

# Building a Great Team in a Multigenerational Workforce



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WHAT GENERATION AM I?

QUIZ

<https://www.beano.com/posts/what-generation-am-i-quiz> -

# Examples of generational differences



What do you want out of your workplace?  
Write it down



- Generational differences



Jeremy Kingsley - Generational Differences Big Speak Speakers Bureau <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V1q5u9JRR3w>

# Think Diversity

- Different generations bring different expectations and experiences
- So many different perspectives, experiences, values and goals
- However, "generational differences" aren't always the real issue

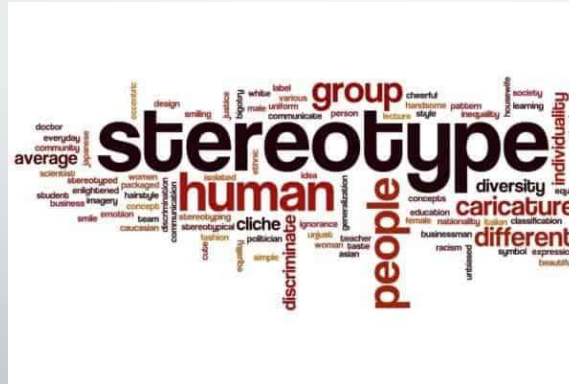
# Intergenerational Conflicts

- Power and clout
- *"A young person who wants more clout wants to be noticed. They have new ideas that aren't being listened to. An older person wants their experience to be recognized and appreciated. Everyone wants to be heard and respected."*  
(Jennifer C. Deal, a senior research scientist at the Center for Creative Leadership in Greensboro, N.C.)

# How to Manage a Multi-Generational Team

- Challenge harmful stereotypes

There is value in educating ourselves in the realities different generations have faced throughout their careers



# How to Manage a Multi-Generational Team

- Communicate preferences openly
- Set an example by helping your team members find ways to clearly communicate with each other
- Switch between methods of communication depending on the goal of the conversation



# How to Manage a Multi-Generational Team

- Focus on **Belonging & Inclusion**
- When every generation has a voice & seat at the table, engagement, productivity & innovation rise.



# Sticking Points

Generational differences tend to emerge around:

- Use of technology
- Communication
- Feedback
- Time management
- Work-life balance
- Organizational structure

Haydn Shaw, author of *Sticking Points: How to Get 4 Generations Working Together in the 12 Places They Come Apart*

<https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/employee-relations/pages/how-to-manage-intergenerational-conflict-in-the-workplace.aspx>

CATEGORY	BUILDERS	BABY BOOMERS	GENERATION X	GENERATION Y	GENERATION Z	GEN ALPHA
<b>Slang terms</b>	 <p>We prefer proper English if you please</p> <p>Born: &lt; 1946 Age: 74+</p>	 <p>Be cool Peace Groovy Way out</p> <p>Born: 1946-1964 Age: 55-73</p>	 <p>Dude Ace Rad As if Wicked</p> <p>Born: 1965-1979 Age: 40-54</p>	 <p>Bling Funky Dah Foshizz Whassup?</p> <p>Born: 1980-1994 Age: 25-39</p>	 <p>lit Fam GOAT Slay Yass queen</p> <p>Born: 1995-2009 Age: 10-24</p>	 <p>lit yeet hunda oof rn idrc</p> <p>Born: 2010-2024 Age: under 10</p>
<b>Social markers</b>	World War II 1939-1945	Moon landing 1969	Stock market crash 1987	September 11 2001	GFC 2008	Trump / Brexit 2016
<b>Iconic cars</b>	 Model T Ford Final, 1927	 Ford Mustang 1964	 Holden Commodore 1978	 Toyota Prius 1997	 Tesla Model S 2012	 Autonomous vehicles 2020s
<b>Iconic toys</b>	 Roller skates	 Frisbee	 Rubix cube	 BMX bike	 Folding scooter	 Fidget spinner
<b>Music devices</b>	 Record player LP, 1948	 Audio cassette 1962	 Walkman 1979	 iPod 2001	 Spotify 2008	 Smart speakers Now
<b>Leadership style</b> L - Leader I - New leaders	 Controlling	 Directing	 Coordinating	 Guiding	 Empowering	 Inspiring
<b>Ideal leader</b>	Commander	Thinker	Doer	Supporter	Collaborator	Co-creator
<b>Learning style</b>	Formal	Structured	Participative	Interactive	Multi-modal	Virtual
<b>Influence/advice</b>	Officials	Experts	Practitioners	Peers	Forums	Chatbots
<b>Marketing</b>	Print (traditional)	Broadcast (mass)	Direct (targeted)	Online (linked)	Digital (social)	In situ (real-time)

