Managing a Multi-Generational Workforce
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Our four generation workforce provides challenges

Seniors  b. 1920-1945
Baby Boomers  b. 1946-1965
Gen Xers  b. 1966-1979
Gen Yers  b. 1980-2000
Agenda

- Demographic and diversity changes in the workforce
- Managing an intergenerational workforce
- Changing expectations and values at work
- Communication strategies to effectively manage and lead

The US Population Today

![Graph showing population by year of birth]
US Total Labor Force Participation by Generation, 2010

- Boomers: 38%
- Gen X: 32%
- Gen Y: 25%
- Matures: 5%

Millennials will comprise the majority of the workforce by 2025

Source: U.S. Census Bureau
State Example
NC State Agencies (2014)

- Matures: 1%
- Gen Y: 29%
- Gen X: 29%
- Boomers: 41%

Important to Consider
Exercise

Matures, born before 1945
Matures Formative Events

- The Great Depression
- Pearl Harbor
- WW II
- Hiroshima
- The New Deal

Matures values

- Duty, honor, dedication, sacrifice
- Conformity, unity – “We First”
- Hard times then prosperity
- Patience
- Importance of a job well done
- Law and order; respect for authority
- Adherence to rules
- Age = Seniority
Matures in the workplace

- Work is an obligation
- Are loyal to their employer and expect the same in return
- Believe promotions, raises, and recognition should come from job tenure
- Leadership style: command and control. Directive

Matures in the Market
Matures in the Market

- **Faith** in the nation’s institutions and the government
- Demand **quality**
- Are **loyal** customers but aren’t afraid to shop around
- **Follow the rules** that have been established
- Believe **standard options** are just fine

Motivating Matures

- Respect Experience
- Recognize perseverance
- Symbols
Baby Boomers, 1946-1964

Baby Boomers Formative Events

- The civil rights movement
- Martin Luther King
- John F. Kennedy
- Vietnam War
- Woodstock
- The Cold War
- Roe vs. Wade
Baby Boomer values

- Stability
- “Workaholic”
- Competitive
- Balancing family and work
- Desire for respect
- Success is largely visible
- Personal development
- Optimistic

Boomers in the workforce

- Evaluate themselves and others based on their work ethic
- Work measured in hours worked
  - Teamwork is critical to success
  - Relationship building is very important
  - Expect loyalty
Baby Boomers in the Market

- Are interested in products and services that will allow them to regain control of their time
- Believe technology brings with it as many problems as it provides solutions
- Want products and services that have been customized for them, the individual
- Believe rules should be obeyed unless they are contrary to what they want; then they’re to be broken
- Want products and services that will indicate to their peers that they’re successful

Baby Boomers like to hear

- “You’re important to our success”
- “You’re valued here”
- “Your contribution is unique and important”
- “We need you”
- “I approve of you”
Gen X, 1965-1977

Gen Xers Formative Events

- Post-Watergate
- Fall of the Berlin Wall
- Challenger explosion
- The Gulf War
- The PC boom
- Parental divorce rates
- ‘Latchkey kids’
- MTV
- AIDS
Generation X Values

- Parent’s began raising them as “friends”
- No common heroes
- Work-life balance
- Independent
- Cynical and pessimistic
- Seek career opportunities
- Think globally
- Techno-literate
- Informal

Gen X in the Workplace

- Eschew the hard-core, motivated, Boomer work ethic
- Want open communication regardless of position
- Respect production over tenure
- Value control of their time
- Look for a person to whom they can invest loyalty
Gen X in the Market

- Can spot a phony a mile away
- Rely on peer-to-peer referrals
- Want options; plans B, C, and D
- Embrace technology
- Want to be in control of the sale

Messages that motivate Gen X

- Do it your way
- We’ve got the newest hardware and software
- There aren’t a lot of rules here
- We’re not very corporate
Gen Y, 1978-2000

