





**BOMA**

**Generations in the Workforce**

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# Keys to success...

- Knowledge
- Skills
- Determination
- Drive
- Persistence

***But one thing brings all of those together...***

# ***People!***

- Interaction
- Communication with others

***Determines the success of your company***

# **Center for Creative Leadership Study**

## **Two most important skills for... personal & business success**

1. Building effective relationships with others
2. Knowing who you are (self management)

***Unprecedented in the history of  
America...***

**Four Generations in the Workforce**

***This is Today's Leadership Challenge***

# Goals for our talk today...

1. Identify the typical characteristics of the four generations in the workplace
2. Discuss each generation's unique contributions and potential areas for growth
3. Diagnose workplace issues from a generational perspective
4. Offer helpful suggestions to facilitate better intergenerational communication

## **What is a Generation?**

Definition: A birth period of roughly 20 years shared by a group of people who experience common life events and cultural milestones that form their values, attitudes, life and work perspectives.



# The Generations

Traditionalist

Baby Boomer

Gen X

Millennial



76M

80M

46M

76M

# The Generations

<u>Generation</u>	<u>Census Total</u>	<u>Years</u>	<u>Workplace %</u>
Traditionalists	76 Mil	1922-1945	7%
Boomers	80 Mil	1946-1964	42%
Gen Xers	46 Mil	1965-1980	29%
Millennials	76 Mil	1981-2000	22%

Why are there 80 million Boomers  
and only 46 million Gen Xers?



# Each Generation brings to your workplace...

- Different Values
- Different preferred Management Styles
- Shared experiences within their generation
- Common approaches in the workplace

# The Traditionalists

Who are they?

Most influenced by  
Great Depression &  
World War II

- 7% of workforce
- Great savers



# The Traditionalists

## Historical and influential events:

- 1929 Stock market crashes
- 1930 U.S. depression deepens
- 1931 Star Spangled Banner becomes national anthem
- 1934 Social Security System established
- 1941 Pearl Harbor, U.S. enters WW II
- 1945 Victory in Europe and Japan
- 1950 Korean War

# The Traditionalists

## Core Values:

Dedication and sacrifice

Duty and Honor

Country and God

Respect for authority

Patience and perseverance

Family values

Fiscally conservative

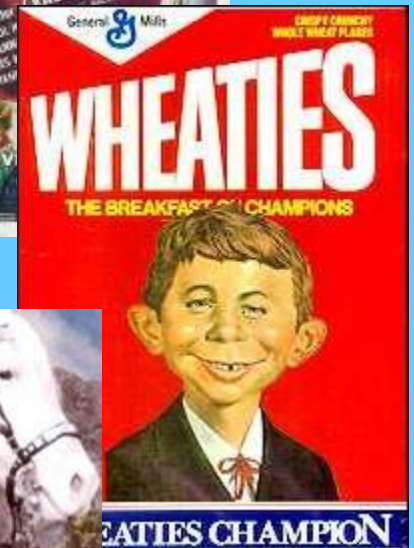
***Loyal***



# The Traditionalists

## Cultural Memorabilia:

Kewpie dolls  
Mickey Mouse  
Flash Gordon  
Golden era of radio  
Wheaties  
Charlie McCarthy  
Tarzan  
Jukeboxes  
Blondie  
The Lone Ranger  
**Yo-yos!**



# The Traditionalists

## On the Job as assets:

1. Stable
2. Detail oriented
3. Thorough
4. Loyal
5. Hard work ethic

## On the Job challenges:

1. Inept with ambiguity and change
2. Reluctant to buck the system
3. Uncomfortable with conflicts
4. Reticent when they disagree

# The Traditionalists

Leadership Style: Chain of Command

50% male traditionalists are military veterans

GI generation – top down management

Organizations with traditionalists as CEO are modeled from military

“No News is Good News”

Reluctant to buck the system

# The Traditionalists

## **To work more effectively with Traditionalists...**

Show respect for length of service & experience

Watch your Language

Take your time with technology

Emphasize your loyalty to them & to your company

Serve them and honor them

Thank them for their contribution to our country

# The Baby Boomers

Who are they?

