Four Generations in the Workplace…

Indiana Chamber

Presented by

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Overview

- Discuss the four generations that are a part of today's workplace.
- Learn about characteristics and events that shaped each generation's perspectives and work style; understand how these elements factor into workplace interactions and communications.
- Understand how to address gaps/challenges/differences of the generations by creating strategies to align work and their specific ways of working.
- Discuss keys to relating to the various generations of the workplace.

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Generation Boom

Baby Boomers—Born from 1946-1964

Description:
- Also known as the "Me" generation.
- Is competitive; possess a need to be "the best".
- Is motivated by their responsibilities to others.
- Is anxious to please and be rewarded for their good deed(s).
- Prefer one-on-one communication; focus on relationship building.
- Is loyal to their employer; work to demonstrate self-worth.
- Can be workaholics—a "live to work" perspective; believe others should do the same; frown on flexible schedules or working from home.
- Expect respect from younger workers.

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Generation X

Generation X—Born from 1965-1980

Description:
- Also know as the Latchkey Kids, Xers, and the Doers.
- Is independent/entrepreneurial/informal.
- Is self-reliant and skeptical; suspicious of Boomer values.
- Is leery of authority and often questions it; little trust of organizations.
- Is driven by tasks and results; seek to work smarter, not harder.
- Is opposed to micro-management.
- Strive for work/life balance—"work to live".
- Prefer immediate feedback and communication via email.
- Lack organizational loyalty displayed by previous generations.
- Embrace technology and its benefits of efficiency.
- Adapt well to change as long as it is understood.

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Generation Next

Generation Y/Millennials—Born from 1981-1996

Description:

- Also known as Generation Next; are fiercely independent.
- Value achievement, diversity, technology, work/life balance.
- See the workplace as a platform to achieve individual goals.
- Have high expectations of their workplaces; only want to work with positive people—see no value in negativity.
- Expect in-depth on-the-job training and development.
- Prefer instant feedback and communication.
- Value flexible work schedules and their personal time.

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Generation Next

Generation Z/iGeneration—Born after 1996

Description:

- Are less focused; live in a world of continuous updates.
- Are more private; do not broadcast every moment of their lives on social media.
- Process information faster than any other generation due to the invention of apps such as Snapchat and Instagram.
- Are expert multi-taskers; are able to shift between work and play with multiple distractions happening in the background.
- Are more entrepreneurial and desire more independent work; have more interest in starting a business than going to college.
- Are big on individuality but possess a global perspective; diversity/gender inclusion is a must.

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Keys to Working With…

Baby Boomers—Born from 1946-1964

- Ensure they feel that their ideas matter and they are a **valued part of the team.**
- Understand that their **careers define them** and their work is important to their being; they expect their work to matter.
- Recognize that before this group will do anything they **must understand the why**, the big picture, its impact on them, etc.
- Know that this group **does not take criticism well** and therefore you may have to prepare the feedback with finesse.
- **Award/Recognize** individuals in this group for their successes publicly—they like to be the "star"; however, they are less likely to recognize others.

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Keys to Working With…

Generation X—Born from 1965-1980

- Provide independence and informality in the workplace; **do not micromanage.**
- Allow this group to **pursue other interests** that are important to them such as other areas of the company, community events, etc.
- Integrate fun into the workplace; allow them to be **creative.**
- Provide the latest **technology** that will help them be more efficient and effective with their work.
- Ensure a good **work/life balance**; allow flexible schedules or other arrangements to meet their life needs.
- Present yourself as an information provider and not a boss; approach them with **collaboration** and as a peer.

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Keys to Working With…

Generation Y/Millennials—Born from 1981-1996

- Provide an informal, team-oriented workplace that allows for **creativity and collaboration.**
- Understand that their goals come first and then work goals; learn about their personal goals; **align work goals with personal goals.**
- Create engaging experiences and variety; this group wants to **work with friends and confidants.**
- Understand that this group needs **rationale** for the work you've asked them to do and how it adds value to the team.
- Know that you have to earn respect no matter what your title—"**respect me to be respected**".
- Provide encouragement regarding **advancement**
- See **technology** as a must.

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Keys to Working With…

Generation Z/iGeneration—Born after 1996

- Demonstrate **strong leadership**; guide, direct, and coach.
- Provide **clear expectations** every step of the way and provide **rewards** for achievement.
- Create high-intensity relationships through **highly defined, small workgroups** with a strong leader.
- Be **honest** in communications; provide both the up/downsides.
- Invest in **training** especially in interpersonal and communication skills.
- Show appreciation for **social connection and collaboration.**
- Be prepared to manage and work **virtually** utilizing a plethora of media and online work tools.
- Assign multiple work tasks; keep them busy.

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Wrap Up

- The four generations in the workplace presents challenges in the way we communicate, interact, and view one another.
- It is important that each of us learn the differences and identify methods to best work together.
- We must embrace change and the differences others bring to the workplace.
- We must be willing to adapt to one another in order to be most effective when working together.

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Questions?

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