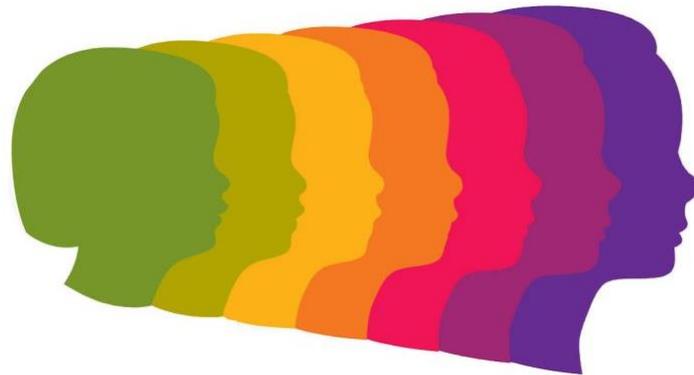
Boomers: Work and Education Styles

- **Work-Centric** - Baby Boomers are extremely hardworking and motivated by position, perks, and prestige. Baby Boomers may criticize younger generations for a lack of work ethic and commitment to the workplace.
- **Work Styles** - They are clever, resourceful and strive to win. Boomers may have a hard time adjusting to workplace flexibility trends. They believe in "face time" at the office and may fault younger generations for working remotely.
- **Education** - In early years of the boom, schools were overcrowded and colleges didn't have enough seats. Competition for starting jobs was intense. As a result, the young Baby Boomers learned to compete for resources and success.

Baby Boomers' views about work shifted from a source of stability to a means of self-actualization and self-expression

Gen X: Personality Characteristics

- Considered to be the least parented generation in recent history
- Some consider Gen X to have lower expectations, but a more realistic understanding of the world
- Divorce was becoming normal as Gen X'ers grew up
- This latchkey generation relied on friends as family
- The first generation to grow up with computers; raised on technology
- **Independent, resourceful and self-sufficient generation**



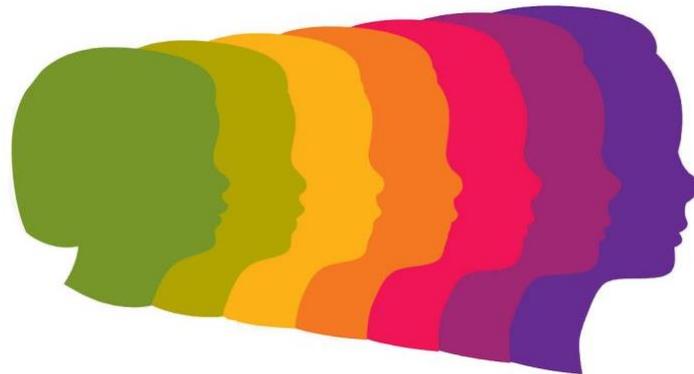
Gen X: Work and Education Styles

- More willing to change jobs to get ahead than previous generations
- Gen X dislikes being micro-managed
- Embraces a hands-off management philosophy
- Demands work-life balance
- Learns and adapts to new technological tools in workplace and schooling such as smartphones, email, laptops, tablets etc.
- Managers of this generation often incorporate humor and games into work activities
- Appreciate the fun in the workplace and throughout education
- Work hard/play hard mentality

Unlike previous generations, Generation X works to live rather than lives to work.

Millennials: Personality Characteristics

- Millennials are the most studied and talked about generation to date
- Grew up totally immersed in a world of digital technology
- Positive attitudes about technology than other generations – say technology makes life easy rather than harder
- Strong sense of community both on local and global scale; focus on larger societal needs rather than individual needs
- Millennials excel at juggling several tasks at once
- When it comes to health, social, economical and environmental issues, Millennials are considered the most conscious generation to date