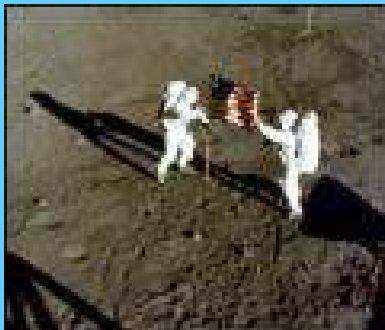
- 42% of workforce
- Grew up prosperous and competitive – “you can do anything” era
- Strong work ethic
- Career came first; family second
  - Many relocations
- Cradle to grave employers
- Cradle to grave employees



# The Baby Boomers

## Historical and influential events:

- 1955 Salk vaccine tested on the public
- 1957 First nuclear power plant
- 1960 First birth control pills introduced
- 1962 Cuban missile crisis
- 1963 Martin Luther King leads march on Washington, D.C.
- 1963 Kennedy assassination
- 1964 Vietnam
- 1968 Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy assassinated
- 1969 Lunar landing



# The Baby Boomers

## Core Values

Hard Work

Team orientation

Social involvement

Fiscally liberal

Consumerism

Personal growth/well being

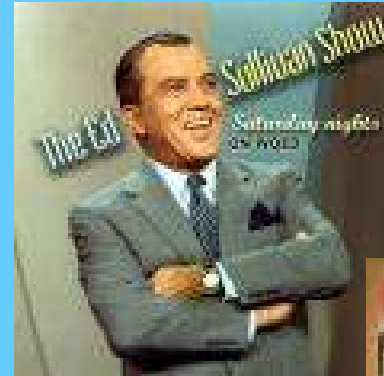
Youth

***Optimistic***

# The Baby Boomers

## Cultural Memorabilia

The Ed Sullivan Show  
Quonset huts  
Fallout shelters  
TV dinners  
The “Laugh-In” TV show  
Elvis  
The peace sign  
The Beatles  
**Yo-yos!**





# The Baby Boomers

## On the Job as Assets:

1. Service oriented
2. Driven – work comes first
3. Willing to go the extra mile
4. Good at relationships
5. Want to please
6. Good team player

## On the Job challenges:

1. Not naturally “budget minded” - not into detail
2. Uncomfortable with conflict
3. Inclined to put process ahead of results
4. Judgmental of those who see things differently
5. Self-centered
6. Struggle with “social similarity”

# The Baby Boomers

## Leadership Style: Consensus Management

They want everyone to have a voice, however they struggle working with other generations

Social similarity

Demand a politically correct working environment

Annual performance reviews expected

They are used to a “pay your dues” culture

# Tips to Improve Your Relationships with Baby Boomers

Choose face-to-face conversation whenever possible

Ask for their advice and take notes to show listening

Respect and honor them for paying their dues

Value the business atmosphere and the relationships  
formed there

# The Gen Xers

Who are they?

- Techno savvy
- Lived through profound economic changes
- 29% of workforce
- Are not cradle to grave employees
- Regularly change jobs



# The Gen Xers



## Historical and influential events:

- 1970 Women's liberation protests and demonstrations.
- 1973 **Watergate scandal**
- 1976 Tandy and Apple market PCs
- 1979 **U.S. corporations begin massive layoffs**
- 1987 Stock market plummets
- 1991 Operation Desert Storm



