

# SURVIVING & THRIVING IN A MULTI-GENERATIONAL WORKPLACE

# Challenges of a Multi-Generational Workplace

- ❑ Managers/Supervisors have never had to manage such a wide range of ages/generational groups
- ❑ Adjusting to the change of promotions based on merit vs seniority
- ❑ Although generation gaps are as old as history, never has there been such differing attitudes
- ❑ Getting employees to see past their biases and learn to work together towards a common goal

If you can name these artists,  
you might be a Traditionalist



**Gene Autry**



**Bing Crosby**



**Fred Astaire**



**Billie Holiday**



**The Andrews Sisters**

If you can name these artists,  
you might be a Baby Boomer



**Elvis Presley**



**Nat King Cole**



**Patsy Cline**



**Chuck Berry**



**Pat Boone**

# If you can name these artists, you might be from Generation X



Led Zeppelin



Marvin Gaye



The Bee Gees



Fleetwood Mac



Aretha Franklin

If you can name these artists,  
you might be from Generation Y



**Destiny's Child**



**Backstreet Boys**



**98 Degrees**

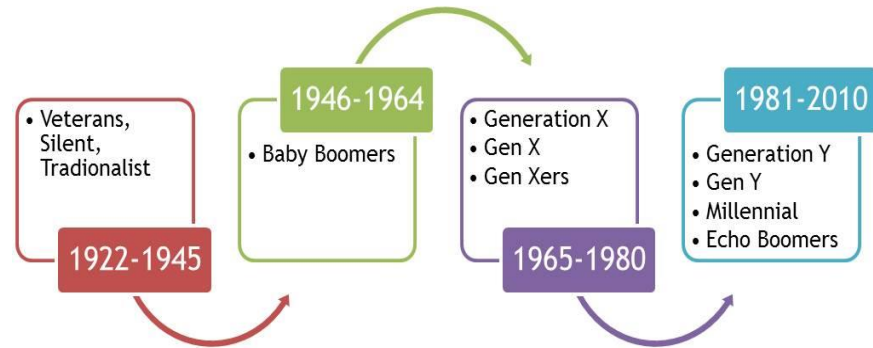


**Britney Spears**

**Brandy**



# Who are the current Generations?



“Generational profiles are generalized looks at a population of the same age cohort, and they’re helpful in understanding groups from a very broad perspective. Each cohort came of age during a particular period in our cultural history – they shared major societal events and cultural mores – and that shared societal background shapes their attitudes, behaviors and worldview.”

(<http://www.forbes.com/sites/marymeehan/>)

# What will we call this next Generation?

iGen?

Gen Z?

Generation Wii?

Net Gen?

Gen We?

Selfies?

Evernets?

20Firsters?

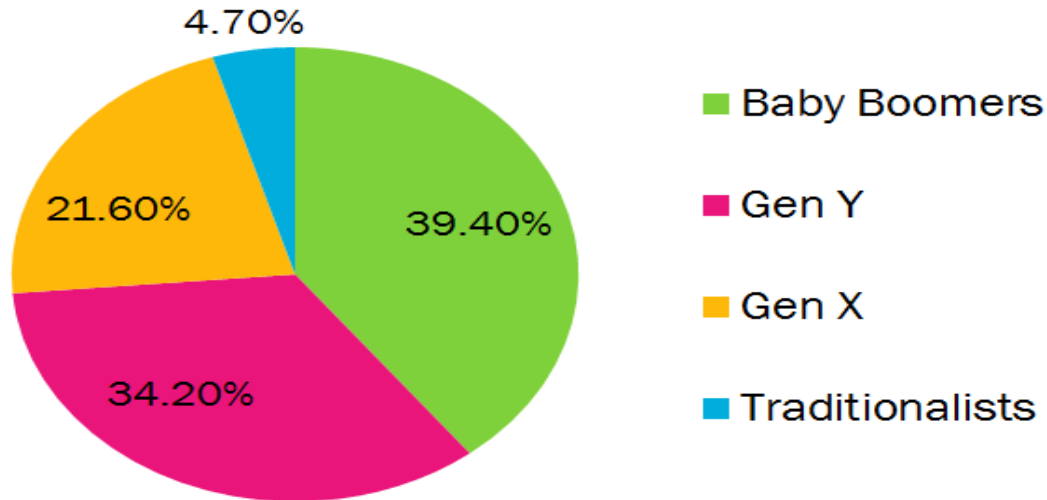
This generation has not lived long enough for us to get a picture of what will define them. They will, however, be our most diverse cohort ever.