# GENERATIONS: Best Work Traits

**BABY BOOMERS**



**Optimistic**  
**Enjoy mentoring**  
**Strong work ethic**

**GENERATION X**



**Independent**  
**Innovative**  
**Strong communicators**

**MILLENNIALS**

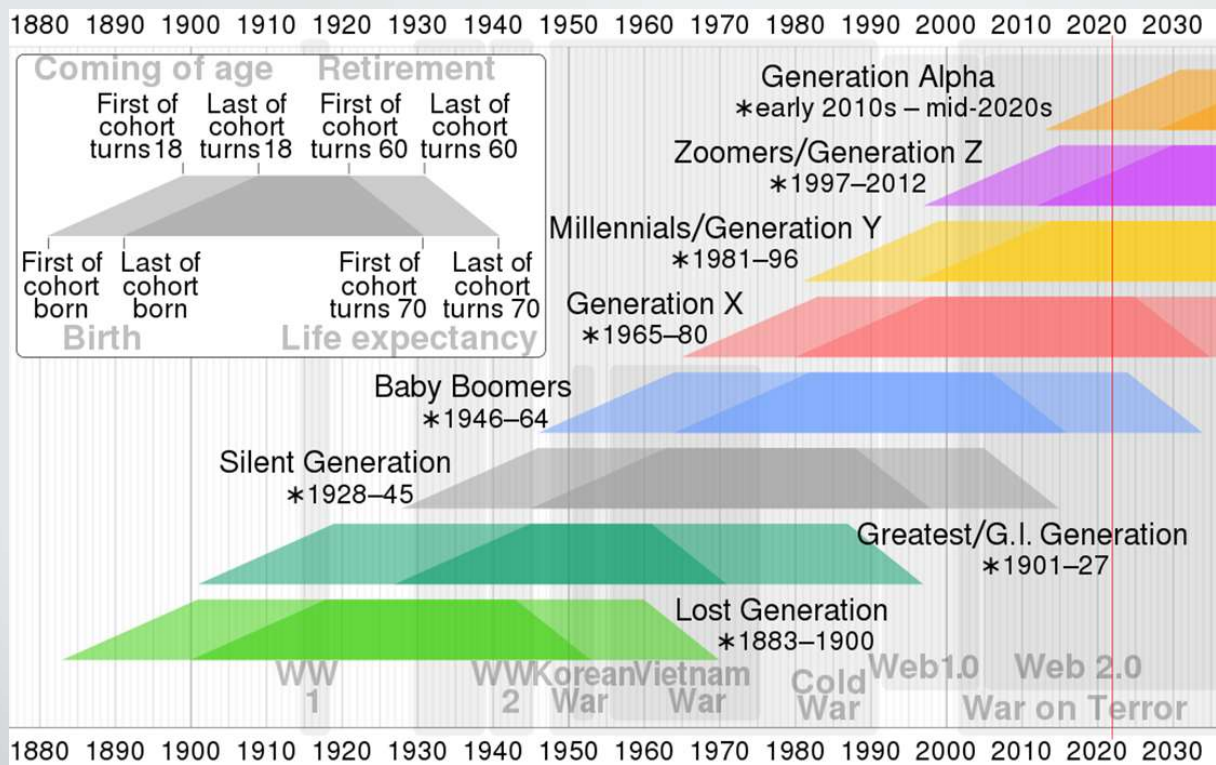


**Tech-savvy**  
**Collaborative**  
**Focused on the greater good**

**GENERATION Z**



**Digitally fluent**  
**Practical**  
**Flourish in diverse workforces**



- Statistical generalizations are an aid to conversation, not a substitute for it. When it comes to understanding another person, nothing replaces conversation

# Gen Z's ideal workplace

## Prioritizing mental health

- 81% left a job for mental health reasons
- Grew up with mental health support in HS, colleges

## Putting values before growth

- Previous generations: building a company was growth at any cost
- Gen Z how do we protect the planet