Formative Events

- Oklahoma City bombing
- 9/11 terrorist attack
- Columbine High School
- The Internet boom
- Child focus
- Technology
Millenials value

- Optimistic and confident
- Individual key, yet group oriented
- Difficulty focusing on “non stimulating” stuff
- Often raised as “friends”
- Search out authority
- Ambitious yet aimless
- Civic duty
- Diversity

Millenials in the workplace

- Search for the individual who will help them achieve their goal
- Want open, constant communication and positive reinforcement from their boss
- Find working with someone of the Mature generation easy to do
- Search for a job that provides great, personal fulfillment
- Are searching for ways to shed the stress in their lives
Millenials in the Market

- Want to be like their peers but with a unique twist
- Don’t want to be hurried
- Consider a company’s products if the company is known for their altruistic attitude
- Are loyal consumers
- Search for the unique items

Messages that motivate

- You’ll be working with other bright, creative people
- You and your coworkers can help turn this organization around
- You can be a hero here
What does all this mean?

Managing Multiple Generations

- Consider type of work
- Team vs. independent
- Varied communication strategies
- Importance of values and vision for all generations
- Generations tend to “Challenge the Process” of the previous generation
- Avoid stereotyping
Every good conversation starts with good listening.
“Yes, and...”

Your ability to effectively communicate will define your success as a leader.
A conversation that did not work

- What was the context?
- How do you feel about it?
- What would you do differently?

Popular strategies

- Stop talking to the person
- Talk about them to everyone else
- Encourage transfer
- Hope they will win the lottery and quit
- Other
How you think shapes how you communicate and address conflict

Mental Models

Are the deeply held beliefs, images, and assumptions we hold about ourselves, our world, and our organizations, and how we fit in them.
Mental Models

- Expectation
- Memory
- First Impression
- Judgment
- Perfection
- Bias
- Hero Worship

Bosses Actually Look Like This
What is your mental model?

Be aware of your mental model

- Ask yourself:
  - What is really happening in this relationship?
  - Why does this person behave as they do?
  - What assumptions am I making?
Mental Models and Communication

- What we say
- How we say it
- How we interpret what is said
- What role we take
- How we react to conflict
- How we address issues

We spend as little of our mental energy as we have to in order to get the job done.
We take shortcuts and make assumptions about each other
Unconscious Assumptions

- Easy for two people to have very different impressions of a person and a situation, depending on their mental model
- We assume people share our mental models
- We make assumptions we don’t even realize we are making
- We expect someone’s behavior to be more stable and predictable than it is

Interpersonal Dynamics

- Three recurrent questions regularly haunt managers:
  1. What is really happening in this relationship?
  2. Why do other people behave as they do?
  3. What can I do about it?
DRAMA TRIANGLE

Rescuer
Poor You
Pain Reliever
Fears Not Being Needed

Victim

Persecutor
The Problem
Dominate, Blames
Keeps Victim Down

Feels Powerless
Dream Denied
Poor Me

The Dreaded Drama Triangle
(derived from the Karanen Drama Triangle)

DDT™
Drama Triangle (Karpman)

- **Victim**
  - Poor me, Feels Powerless, Dream lost or denied

- **Persecutor**
  - Criticizes, Focuses on problem, Blames, Tears down

- **Rescuer**
  - Poor you, Pain reliever, Fears not being needed

- **They discount self**
- **They discount others’ value and integrity**
- **They discount others’ ability to think for themselves**

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Rescuer → Persecutor → Victim

- **Coach**
- **Challenger**
- **Creator**

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Get out of the Triangle

- Recognize you are in it
- How to get out of it
Keys to Communication

- Test assumptions and be curious
- Distinguish between positions and interests
- Consider what drives people
- Recognize emotions
We all go “up the ladder”

- Assumptions
- Inferences
- Attributions

The Ladder of Inference

- Take action based on beliefs
  - I adopt beliefs about the world
  - I draw conclusions
  - I make assumptions based on my meanings
  - I add meanings (cultural and personal)
  - I select data from what I observe
- Observable data
Lowering your ladder

- What observable information did I miss?
- What did this person say that led me to this conclusion?
- What is a more generous explanation for this information?
- How can I respond given what I think this means?