# Where are we at now?

Workforce Population, from US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2011

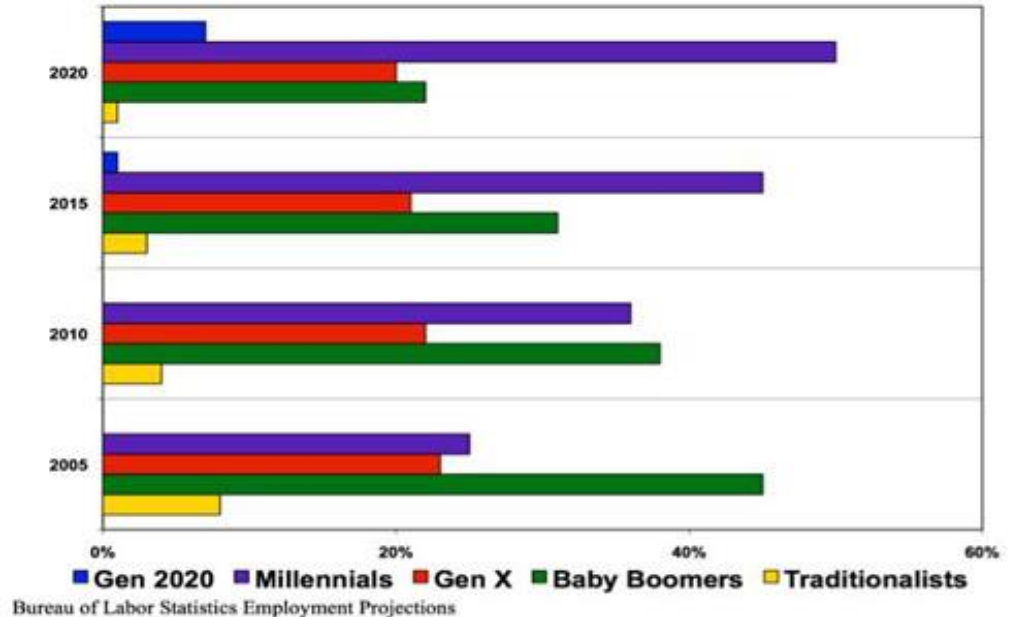


\*In less than 5 years Millennials will account for nearly half the employees in the world.

# Preparing for the future

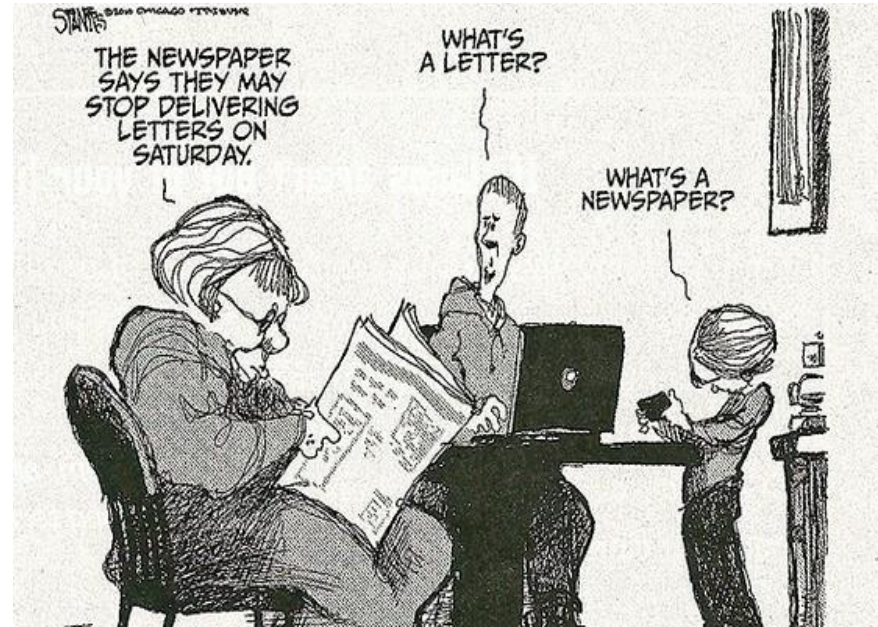
For the first time in history we will soon have 5 generations in the workplace at one time.

Five Generations in the Workplace



# Why is this significant?

- ❑ Different workplace behaviors
- ❑ Different motivators
- ❑ Different employee engagement preferences
- ❑ Different tools & strategies for interacting



# We're not just different at work...

## Personal and Lifestyle Characteristics by Generation

	Veterans (1922–1945)	Baby Boomers (1946–1964)	Generation X (1965–1980)	Generation Y (1981–2000)
<b>Core Values</b>	Respect for authority Conformers Discipline	Optimism Involvement	Skepticism Fun Informality	Realism Confidence Extreme fun Social
<b>Family</b>	Traditional Nuclear	Disintegrating	Latch-key kids	Merged families
<b>Education</b>	A dream	A birthright	A way to get there	An incredible expense
<b>Communication Media</b>	Rotary phones One-on-one Write a memo	Touch-tone phones Call me anytime	Cell phones Call me only at work	Internet Picture phones E-mail
<b>Dealing with Money</b>	Put it away Pay cash	Buy now, pay later	Cautions Conservative Save, save, save	Earn to spend



Source: FDU Magazine Online, Winter/Spring 2005

# Generational Opinions

In a 2013 Ernst & Young study of 1,200 professionals across ages/industries...

“Tech-Savvy”

78% for Millennials  
18% for Gen X'ers  
4% for Boomers.

“Cost-Effectiveness”

59% for Boomers  
34% for Gen X'ers  
7% for Millennials.