# The Gen Xers

## Core Values

Diversity

Thinking globally

Work/Life Balance

Techno-literacy

Fun

Informality

Self-reliance

***Skeptical***

# The Gen Xers

## Cultural Memorabilia

The Brady Bunch

Pet Rocks

The Simpsons

ET

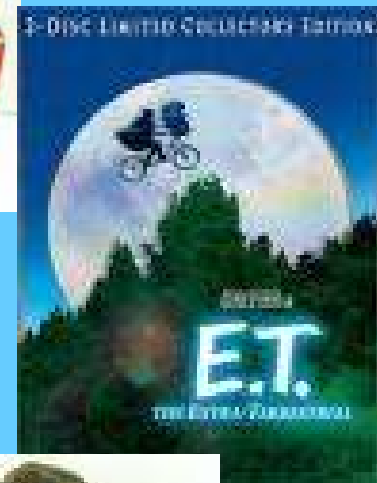
Cabbage Patch dolls

Little House on the Prairie

The “Fonz”

Rubik’s Cube

**Yo-yos!**



# The Gen Xers

## On the Job as Assets:

1. Adaptable
2. Techno-literate
3. Independent
4. Not intimidated by authority
5. Creative

## On the Job challenges:

1. Impatient
2. Poor people skills
3. Inexperienced
4. Cynical



# The Gen Xers

## Leadership Style: Lead by Competence

Prefer to Lead by experience

Want to hear the good news & the bad news

We must earn their respect, not the opposite

Interviewing is a two way street

- They are also interviewing you to check competence and leadership.

# Tips to Improve Your Relationship with Generation Xers

Stop micromanaging them

Support work-life balance initiatives

When delegating, describe the outcomes, but leave the processes to the Xer

Value their need to keep learning in order to maintain marketability

Trust their technological literacy

Mentor them and ask for opinions. Talk with, not at, them

# The Millennials

Who are they?

- 22% of workforce
- Experts in global communications
- High speed stimulus junkies
- Becoming politically savvy



# The Millennials

Historical & Influential events

Child Focus

Rise of the Internet

Busy-stress filled lives

1995 Oklahoma City Bombing

1995 Clinton-Lewinsky Scandal

1999 Columbine HS Shooting

2000 Dot Com Bubble Burst

2001 9/11



# The Millennials

## Core Values

Optimism

Civic duty

Confidence

Sociability

Morality

Globally Inclusive

***Hopeful***

***More similar to baby boomers***

***Bold & determined like Traditionalists***

# The Millennials

## Cultural Memorabilia

1. Barney
2. Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
3. Beanie Babies
4. Oprah and Ellen
5. The X Games
6. **Yo-yos!**



# The Millennials

## On the Job Assets:

1. Collective action
2. Optimism
3. Tenacity
4. Heroic spirit
5. Multitasking capabilities
6. Technological savvy

## On the Job challenges:

1. Need for supervision and structure
2. Inexperience, particularly with handling difficult people issues
3. Need for lots of feedback & affirmation
4. Unrealistic perspective on career paths

# The Millennials

Leadership Style:

Collaborative Leadership

They pull together & are polite with authority

They value inter-generational goodwill on the job

Personal safety in the workplace is also a major concern



# The Millennials

## To Work better with Millennials

Remember that they feel really good about themselves!

Involve them in your decisions

Emphasize the positive of doing right

Mentor them and be realistic

Remember that patience is not their virtue!

Be prepared to offer flexible scheduling

# A Comparison of Perspectives

As seen through each generation:

	Traditionalists	Boomers	Gen Xers	Millennials
Outlook	Practical	Optimistic	Skeptical	Hopeful
Work Ethic	Dedicated	Driven	Balanced	Determined
View of Authority	Respectful	Love/Hate	Unimpressed	Polite
Leadership	Hierarchy	Consensus	Competence	Collaboration
Relationships	Sacrifice	Gratification	Slow to Commit	Inclusive
Turnoffs	Vulgarity	Political Correctness	Cliché, Hype	Promiscuity

Did anyone notice the one Cultural Memorabilia item common to all four generations?

***The Yo-yo!***

# In Conclusion

Effective relationship building and self management are the two most important skills for your success in business

Applying your understanding of the Four Generations will accelerate your impact with team members, clients, and prospects

# Thank You!



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