

Developing Tactful Communication Skills to Manage the Generational Mix and Improve Performance and Engagement in a Multi-Generational Work Force

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Not Ok, That's OK



Are you a/an...

Individual
contributor

People
manager



- 13 Years as a Higher Education Administrator (Wharton, Penn State)
- Consultant, Trainer & Speaker collaborating with organizations to humanize workplaces
- I'm a Millennial

What happens when we have communication breakdowns across generations?

- People start ignoring and avoiding other people
- We're less productive as a team, office and as individuals
- Frustrations are high and engagement is low
- Turnover increases

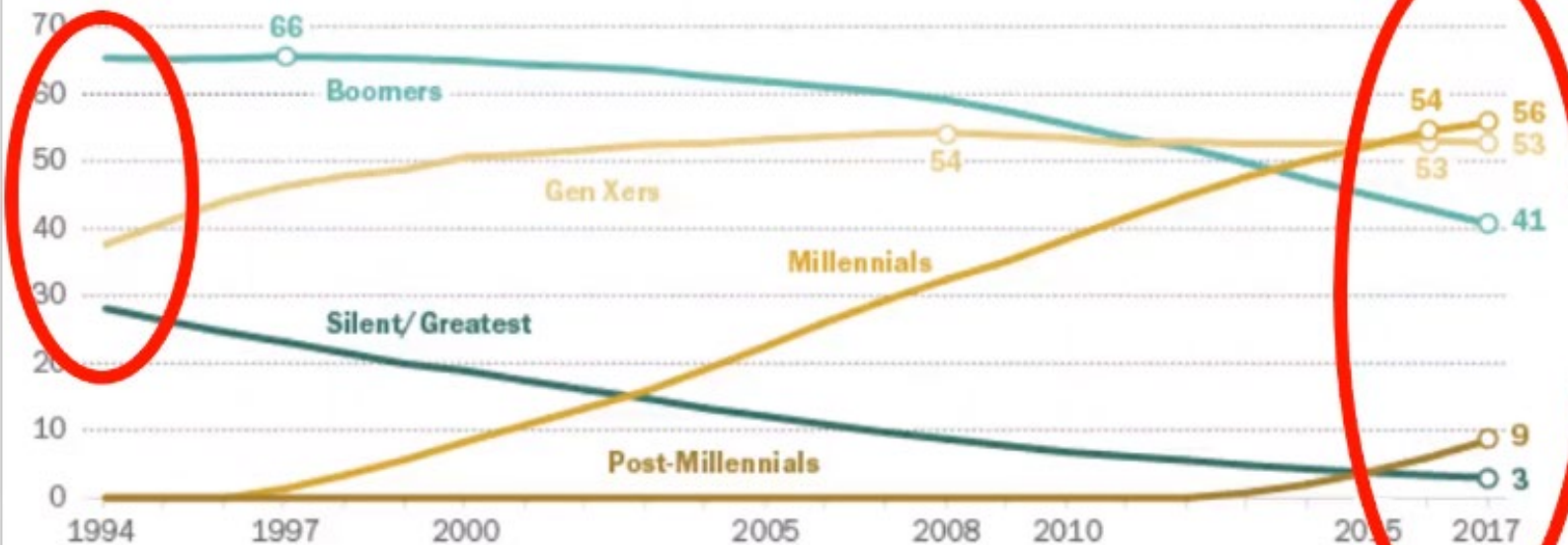
Disclaimer

Individuals make up a generation

- There were 3 generations in the 90s
- 250,000 people 85 years and older in the workforce

Millennials became the largest generation in the labor force in 2016

U.S. labor force, in millions



Note: Labor force includes those ages 16 and older who are working or looking for work. Annual averages shown.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of monthly 1994-2017 Current Population Survey (IPUMS).

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Generations in the Workforce

Generation	Birth Years	Ages
Baby Boomers	1946-1964	54-72
Gen X	1965-1980	39-53
Millennials/Gen Y	1980-1996	22-38
Gen Z	1996-2010	8-22

1. What events occurred during their childhood?

2. What have you noticed motives this generation to get work done?

3. What positive impact do they bring to the workplace?

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Who are Baby Boomers?

1946-1964
(ages: 54-72)



Values shaped by: a rise in civil rights activism, Woodstock, Vietnam, and inflation

- More optimistic and open to change than the prior generation
- Resourceful & team-oriented collaborators
- Generally distrust authority and large systems
- “Do as you’re told”
- **Common driver:** Competition and status
- **Communication strategies:** in person, phone (leave a message), structure, formal conversations

Who are Gen X? 1965-1979 (ages: 39-53)



Values shaped by: corporate layoffs, falling of the Berlin Wall, rise of personal computer, Challenger

- Willing to develop their skill sets and take on challenges
- Independent and question authority figures
- Very adaptive to job instability in the post-downsizing environment
- Strong technical skills
- “No news is good news”
- **Common driver:** Independence
- **Communication strategies:** Informal conversations, in-person, email, text

Who are the Millennials? 1980-1996 (ages: 38-22)