For these generations to work together effectively and harmoniously, business culture must change.

# Something important to remember!!!



- We are all individuals.  
These generational cohorts represent overall trends, or stereotypes, not specific situations or persons.

# Recipe for a Traditionalist

- ❑ Impacted by World War II and the Great Depression
- ❑ Witnessed the birth of rock 'n' roll
- ❑ First presidential election was a landslide win for Republican Dwight Eisenhower (1952)
- ❑ The African-American civil rights movement
- ❑ The assassination of President John F. Kennedy (1963)

# The Traditionalist

- Value hard work, respect for authority, sacrifice and duty
- Adhere to rules and generally conforms easily
- Keep family and work life separate
- See work as an obligation, not always fun
- See themselves as loyal, patriotic, and responsible



# Working with a Traditionalist

- ❑ Prefer 1-on-1, face-to-face conversations
- ❑ Grew up on rotary phones and paper letters
- ❑ Believes in hierarchy & the chain of command
- ❑ Believes no news is good news – doesn't actively seek feedback
- ❑ Motivated by comments like “your experience is respected”

# Recipe for a Baby Boomer

- ❑ Impacted by the Vietnam War and Neil Armstrong walking on the moon
- ❑ Participated in the original Woodstock Music Festival (1969)
- ❑ Helped launch the environmental movement (the original “green”)
- ❑ First presidential election was when Republican Richard Nixon won, followed soon by his resignation after the Watergate scandal
- ❑ The first generation to grow up with the television through the The Brady Bunch, Gilligan's Island, The Twilight Zone, The Ed Sullivan Show, and Happy Days

# The Baby Boomer

- Value team work, quality, and efficiency, yet question authority
- See work as an exciting adventure
- Desire money, titles, and recognition
- Known for individuality, aspiration, and idealism
- Fought to make the world more “just and fair”

# Working with a Baby Boomer

- ❑ Likes to be part of a team and loves to have meetings
- ❑ Prefers in-person communication, but doesn't appreciate feedback
- ❑ Motivated by comments like “you are valued and needed”
- ❑ Grew up with touch-tone phones and have a “call me anytime” attitude

# Recipe for a Gen X'er

- ❑ Sometimes feel ignored as the "in-between" or "lost" generation
- ❑ The first generation with dual-income families and an increasing divorce rate among Baby Boomer parents
- ❑ Saw the end of the Cold War, the fall of communism, and the dismantling of the Berlin Wall
- ❑ The rise of MTV and the birth of the Internet made them technologically savvy and entrepreneurial in spirit
- ❑ First election was when Republican Ronald Reagan won in 1984
- ❑ Witnessed the end of apartheid in South Africa and the sale of the first Apple Macintosh computers in 1984

# The Gen X'er

- Value getting the job done, self-reliance, structure and direction, yet are skeptical
- Work is seen as a difficult challenge to master
- Freedom is the best reward
- First generation of latch-key kids (little supervision)
- Known for their independence, authenticity, thrift and balanced outlook on life

# Working with a Gen X'er

- ❑ Independent thinkers who can take a more entrepreneurial approach
- ❑ Communicates in a direct/immediate manner and will ask for feedback
- ❑ Motivated by comments like “do it your way and don’t get hung up with the rules”
- ❑ Grew up with cell phones, but value privacy during personal time

# Recipe for a Millennial

- ❑ Grew up in an environment of unrest and security in post-9/11 world
- ❑ Issues with commitment – dating vs. marriage, renting vs. owning, etc...
- ❑ Referred to as "digital natives" and are often the first consumers of the newest technologies and gadgets
- ❑ First election was when Republican George W. Bush took office after a down-to-the-wire battle with Democratic Vice President Al Gore (hanging chads!!!)
- ❑ The hardest hit by the economic downturn, but are still upbeat and optimistic about the future
- ❑ Have been told they are "great" at everything (trophy for participation)



# The Millennial

- ❑ Value multi-tasking, tenacity, entrepreneurship and setting goals (what's next!)
- ❑ See work as a fulfilling means to an end
- ❑ Collaborative, participatory, socially responsible & tolerant
- ❑ Motivated by working with other bright, creative people
- ❑ Attention span can be short and sometimes drifts

# Working with a Millennial

- ❑ Communicates primarily through email, voicemail and texting...not face-to-face
- ❑ Loves to engage with others in all formats
- ❑ Wants frequent feedback
- ❑ Grew up with the Internet, smart phones and email
- ❑ Motivated by consistent praise

# Strategies for Bridging the Generation Gap

Beth Miller – Leadership Development Advisor, Speaker, Executive Coach

- ❑ Create diverse teams – opportunities for harmonious collaboration
- ❑ Keep employees connected and engaged – employees from all generations want to know their work is valuable
- ❑ Create mentoring opportunities – partnering younger workers with more experienced workers
- ❑ Look beyond experience & skills sets – skills can be learned, attitude cannot
- ❑ Deal with conflict productively – conflict is guaranteed, but can lead to greater collaboration

# Questions?

**Traditionalist**

**Baby Boomer**

**Millennial**

**Gen X'er**



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