1. Test observation
   “What I saw was...”
   “Did I miss something?”

2. Test meaning
   “I’m thinking...”
   “What do you think?”
Actions are a matter of interpretation

- Observers put things into context and draw from the past
- People and events are never seen objectively
- People don’t agree with each other about what happened and what someone is like

I talked to John about his performance
Mary talked to me about my performance

We think we can read each other

Transparency illusion
- You are much harder to read than you imagine
- No one can read your mind
- You are a mystery to those around you
- Your emotions are less obvious than you realize and your face is less expressive
Curiosity

Curiosity will drive you to talk to someone to find out what they meant.

Your job with others

- Gain information from others

- Test your assumption
  - If you don’t, you fill in the blanks and you are usually wrong

- You will imagine a personality profile that may or may not be accurate
Your job for yourself

- Make information available about yourself to others
  - If you don’t, people will fill in the blanks

- That’s the danger, people will imagine a personality profile for you that may or may not be accurate

HELPING YOURSELF AND OTHERS STAY ON THE LOWER RUNGS
Ask genuine questions

- You aren’t going to do it *that* way are you?
- What happens when you do it *that* way?

1. Be specific
2. Agree on what important words mean

*Example:* “I want the draft *soon*.”
Explain the reasons behind your statements, questions and actions.
Example: Is the report done yet?
The reason I am asking is I want to add some more to it before it goes out.

Keys to Communication

- Testing assumptions and curiosity is critical
- Distinguish between positions and interests
- Consider what drives people
- Recognize emotions
Focus on your interest **not** your position

Positions are...

- Demands
- Suggestions
- Proposed solutions
- Courses of action
- Fairly specific

the **what** to do
Examples of positions

- We need a dress code policy
- We should implement a four day workweek when we are not in session
- Texting should not be used for official business

Interests are...

- reason(s) for a position
- underlying goals or objectives
- more general and open to interpretation
- not actions

The Why behind the What
Getting to the interest

**Why?**

**Why?**

**Why?**

**Why?**

**Why?**

**Why?**

Examples of interests

- We need a dress code policy
  - to enhance the professionalism of our office
- We should implement a four day workweek when we are not in session
  - to allow for more flexibility of schedules especially after people have worked such crazy schedules when we were in session
- Texting should not be used for official business
  - I am worried that not everyone uses text messages and will be excluded from communication
Move from position to interest by

- Sharing your reasoning
- Providing relevant information
- Remaining open and curious

Keys to communication

- Testing assumptions and curiosity is critical
- Distinguish between positions and interests
- Consider what drives people
- Recognize emotions
Understand other’s values

- Every person is motivated for individual reasons
- Your role as a leader is to have conversations with your people to facilitate:
  - their understanding of those reasons
  - the implications for their current motivational outlook
  - their alternate choices
- A values conversation may be in order to share your values or reiterate the organization’s values
Keys to Communication

- Testing assumptions and curiosity is critical
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- Consider what drives people
- Recognize emotions

Power of emotions

- We all have emotional needs
- Recognize and address emotions in yourself and others
- Act in ways that address the core concerns in others as well as yourself
Five core concerns

- Appreciation
- Affiliation
- Autonomy
- Status
- Role

Find merit in what another person

- Thinks
- Feels
- Does
Reflect

Ask yourself, was I
• transparent?
• curious?
• compassionate?
• able to establish joint accountability?

Leadership requires

- Knowing yourself, leading yourself. Knowing others, leading others.
- Having difficult conversations
- Giving feedback in a timely basis
- Using specific examples and sharing your reasoning
- Finding out what others think
Thank you