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UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

CREATING A CULTURE OF INCLUSION --
LEVERAGING GENERATIONAL DIVERSITY: At-a-Glance

The best learning is always inter-generational, with the young people alongside the elders and together with the middle generation adults. Bringing people together in these kinds of natural ways, across the whole system brings out the best in human behavior. – Margaret Mead

Linking Generational Diversity and Team Performance – Why Does It Matter?

There are four different generations at work: people moving through time. Generational diversity issues influence interactions with team members. Different values, experiences, work styles, and attitudes of each generation can result in unproductive teams because of conflict, frustration, and misunderstanding. Creating an inclusive work environment aligned with a firm's mission and strategy enables organizational learning and effective change.

By the year 2012, there will be parity in the workplace: 30% Baby Boomers (born approximately 1946-64), 30% Generation X (1965-76), 30% Generation Y (1977-2005). Note: A person's perception of generational identify is important.

Successful organizations need to **chart a change course** for effective diversity management. Effective organizational change requires organizational learning. **Reflective learning** involves rethinking of organizational norms and operating rules and changing its world view. Although more difficult than reactive learning using existing policies and procedures, rethinking obsolete systems moves the organization to a new level.

The ABCs of Building a World Class Staff through Reflective Learning

Assessing and affirming differences	Broadly assess demographics and recognize the human resource management implications of the assessment using the Team Diversity Wheel as a starting point to get a snapshot of your organization. Conduct a culture audit to see if it supports differences so that employees work in an environment where they can reach their fullest potential. Craft a diversity vision that acknowledges the importance of an inclusive work environment and links diversity to the organization's vision.
Building bridges to support generational diversity	Translate assessment data and organizational affirmations into action. Top management team must be fully engaged for diversity management to succeed Human resource management practices and organizational processes must support inclusion (recruitment, retention, rewards, training, mentoring and development) Build and maintain bridges through high-quality connections (HQCs).[1]
Cultivating team capability	Conduct forums to brainstorm how the organization can use diversity to gain competitive advantage. Implement a strategy that includes action plans for investing in diverse human capital and integrating organizational capabilities with human capital to gain competitive advantage.

[1] Jane Dutton. 2003. *Energize Your Workplace.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

How to Leverage Generational Diversity

A generation's identity is a state of mind shaped by Family Life, Gender Roles, Important Institutions, Politics, Religion, Culture, Lifestyle, Views on the Future. Appreciate the best to leverage strengths of each generation.

Baby Boomers (Born Between 1946-1964) Hippies, Yuppies, The Me Generation

Seminal Events	Heroes	Cultural Memorabilia	Work Values, Assets & Challenges
Civil Rights Movement, Vietnam War, Woodstock, Assassinations, Birth Control Pills, Man on the Moon, NOW, Peace Corps	The Kennedy Family, Martin Luther King, Jr.	The Peace Sign, Fallout Shelters, Poodle Skirts, The Ed Sullivan Show, Mod Squad, TV Dinners	"I am the star of the show and let's make the world a better place." Idealists, radicals. Driven, competitive, individualistic, dedicated, equate work with self-worth, Average 6 jobs per career, dual careers, do not plan to retire. Service-oriented, driven, willing to go the extra mile, good at relationships, consensus, want to please. Separation between work and family. Problems with budgets, conflict, sensitive to feedback.

Generation X (1965-1976)

Seminal Events	Heroes	Cultural Memorabilia	Work Values, Assets & Challenges
Watergate Scandal, Personal Computers , Operation Desert Storm, Ronald Reagan, Stock Market Plummets, Energy Crisis, American Hostages, Challenger Disaster, AIDS	None	Cabbage Patch Dolls, The Brady Bunch, Pet Rocks, Dynasty, ET	" I survived the 1970s." Realist. Independent; self-managers; resourceful. Techno-literate, creative, adaptable, rules and the political system do not work, hate to be micro-managed, entrepreneurs, work-life balance is important, average 12 jobs per career Independence (latch-key kids), not intimidated by authority. Impatient, poor people skills, cynical.

Generation Y (1977-2005)

Seminal Events	Heroes	Cultural Memorabilia	Work Values, Assets & Challenges
September 11th, Columbine, Mobile Technology; Family Values, Children of Immigrants, Overscheduled, Tutored and Coached Childhood	Ricky Martin, Venus & Serena Williams, Courtney Love & Kurt Cobain, Reality TV Stars	Barney, Beanie Babies, Video Games, Microwave Popcorn, Pin Numbers	Doted on by their baby-boomer parents. Technologically proficient, flexible. Teamwork, diversity, corporate citizenship, community involvement, fun, optimism, awards for everything, instant feedback, multi-tasking, finding happiness, extended adolescence. Need for supervision, feedback and structure, low service levels.

Leading an Intergenerational staff requires compelling vision, relationship competence, and clear processes.

Key issues:
Create a learning culture

Prepare for the brain drain: retirement of baby boomers (recruitment, revitalization, alternative work arrangements, knowledge transfer).

Rekindle careers of mid-career: build the leadership pipeline, win-win assignments, opportunities for talent flow.

Retain talent of Gen-Y: 3 Rs -- Responsibility, Recognition and Respect. Excellent onboarding, stimulating work environment, teamwork, creativity and innovation.

Practice Generation Gratitude