

9-23-2008

# Connecting Generations for Organizational Success

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## Recommended Citation

Wise, Kate; Blackburn, Heidi; and Starkey, Alysia, "Connecting Generations for Organizational Success" (2008). *Criss Library Faculty Proceedings & Presentations*. 31.

<https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/crisslibfacproc/31>

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# CONNECTING GENERATIONS FOR ORGANIZATIONAL SUCCESS

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October 23, 2008

CULS Fall Conference

## WELCOME

- Agenda
  - Introduction
  - A Brief Look at Generational Characteristics
    - Baby Boomers
    - Gen X / Millennial
  - Techniques to Bridge Generational Gaps
    - Internal Customer Service

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## INTRODUCTION

- 4 generations trying to co-exist:
- Traditionalists
  - Baby Boomers
  - Generation X
  - Millennial

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## TRADITIONALISTS

- Born between 1922 - 1943
- 5% of workforce
- Respect authority
- Like rules
- Formal communication
- Extremely loyal

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## BABY BOOMERS

- Born between 1943 - 1964
- 45% of workforce
- Committed to organization
- Enjoy work
  - Self-esteem often tied to work accomplishments
- Dedicated, driven

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## BABY BOOMERS

- Anti-authoritarian
- Seek “meaningful career”
- Value team building
- Direct communication and feedback
- Need to create healthy life balance
- Competitive

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## GENERATION X

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## MILLENNIALS

- Born between 1979-1994
- Balance work/personal lives well
- Do not always commit loyalty to a company
- Use different formats to access/communicate information
- Prefer to communicate directly
- Multi-taskers

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## MILLENNIALS

- Nomadic with their technology
- Accustomed to instant feedback
- Like to collaborate to work
- Are flexible
- Often impatient
- Preference for “learning by doing”
- Large promoters of the “green” movement

## Some Observations and Experiences as a Millennial Manager

- By-the-book vs. diving-in learning
- Tradition vs. change
- Quiet vs. multi-stimulation work environment
- Follow-the-leader vs. teamwork
- Communication bewilderment

## By-the-book vs. diving-in learning

### Boomers like:

- a traditional hierarchical framework.
- working and rising within framework.
- appreciate the clear boundaries set by hierarchies

### Millennials like:

- a greater sense of lateral teamwork.
- to form teams despite hierarchical differences that may exist between team members (Mosley & Kaspar, 2008, 95) (Sweeny, 2005, 171)

**IRL example**

## Tradition vs. change

### Boomers:

- expect change to come through the institutional hierarchy

### Millennials:

- expect change;
- will take the initiative to suggest change in the library

**IRL example**

## Quiet vs. multistimulation work environment

### Boomers:

- generally prefer a quiet environment

### Millenials:

- have had access to multiple information inputs
- find it harder to concentrate in a quiet environment
- like to multitask

**IRL example**

## Follow-the-leader vs. teamwork

### Boomers:

- like a traditional hierarchical framework.
- accustomed to a framework,
- appreciate the clear boundaries

### Millenials:

- bring a greater sense of lateral teamwork,
- work better when allowed to form teams, (Mosley & Kaspar, 2008, 95) (Sweeny, 2005, 171).

**IRL example**

## Communication bewilderment

### Boomers:

- prefer a set form of communication
- tend to have more finesse

### Millenials:

- will work in any consistant communication format
- tend to be direct, frank and blunt (Abram & Luther, 2004, 37) (Sweeny, 2005, 170)

**IRL example**

## Job loyalty vs. career management

### Boomers:

- are loyal to their job.
- see their career as a form or large part of their identity
- expect to work up through the ranks

### Millenials:

- see a job as a tool
- will manage their careers by switching jobs when it benefits personal goals (Mosley & Kaspar, 2008, 93) (Lancaster, 2003, 37) (Markgren, Dickenson, Leonard & Vassiliadis, 2007)

**IRL example**

## Bridging the Gap

### Internal Customer Service

- One
- Two
- Three

Any questions?

Thanks for coming!