



The Perfect Storm: When Generations Collide in the Workplace



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The Perfect Storm

Traditionalists/Veterans-1920

| Events/Conditions | Values |
|--------------------|--------------------------|
| WW I ended | Patriotism |
| Lack of Mobility | Traditional family roles |
| Stock market crash | Jobs/Money valued |

Traditionalists/Veterans-1930

| Events/Conditions | Values |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| Great Depression | Save for a rainy day |

Traditionalists/Veterans-1940

| Events/Conditions | Values |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| WW II | Intensely patriotic/competitive |
| Working woman | Family roles questioned |
| Atomic bomb | Live for today |

Baby Boomers-1950's

| Events/Conditions | Values |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Korean Conflict | Patriotism questioned |
| TV | Kids easily bored |
| Civil riots | Questioned everything |

Baby Boomers-1960's

| Events/Conditions | Values |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Vietnam War on TV | Reality is not pretty |
| Kennedy's-MLK killed | Good life has peaked |
| Vietnam | Questioning institutions |
| Drugs, music, birth control | Sexual freedom/independence |
| Space program | Instant solutions |
| Satellites | Technology is the answer |

Generation Xers-1970's

| Events/Conditions | Values |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Watergate | Cynical |
| Nixon resigns | O.K. if not caught |
| Mobile society | Divorce more acceptable |

Generation Y/Millennials-1980's

| Events/Conditions | Values |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|
| Reagan elected | Keeping up with Jones' "Me Decade" |
| PATKO Strike | |

Generation Y/Millennials-1990's

| Events/Conditions | Values |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| Desert Storm | Patriotism rising |
| Rejectionists in power | Equality |
| Clinton impeached | Redefinition of sex |

WORKPLACE CHARACTERISTICS

| | Veterans | Baby Boomers | Generation X | Generation Y |
|------------------------|---|--|--|--|
| Work Ethic and Values | Hard work Respect authority Sacrifice Duty before fun Adhere to rules | Workaholics Work efficiently Crusading causes Personal Fulfillment Desire quality Question authority | Eliminate the task Self-reliance Want structure and direction Skeptical | What's next Multitasking Tenacity Entrepreneurial Tolerant Goal oriented |
| Work is... | An obligation | An exciting adventure | A difficult challenge A contract | A means to an end Fulfillment |
| Leadership Style | Dictatorial Command-and-control | Consultative | Everyone is the same Challenge others Ask why | Empowered Teams |
| Interactive Style | Individual | Team player Loves to have meetings | Trust ME! | Participative |
| Communications | Formal Memo | In person | Direct Immediate | Email Text IM |
| Feedback and Rewards | No news is good news Satisfaction in a job well done | Don't appreciate it Money Title recognition | Sorry to interrupt, but how am I doing? Freedom is the best reward | Whenever I want it, at the push of a button Meaningful work |
| Messages that Motivate | Your experience is respected | You are valued You are needed | Do it your way Forget the rules | You will work with other bright, creative people |
| Work and Family Life | Keep separated | No balance Work to live | Balance | Balance |
| How to Coach... | | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide new work experiences. 2. Keep lines of communication open. 3. Tout your organizations benefits. 4. Reward a job well done. 5. Offer flexible schedule. 6. Setup mentoring program. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Set expectations and relate how job fits with strategic plan. 2. Whenever possible, involve them in decisions they are doing it right. 3. Tell them when they are doing it right. 4. Steer them when off course. 5. Give lots of opportunities to learn. 6. Give honest information on how the company is doing. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Give them feedback. 2. Give them teams. 3. Be prepared to negotiate – be flexible. 4. Give them lots of small deadlines. 5. Flatter them. 6. Keep them informed. |