



# Generational Teambuilding

- Now 4 Generations in the workplace
- Events and conditions each of us experience during our formative years help define who we are and how we view the world.
- Each Generation has different value systems – *Values drive behavior.*
- We need to understand each other so we can value what each generation brings to the team.
- In 10 years, 40% of current workforce will retired.

# 4 Generations

- Builders: 60 + years old
- Boomers: 45 – 60 years old
- Gen X: 30 - 45 years old
- Gen Y: Under 30 years old

People at beginning and end of a generation will be a blend of both generations.



# Builders 60+

## Formed By:

Parents from Depression and  
WWI

Many are Veterans

WWII, Korea

The Silent Generation

The Greatest Generation

Big Band Era, Jazz

## Characteristics:

Hard workers

Savers

Patriotic

Loyal to institutions

Private

Dependable

Mechanically savvy



# Builders

## **Value:**

Dedication/sacrifice

Hard work

Conformity

Law & Order

Respect for Authority

Patience

Delayed gratification

Duty before pleasure

Adherence to Rules

Honor



# Builders

May not be excited about change.

May not feel effected by change - "out of here!"

May see technology as a nuisance.



# Boomers 45-60

28% of pop, 40% of Workforce

**Formed by:**

Formed by Post WWII parents  
/Builders

First Generation with TV

Viet Nam, Civil Unrest

Inflation & Corporate  
Downsizing

Womens Liberation

Watergate, Woodstock,  
Hippies, Free sex & drugs,  
Flower power, hotpants,  
anti-establishment politics,  
environmental protection,  
groups, civil rights  
movement

**Characteristics:**

Educated

Hard Workers

Desire quality

Independent

Cause oriented

Fitness conscious

Question authority

Groomed to explore inner  
world

Built the first computers,  
networks and wireless  
devices



# Boomers

## Value:

Optimism

Team orientation

Personal Gratification

(Keeping up with the Joneses)

Personal Growth (Me Generation)

Health and wellness

Youth

Hard Work

Involvement

# Boomers

May be Work-a-Holics

Taught that TIME in the workplace is important – early to work, stay late at work

May seek status and sacrifice family for advancement

May over-value material possessions

May seem rebellious – challenging company to suit their needs.

Boomers are morphing - values are changing – now valuing work-life balance

# Generation X, 30-45

Smallest Gen, only 16% of Pop,  
sandwiched between 2 Giant  
Generations

## Formed By:

Were Latchkey kids, Saw Boomer  
parents laid off,

Divorce rate skyrockets,

Watergate, Public Heroes  
debunked,

Fast food, War on Drugs, Aids,  
Space shuttles, human  
genome research, falling of  
Berlin Wall, 1<sup>st</sup> Woman  
Supreme Court Justice –  
Harvested benefits of  
Womens Liberation.

First to be shaped by Mass Media

## Characteristics:

Neglected by parents

Loyal to a few relationships

Serious about life

Stressed out,

Cynical & Skeptical, Bart Simpson

Self-reliant

Highly spiritual

Survivors

Technically savvy – Developed  
today's leading edge  
technologies.

The only generation that *demand*s  
work/life balance.

# Generation X, 30-45

## Values:

Not institutional loyalty, but earned loyalty - a few people, or “transactional loyalty” – I’ll be loyal when it’s mutual.

Self Reliance

Work Life Balance a MUST

Diversity

Relationships - People over corporate product.

Thinking globally

Techno-literacy

Environment

Fun, Informality, Practicality

# Generation X

- May want to work hard and be paid well now and not defer gratification like previous generations.
- May believe treating people with respect is more important than cranking out a product.
- May value Corporate Goals as lower priority than Individuals' Goals.
- May not have loyalty to organizations, only a few people or transactional loyalty.
- May be skeptical and cynical - Bart Simpson.



