

Multi-Gen Workforce

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Managing A Multi-Generational Workforce – Thoughts & Perspectives

We are now living in a highly complex world that spans four generations. More and more millennials are entering the workforce while the general population is aging. Life expectancy rates are going up with advanced medical care and technological breakthroughs. This will mean a greater diversity in the work place, and the ability to manage these four generations will be key to greater organizational effectiveness. I broadly classify the four generations as follows:



The four generations will have distinct ways in which they view the world, communicate, lead, work, view authority as well as manage Technology. This can be summarized in the chart below:

CHARACTERISTICS OF FOUR GENERATIONS

	Veteran (1922 – 1945)	Baby Boomers (1946-1963)	Gen X (1964-1980)	Gen Y (1981-2000)
Perspective on Work	Long Term Career	Career	Job	Flexibility
Communication	Discrete	Diplomatic	Blunt	Polite
View of Authority	Respectful	Impressed	Unimpressed	Relaxed
Leadership by	Hierarchy	Consensus	Competence	Achievers
Work Ethic	Dedicated	Driven	Balance	Ambitious
Focus	Task	Relationships and Results	Task and Results	Global and Networked
Technology	Adapted	Acquired	Assimilated	Integral
Motivated by	Being valued for experience	Title, Money, Recognition and work life balance	Autonomy Money, Challenging job and independence	Instant rewards and recognition, work groups, high independence and challenging task

Understanding these basic characteristics will help us to coach and manage these four groups in a more effective manner. Finally, some tips on how to coach and mentor them.

1. COACHING AND MANAGING VETERANS

- Provide formal directions
- Tap into their institutional knowledge and industry experience
- Assign them the job of a mentor to share their experiences
- When communicating, try to engage in a one on one discussion and guide them through changes using incremental steps

2. COACHING AND MANAGING BABY BOOMERS

- Provide flexibility and work life balance as this is important to them
- Demonstrate the importance of a strong team and their role
- Involve them in group meetings
- Don't micro manage them

3. COACHING AND MANAGING GEN X

- Present yourself as an information provider and not boss
- Coach and guide them to increase their sense of responsibility
- Allow them to ask “why”
- Provide instantaneous feedback

4. COACHING AND MANAGING GEN Y

- Allow options, including working from home and flex time
- Spend time providing information and guidance
- Communicate with them through technology
- Provide instantaneous feedback

I hope these ideas will give a simple guide in your journey of managing the four generations!