

# Bridging the Generation Gap in the Workplace

Presented By:

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# Today, We' ll Cover....

- The Five Workplace Generations and Their Influences Growing Up
- Best Practices Across Generations for:
  - Communication and Conflict Management
  - Rewards and Recognition
  - Professional Development
- Younger Supervisors Working with Older Direct Reports and Vice Versa

# By Way of Introduction



Let's Play Generations  
BINGO

# Generations in the U.S. Today

- Radio Babies
  - 1930 – 1945 (70 – 85 years old)
- Baby Boomers
  - 1946 – 1964 (51 – 69 years old)
- Generation X
  - 1965 – 1976 (39 – 50 years old)
- Generation Y
  - 1977 – 1990 (25 – 38 years old)
- Millennials
  - 1991 and later (24 or younger)

**Let's Have a Little Competition!**



Generations Jeopardy

# Radio Babies

- Born Between 1930 – 1945
- Many Appreciate Tradition and Loyalty
- Tend to be Thrifty and Cost Conscious
- Mantra: “You Get a Job...You Keep a Job”



# Baby Boomers

- Born Between 1946 – 1964
- 77 Million Strong!
- Grew Up During Times of Societal Change
- Mantra: “Work Hard...Pay Your Dues”



# Generation X

- Born Between 1965 – 1976
- Named by a Canadian Novelist
- More Likely to be Children of Divorce
- Became Disenchanted as Parents Were Downsized
- Grew Up with Technology
- Mantra: “Tell Me What You Want and Get Out of My Way”



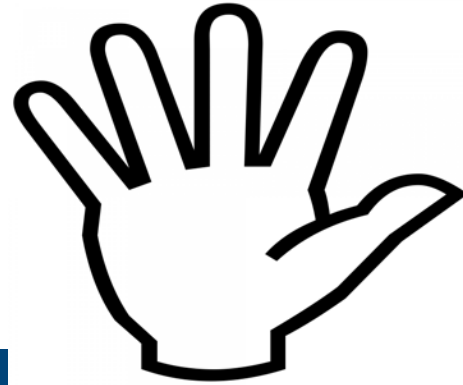


# Generation Y



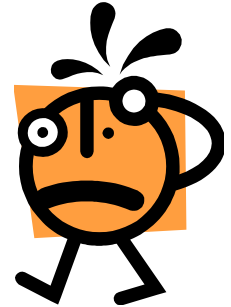
- Born Between 1977 – 1991
- Relate Most to Radio Babies
- Street Smart and Savvy
- Goal Oriented (Towards *Their* Goals)
- Respect Accomplishments Rather than Authority
- Mantra: “Why do we have to do this your way?!”

# Millennials



- Born 1992 or later
- Live a fast-paced, hectic lifestyle
- Close to their parents and family members
- Technology is a part of life; new name for this age group is “Linkers”
- Do not handle conflict well
- Mantra: “I’ m wonderful...accept it.”

# Discussion Question



What are Your Biggest Challenges in Working Across Generations?

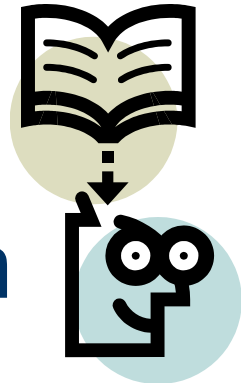
# Challenges Across the Country

- Workforce is getting older faster than it can be replaced
- In 2008, the median age of the U.S. worker was 41
- Exodus of older workers creates a leadership deficit
- Simply not enough Gen Xers to fill the need: two people leave for each person entering the workforce
- Generation Y and Millennials are entering in droves – however; they need skills and experience



What?  
Me worry?