## Avoiding hierarchies

- Hierarchical structures make it hard to connect
- Hard to connect with higher ups, lost in bureaucracy

## Flexibility

- Pandemic=remote work
- Here to stay

## Autonomy

- Gen Z founders are prioritizing autonomy in their employees

# Shaw's 5 Step Process

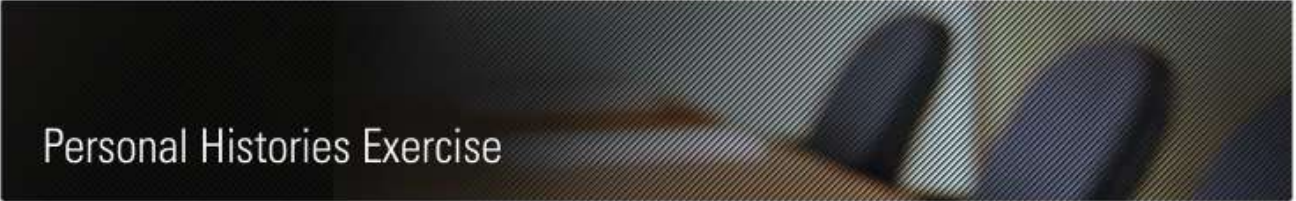
- **Acknowledge.**
  - Talk about generational differences. "You can't solve a problem if you don't acknowledge it exists."
- **Appreciate.**
  - Focus on the "**why**," not the "what," and the common needs. "The 'what' divides us. The '**why**' is a uniter."
- **Flex.**
  - Agree on how to accommodate different approaches.
- **Leverage.**
  - Maximize the strengths of each generation. For example, if an organization decides to use the messaging platform Slack as a communication tool, there will inevitably be people who are uncomfortable with a technology they don't recognize or understand. A manager or leader can recruit an older team member who is comfortable and experienced in using this technology to coach, train and mentor the novice Slack users.
- **Resolve.**
  - Determine which option will yield the best results if flexing isn't enough.

# Dismantling Stereotypes

## One Relationship at a Time

- **Develop & Recognize** the unique value of each individual, as well as the synergy that can be created between people with different experiences and perspectives.
- Use **appreciative inquiry** to advance that goal.
  - Appreciative inquiry focuses on strengths rather than weaknesses by recognizing that people with different perspectives and experiences and at different life stages are all able to work collaboratively.
- Promote camaraderie

<https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/employee-relations/pages/how-to-manage-intergenerational-conflict-in-the-workplace.aspx>



## Personal Histories Exercise

This exercise is typically the first small step teams take to start developing trust.

**Purpose:** To improve trust by giving team members an opportunity to demonstrate vulnerability in a low-risk way and to help team members understand one another at a fundamental level so that they can avoid making false attributions about behaviors and intentions.

**Time Required:** 15 — 25 Minutes

**Instructions:** Go around the table and have everyone answer three questions about themselves.

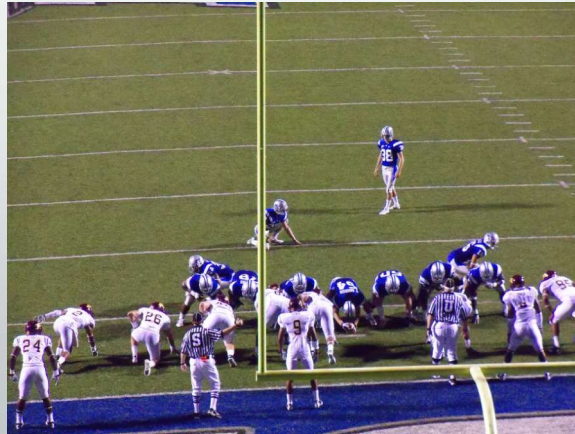
1. Where did you grow up?
2. How many siblings do you have and where do you fall in that order?
3. Please describe a unique or interesting challenge or experience from your childhood.

**Debrief:** Ask team members to share what they learned about one another that they didn't already know. This reinforces the purpose of the exercise and allows for a natural ending to the conversation.

<https://files.tablegroup.com/content/download/personal-histories-exercise>

# Uniting Around a Common Purpose

- What does this company do better, special or different?
- What unites them all is striving toward a **common purpose & set of goals**
- Make sure you are leveraging their strengths & working together as a team



- What are you seeing?
- How are you going to handle it?