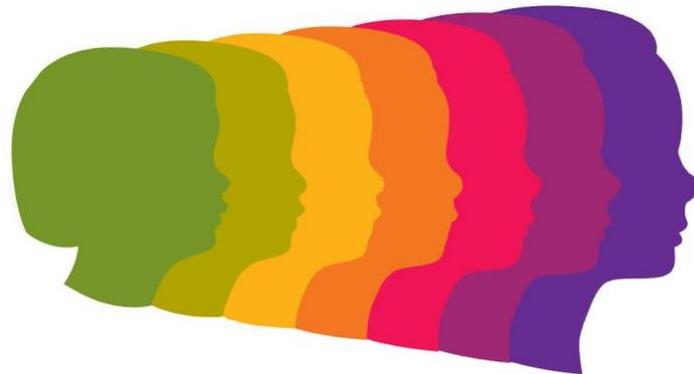
Millennials: Work and Education Styles

- **Work Style:**
 - Entrepreneurially-minded
 - Value flexible working arrangements and freedom over the stable 9-to-5
 - Want to work from remote locations with non-traditional hours
 - Want open and honest relationships with their manager and co-workers
 - Believe in teamwork
- **Education:**
 - The Millennial women are outperforming the Millennial men in the classroom
 - 57% of today's undergraduates are women, and women are now earning 170,000 more bachelor's degrees each year than men

Without a doubt, educational achievement and getting a college education is very important for Millennials. The majority think that education is a big factor to achieving success in life and are willing to put themselves into debt in order to get that increasingly expensive piece of paper.

Generation Z: Personality Characteristics

- Technologically advanced; have not experienced the world without the internet or mobile phones
- They absorb tons of new information every day
- Spend several hours a day on social media platforms or searching the internet for information
- Environmentally aware; value eco-friendly and healthy lifestyles
- Can easily handle several tasks at once
- Do not rely on parents as much as past generations
- Greater openness to understanding different kinds of people
- **Independent, self confident and autonomous**



Generation Z: Work and Education Styles

- Perceives information visually, so education should revolve around story telling, videos
- Short attention spans and are less focused than past generations
- Pick up new technology skills very easily
- Expect workplace or education to conform to their needs
- Gen Z employees will often want to discuss their projects as well as their professional development
- According to the *Generation Z facts sheet prepared by Common Sense Census:*
 - 44% of teens use computers to do their homework
 - 48% of teens watch how to videos that are related to school

A green square containing the white text "Q:".

**Have you had to change
your communication style
to adjust to team members
of another generation within
your department?**

COLLABORATING ACROSS GENERATIONS

1. CHALLENGE STEREOTYPES

A powerful way to demonstrate respect for others is to move past labels and treat people as individuals with unique experiences, preferences, and interests.

Begin by examining your own ideas about other age groups. Then help others recognize when age stereotypes may be hurting collaboration. To challenge stereotypes:

- Treat everyone as an individual
- Assess how age stereotypes may color your views
- Encourage others to reject age stereotypes

2. FIND COMMON GROUND

While each of us is unique, we share more than you might think. Invest time discovering what you share—needs, goals, interests, points of view—with individuals from other generations.

What you share with and learn from them can strengthen the human connection and sense of community that support collaborative work relationships. To find common ground:

- Ask respectful questions
- Listen with an open mind
- Connect on the human level shared by all

3. FIND THE TALENTS IN EVERYONE

Regardless of generation, everyone has something important to contribute. It's a matter of taking initiative to find those talents and match them with the challenges at hand.

When you respectfully ask about the interests, abilities, and experience of others, you enhance their sense of competence and encourage them to contribute to a shared effort. To find the talents in everyone:

- Assume that everyone has value to contribute
- Ask others about their interests, abilities, and experience
- Allow for a range of productive work styles

4. MIX IT UP

Most of us prefer to spend time with people like ourselves, including those of similar age. Working across generations helps realize the tremendous value of diverse perspectives, which often spark creativity and innovation.

Your daily effort to offer and ask for help builds strong connections among age groups and makes everyone's job easier. To mix it up:

- Partner across generations
- Find collaborative ways to share your perspective
- Respectfully ask for and offer ideas and help



**Do you have any specific examples
that reflect generational differences on
your campus?**

THANK YOU!

Brian Suponcic, Director, Relationship Management

BankMobile



bsuponcic@bankmobile.com



216-849-2927