

# Understanding Generational Differences

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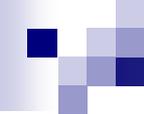
- For the first time in history, four generations are working side by side. Different values, experiences, styles, and activities create misunderstandings and frustrations
- By the year 2014, 70 million **Baby Boomer** (including many teachers and school leaders) will entire **retirement** in large numbers
- **Generation X**, a generation with different sensibilities and priorities than Boomers, will assume positions of leadership in schools and districts

# The Generational Divide (U.S. Population)

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <b>Traditionalists</b>          | Born 1925-1945 50 million<br>GWAEA 6% (28)   |
| <b>Baby Boomers</b>             | Born 1946-1964 80 million<br>GWAEA 70% (341) |
| <b>Generation X</b>             | Born 1965-1980 46 million<br>GWAEA 22% (110) |
| <b>Generation Y/Millennials</b> | Born 1981-2006 76 million<br>GWAEA 2% (9)    |

# Traditionalists (61+)

| <i>Influences</i>   | <i>Characteristics</i>   |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Great Depression</li><li>■ Roaring 20's</li><li>■ WWI and II</li><li>■ Korean War</li><li>■ GI Bill</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Patriotic loyal “waste not want not”</li><li>■ Faith in institutions—<br/>one company career</li><li>■ Military influenced top<br/>down approach</li></ul> |
| <b>KEY WORD: LOYAL</b>  |  |

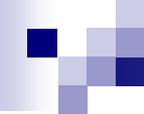


# Traditionalists (61+)

- Value Logic and Discipline
- Don't Like Change
- Want to Build a Legacy

# Baby Boomers (42-60)

| <i>Influences</i>   | <i>Characteristics</i>  |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Suburbia</li><li>■ TV</li><li>■ Vietnam, Watergate</li><li>■ Protests, Human Rights Movement</li><li>■ Drugs &amp; Rock 'n Roll</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Idealistic</li><li>■ COMPETITIVE</li><li>■ Question Authority</li></ul> |
| <b>KEY WORD: Optimist</b>   |   |

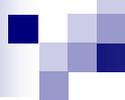


# Baby Boomers (42-60)

- “Me” Generation
- Money, Title, Recognition
- Want to Build A Stellar Career

# Generation X (26-41)

| <i>Influences</i>  | <i>Characteristics</i>   |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Sesame Street, MTV</li><li>■ Game Boy</li><li>■ PC</li><li>■ Divorce Rate Tripled</li><li>■ Latch Key Children</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Eclectic</li><li>■ Resourceful</li><li>■ Self-reliant</li><li>■ Distrustful of Institutions</li><li>■ Highly Adaptive to Change &amp; Technology</li></ul> |
| <b>KEY WORD: Skepticism</b>  |  |

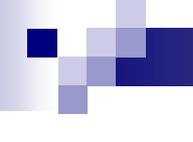


# Generation X (26-41)

- Possibly Most Misunderstood Generation
- Need a Balance Between Work and Life-Freedom
- Flexible and Motivated
- Want to Build a Portable Career

# Generation Y/Millennials (up to 26)

| <i>Influences</i>  | <i>Characteristics</i>  |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Expanded Technology</li><li>■ Natural Disasters</li><li>■ Violence</li><li>■ Gangs</li><li>■ Diversity</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Globally Concerned</li><li>■ Realistic</li><li>■ Cyber Literate</li><li>■ Personal Safety is Number One Concern</li></ul> |
| <b>KEY WORD: Realistic</b>   |   |



# Generation Y/Millennials (up to 26)

- Value Diversity/Change
- Been Involved Entire Life
- Want Work to be Meaningful

# Goals

|                          |                           |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Traditionalists          | “Build a Legacy”          |
| Baby Boomers             | “Build a Stellar Career”  |
| Generation X             | “Build a Portable Career” |
| Generation Y/Millennials | “Build Parallel Careers”  |

# Institutions

|                          |                                       |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Traditionalists          | “Deserve Loyalty”                     |
| Baby Boomers             | “Deserve to Change”                   |
| Generation X             | “Are Suspect”                         |
| Generation Y/Millennials | “Should Be Judged on Their Own Merit” |

# Rewards

|                          |                                 |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Traditionalists          | “Satisfaction of job well done” |
| Baby Boomers             | “Money, Title, Recognition”     |
| Generation X             | “Freedom!”                      |
| Generation Y/Millennials | “Work that has meaning”         |

# Career Path

|                          |                                      |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Traditionalists          | “Job changing has stigma”            |
| Baby Boomers             | “Job changing puts you behind”       |
| Generation X             | “Job changing is necessary”          |
| Generation Y/Millennials | “Doesn’t need to be a straight line” |

# Feedback

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| Traditionalists          | “No news is good news.”                   |
| Baby Boomers             | “Once a year whether needed or not.”      |
| Generation X             | “So, how am I doing?”                     |
| Generation Y/Millennials | “From virtual coach to touch of a button” |

# Summarizing...

|                        | <b>Traditionalists</b> | <b>Baby Boomers</b> | <b>Generation X</b> | <b>Millennials</b> |
|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Birth Years</b>     | Before 1945            | 1946-1964           | 1965-1980           | 1979-2006          |
| <b>Business Focus</b>  | Quality                | Long hours          | Productivity        | Contribution       |
| <b>Motivator</b>       | Security               | Money               | Time off            | Time off           |
| <b>Company Loyalty</b> | Highest                | High                | Low                 | Low                |
| <b>Money is</b>        | Livelihood             | Status symbol       | Means to an end     | Today's payoff     |
| <b>Value</b>           | Family/Community       | Success             | Time                | Individuality      |

# What To Do? Traditionalists

- Consider engaging them as teachers, mentors, coaches.
- When they retire, consider re-hiring them as part-time project leaders and coaches.



# What To Do? Baby Boomers

Boomers are burning out with today's workload and are not impressed with less ambitious Gen Xers.

- Offer them flexibility, authority and respect.
- Challenge them to keep growing (in their own way).



# What To Do? Gen Xers

Gen Xers don't want to follow Boomers into burn out. They think Millennials need too much hand holding.

- Manage them with a coaching style--FAST feedback and credit for results.
- Push them to keep learning just-in-time for every new project.



# What To Do? Millennials

Millennials feel that basics such as punctuality and dress code are less important.

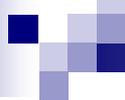
They want fair and direct managers who are highly engaged in their personal development.



# What To Do? Millennials

- Get to know their capabilities and put them in roles that push their limits.
- Treat them as professional colleagues and they will act like professionals.
- Keep them focused with speed, customization and interactivity.



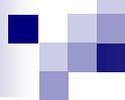


# Credits

“When Generations Collide: Who They Are.  
Why They Clash. How to Solve the  
Generational Puzzle at Work”

Lynne Lancaster and David Stillman

[www.generations.com](http://www.generations.com)



# Resources

More information about GWAEA leadership programs can be found at :

<http://www.aea10.k12.ia.us/leadership/ldrshipdev.html>