# Critical Issues Uncovered in Research\*



Different Work Ethics  
Varying Communication Styles  
Younger Bosses with Older  
Workers and Older Bosses with  
Younger Workers



\*Bridging the Generation Gap, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, Gravett and Throckmorton, Planned Release in late 2015

# Poll



One reason why Radio Babies and Gen Yers “connect” is because they are both:

- Competitive
- Security-minded
- Informal
- Assertive



# Poll

One of the values most associated with Generation X is that they:

- Respect authority
- Like to have fun at work
- Encourage teamwork
- Exert independence



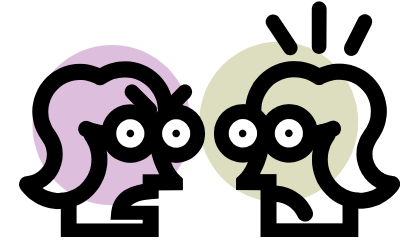
# Myths and Truths

**Myth:** Boomers are not capable of learning technology.

**Truth:** Many Boomers grew up with technology, believe in its value and learn new technology every day.



# Myths and Truths



**Myth:** Gen Xers are just complainers.

**Truth:** Xers are concerned about the state of the world and the state of the planet.

# It's Your Turn



Scenario Discussion

# Responses to Conflict\*



- Radio Babies
  - Are not prone to confront authority
- Baby Boomers
  - Prefer to obtain team consensus
- Gen Xers
  - Tend to be straightforward and tell it like it is
- Gen Yers
  - Want to understand the reasoning behind misunderstandings
- Millennials
  - Often don't cope well with conflict; need coaching

\*Gravett research for 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed., Bridging the Generation Gap

# Communication Pointers Across Generations

Generation	Preferred Style	Message that Grabs Attention
Radio Babies	Face to Face	Show appreciation for knowledge
Boomers	Meetings, in Person or by Phone	Ask how to improve processes
Gen Xers	Email; virtual meeting	Tell me the results you want and get out of my way
Gen Yers	Email, IM or Text	What's efficient and clever?
Millennials	Text	Recognition; praise

## Younger Supervisors with Older Direct Reports

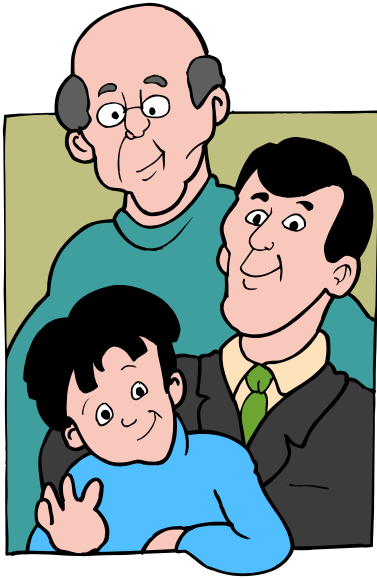
- Engage in Active Listening
- Utilize Experiences and Expertise
- Establish an Individual Development Plan
- Provide Opportunities for Team Involvement

# Older Supervisors Working with Younger Direct Reports

- Provide frequent constructive feedback
- Encourage creativity and big-picture thinking
- Set expectations with options for fulfilling the expectations
- Provide up-to-date technology resources

# RETENTION OF ALL GENERATIONS

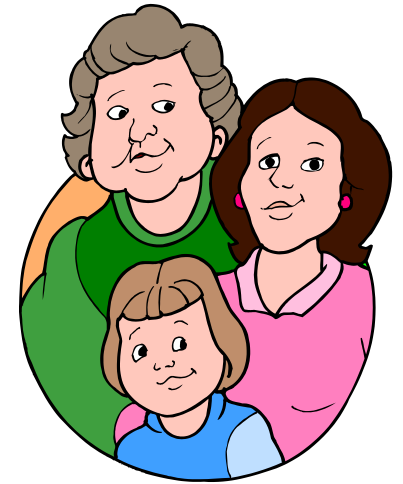
Foster a Sense of Family



Invest in Training and Mentoring

Provide Lateral Moves

Create a Culture of Exclusivity





# For Additional Resources

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# Question and Answer Time

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