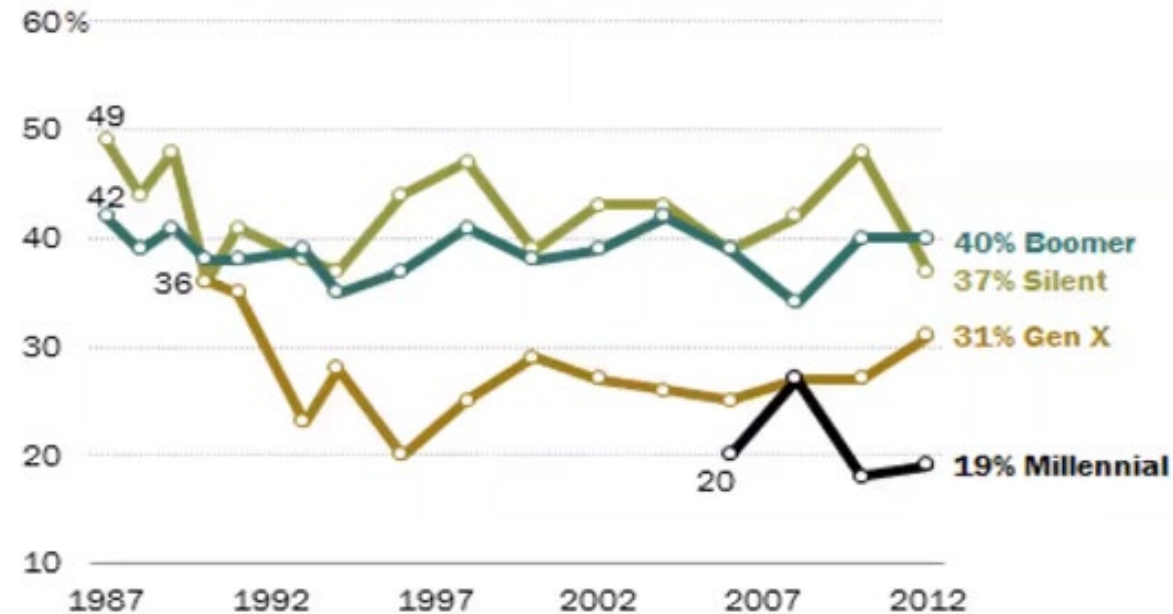


Values shaped by: Columbine, 9/11, rise of social media

- First global-centric generation
- Resilient in navigating change while deepening their appreciation for diversity and inclusion
- Multi-task
- Can appear more demanding than previous generations
- “How am I doing?”
- **Common driver:** Personal meaning and purpose
- **Communication strategies:** In person, text, social media, cloud-based platform

Millennials Less Trusting of Others

% saying that, generally speaking, most people can be trusted



Question wording: "Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?"

Source: General Social Survey data, 1987-2012

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81% of Millennials will not trust you UNLESS you build a relationship

Who are Gen Z?

1997-2010
(ages:8-21)



Values shaped by: do not recall a time without the War on Terror, legalization of gay marriage, or school violence

- Entrepreneurial and good “multi-multi” taskers
- Less focused than previous generation
- Independent and collaborative
- Inclusive and tolerant of difference
- “Express yourself”
- **Common driver:** Competition and entrepreneurship
- **Communication strategies:** In person, social media (hashtags/influencers), text, email



- Attention Span in 2000:
12 seconds
- Attention Span in 2015
8.25 seconds
- Attention Span of a Goldfish:
9 seconds

Source: Statistic Brain

	Suggestion	What they Bring
Baby Boomer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure • Scheduled conversations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team players • Mentors
Gen X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal conversations • Direction without micromanagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-starters • Results driven
Millennial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear direction • Instant communication/ongoing dialogue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimistic • Globally-minded
Gen Z	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infotainment • Targeted learning outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tech savvy • Socially responsible

To create inclusive generationally diverse workspaces, we need to bring the best practices of all generations together. That means taking the time to learn, practice, and communicate with people who think, act and experience life differently from you.

3 Concepts to Adapt

- **Assume the best intentions:** we all want the best for our organization and we all want to be valued. We just communicate it a different way
- **Appreciate the other person's perspective:** learn about the experiences, values, priorities, preferences of others
- **Be flexible:** it's not about who is right or who is wrong, it's about finding a solution that is in the best interest of others (employees, customers)

How Can We Identify and Bring the Best Practices Together?

- Consistent and ongoing communication
- Providing and seeking out development
- Identifying and leveraging our strengths



Provide and Be Open to Consistent FEEDBACK



- 72% of employees under the age of 30 desire feedback on a weekly basis
- 60% of employees over the age of 30 desire feedback on a weekly basis
- “What do you need from me?”
- “Just in time” feedback
- Schedule virtual/in person meetings where both parties “have the floor”

PWC, Millennials at Work 2011

Make DEVELOPMENT Part of Your Organization's Core Values

- Creating opportunities for apprenticeship
- Implementing a reverse mentoring program
- Have a “stay conversation”
- Providing opportunities to gain new skills, knowledge, experiences
 - Creative Live
 - Networking
 - Udemy
 - Coursera/EdX/Udacity
 - LinkedIn Learning



Leaders Identify Strengths



Employees who understand their strengths are:

- 6x more likely to be engaged at work
- 8% more productive
- 3x more likely to have an excellent quality of life
- 15% less likely to quit their jobs

Teams who use their strengths are:

- 12% more productive
- 9% more profitable

Gallup

How to Identify Strengths

- Pro-active conversations
- Observe
- Ask others around them
- StrengthsFinder assessment



Next Steps

- Schedule one-on-one conversations with your employees (or supervisor)
 - Start the strengths conversation
 - Discuss professional development opportunities and interests
 - Ask for and be open to feedback
 - Find out the best way to communicate with one another for everyday issues and urgent matters
 - Have a “stay conversation”

We're in This
Together!

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TEXT: Alissa to 66866 for "20 Ways to Increase
Engagement in a Multi-Generational Workforce"

