

Bridging Generational Differences in the Workplace

Strategies for Managing Generations

| GENERATION | STRATEGIES |
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| Silent <i>"Pay your dues"</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge their experience, expertise and education • Pay attention to the chain of command • Speak positively of your company's history and legacy • Express interest in the work (projects, processes, products, results) • Seek insights they have gained from the years • Use them as a resource when you have questions • Acknowledge their respect for rules and hierarchy |
| Boomer <i>"Anything is possible"</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge their experience, expertise and education • Find a communications balance between email, voicemail and face to face meetings • Seek their help with workplace politics • Use them to navigate politically charged environments • Use them as a sounding board to test ideas • Ask multiple questions about what has worked/not worked in past |
| Generation X <i>"Work life balance"</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge their experience/expertise/you can learn from them • Be clear and direct in your language – avoid corporate jargon • Find a communications balance – save meetings for issues that really require face to face communication • Honor the need for work-life balance • Encourage a friendly, open, and informal work environment |
| Millennials <i>"Technology rules"</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge their experience/expertise/you can learn from them • Be open to new and different ways of working • Encourage and embrace new technology • Create opportunities to involve them in projects of significance • Show respect by asking for their opinion or help • Offer to be or find a mentor • Speak directly and quickly, avoid lengthy explanations • Foster a fun and fast paced work environment • Give frequent and timely feedback |
| Generation Z <i>"You do you"</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge their experience/expertise/you can learn from them • Provide supportive leadership • Facilitate opportunities to build positive relationships at work • Allow flexibility in scheduling when possible • Be prepared for them to push back • Give them a chance to learn real skills • Assign roles & responsibilities that are meaningful to them • Coach them to find opportunities for promotion • Connect extra pay to going the extra mile • Allow autonomy and creative freedom • Know they aren't ignoring you or work when checking their phone |

Individual Exercise: Real Life Application

Instructions: Think of a situation at work in which you are having a challenge with a generational difference with a colleague. Use the M.E.E.T. approach to plan your conversation with this person.

| M.E.E.T. | WHAT I WILL THINK AND SAY |
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| Make Time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess & prepare: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description of problem Consequences to avoid What you want (start/stop) Generational dynamics & strategies Communicate need to M.E.E.T. Time & place Courteous & considerate tone | My assessment: What I will say: |
| Explore Differences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> State <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Problem (30 seconds) Facts Consequences What you want & why Ask to hear their side Use “<i>also/and</i>” to incorporate their side | What I will say: |
| Encourage Respect <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show respect in the way <i>they</i> want it X` Make communication descriptive, with regard, connected Maintain present and future focus vs. rehashing the past | I can show my employee I respect them by: |
| Take Responsibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> State what you need State willingness to help your employees get what they need Reach agreement End on a positive note | What I will say: |