# Generation Y – Under 30

25% of population

## Formed by:

Parents who were aware they didn't want them to be Latchkey kids

Computer/Net/Cell Age – instant info – Electronic Age

First Generation to do Homework on a computer,

First kids to carry own cell phones, download music to ipods, do shopping online.

Wars in Middle East, 9/11, Booming Economy, Diversity, Casual dress codes, Ritalin, NAFTA, reality TV, Distance Ed

## Characteristics:

Lowest parent/child ratio in US history.

Cherished – *Decade of the Child*

Groomed to achieve

Entrepreneurial – flexible

Mediavores & Techno-savvy

Extreme fun

Law abiding, socially conscious

Most educated-minded

New Confidence & self esteem

Upbeat and Optimistic

Volunteerism

Compartmentalize Work & Life,

Want to know co-workers personally.



# Generation Y – Under 30

## **Value:**

Optimism

Civic Duty

Confidence, Achievement

Sociability, Morality

Street Smarts

Diversity (most diverse Gen)

Balance between materialistic  
and spiritual.

Will work hard

Instant Information

Quick Decisions – Just Do It.

# Generation Y

- May be demanding – may want 20 yrs experience in 2 yrs.
- May not be individualistic thinkers or planners – are brought up to be team players.
- May get easily bored, short attention span – Computer Age.
- May want to be held accountable for what they Do at work, not how much time they Spend at work.

# Generational Thoughts

- X&Y act first, evaluate later – they know more than older generations knew at their age. Thrive in speed and chaos. May think about having multiple careers.
  - *May not Actively Listen to Builders & Boomers, missing valuable info.*
- Builders & Boomers – paid their dues, have vast experience & knowledge.
  - *May question how much X&Y know, undervalue their quick decision-making, don't think of them as colleagues and collaborators because assume they're inexperienced.*
  - *May think X&Y are too impatient –quick to throw out tried & true strategies .*
- **Loyalty to Co.** – Builders & Boomers may value; X&Y may not
- **Challenge Authority** – Builders & Boomers may not, X&Y may.
- **Work Life Balance:** Builders & Boomers may do without, X&Y may not do without.

# Generational Thoughts

- Builders may see Boomers as self absorbed & prone to sharing too much info.
- Boomers may see Builders as dictatorial and rigid.
- Y may view X as too cynical and negative.
- X may view Y as too spoiled and self-absorbed.
- X may view Boomers as being too Politic – say right thing to right person.

# What Bonds Generations

**All Generations want:**

**Work-Life Balance** – flexible hours, fewer hours

- Younger Generations – may be less ambitious in traditional terms, less willing to make tradeoffs - family focus – PTO may be more important than money.
- Boomers – want time for hobbies or fitness, care for aging parents, family, start own business.

**Timely, Constructive Feedback**

**Sense of Community with Others**

**Effective Projects and Meetings**

**Use their Talents**

**Enhance their Skills**



# Valuing What Each Brings

Work with your Team:

- At least one thing you value about the other 3 generations  
Builders  
Boomers  
Gen X  
Gen Y  
(Not a test. Look at the people in the group. What do you value about them.)
- What do you want to be valued more for?

# Things Research Says Gens Want to be Valued for

- **Builders:** “Your experience is respected – It’s valuable to hear what’s worked in the past.”
- **Boomers:** “You are valuable & worthy. Your contribution is unique and important to our success.”
- **Xers:** “Let’s explore some options outside the box – your technical expertise and is a big asset.”
- **Y’s:** “You will be collaborating with other bright, creative people – you have really rescued this situation with your commitment.”



# What All Generations Need to Do

Seek balance between

- building on traditional procedures and
- supporting flexibility and creativity  
to effectively blend the generations work ethics.

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- Allow choices
- Openly explore ideas
- Value different points of view
- Encourage active listening
- Share expertise
- Share recognition and appreciation
- Value hard work
- Build in humor and fun into learning.
- Accommodate the needs and values of all generations.