

# ND County Roads Conference

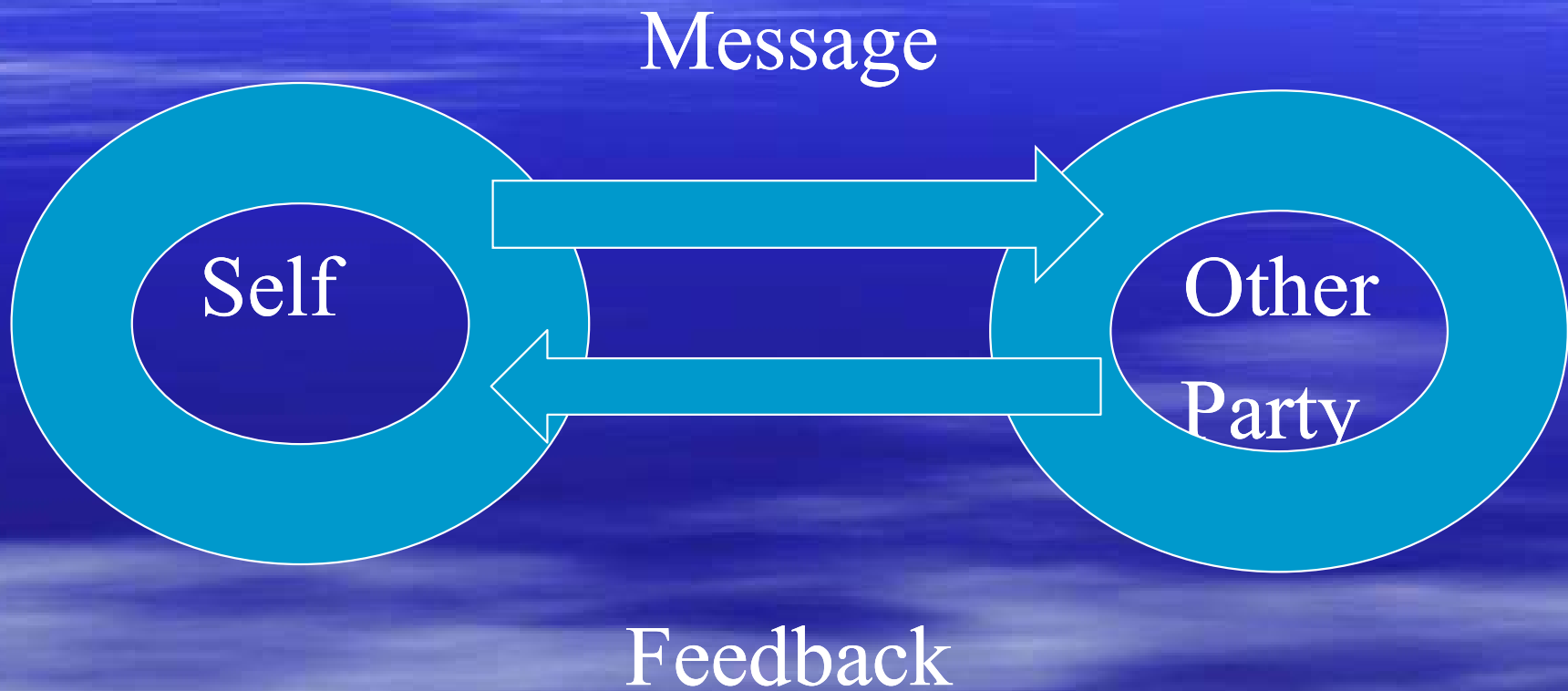
## Generational Communication:

*How to Connect and Communicate*

*in a*

*Multi-Generation Workplace*

# The Communication Model



People who lack strong relationships have two to three times the risk of early death, regardless of whether they smoke, drink alcoholic beverages, or exercise regularly.

**One Out of Four People  
in this Country  
is Mentally Unbalanced.**

**Think of Your Three**

**Closest Friends...**

**If They Seem Okay,**

**Then You're the One.**

It's what you say.

Saying, “*Have a nice day*” to someone sounds friendly.

But saying, “*Enjoy your next 24 hours*” sounds threatening.

It's not just content.  
Context matters, too.



I was trying to buy some organic fruit and asked the guy in produce if their apples had been sprayed with any poisonous chemicals because they were for my wife.

*I should be done with my police interviews soon.*

It's also what you say and how you say it.

**A man and a woman,  
who have never met before,  
find themselves assigned to the same  
sleeping room on a transcontinental train.**

**Though initially embarrassed and uneasy  
sharing a room,  
the two are tired and fall asleep quickly...  
he in the upper bunk  
and she in the lower bunk...**

At 1:00 a.m. the man leans over  
and gently wakes the woman saying,

*“Ma’am, I’m sorry to bother you,  
but would you be willing to reach into the closet  
to get me a second blanket?  
I’m awfully cold.”*

*“I have a better idea,”* she replies. *“Just for tonight, let’s pretend we’re married.”*

*“Wow! That’s a great idea!”* he exclaims.

*“Good,” she replies. “Get your own damn blanket!”*

Self-Regulation could also simply be called “*the ability to bite your tongue.*”

Especially if you are distracted or stressed.



A man and a woman are in a supermarket.

The woman says to the man, “*Hi there.*”

The man responds, “*Do you know me?*”

The woman replies, *“I think you’re the father of one of my kids.”*

He asks, *“Are you the woman I ran into after the North Dakota County Roads Conference, when we drank late into the night, and I woke up in the bean field out by the fairgrounds?”*

*“No,” she replies, “I’m your son’s teacher.”*

**Perception is Powerful**

It may take people as little as 100 milliseconds to form an impression of another person – to decide whether he or she is attractive, trustworthy, competent and likable.

*That's less time than it takes to form a rational thought.*

# Contrasting Perceptions

## Tenant's Perceptions

I always pay rent when she asks for it.

## Landlady's Perceptions

He never pays rent until I ask for it.

# Communicating Across the Generations

Traditionals	1922 – 1943/1946
Baby Boomers	1943/1946 – 1960/1964
Generation Xers	1960/1964 – 1980
Millennials	1980 - 1995/2000
Gen Z	1995 - present

In the United States, by 2030, Millennials and Gen Z will make up 75% of the workforce.



# Communicating Across the Generations

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Generation Xers	1960/1964 – 1980
Millennials	1980 - 1995/2000
Gen Z	1995 – present

*Why do we need to talk about this?*

One evening, a grandson was talking to his grandmother about current events. The grandson asked his grandmother what she thought of about the shootings at schools, the computer age, and just things in general.

Grandma replies... Well, let me think a minute.

I was born before television, penicillin, polio shots, frozen foods, Xerox, contact lenses, Frisbees, and the pill.

There were no credit cards, laser beams, or ball-point pens.

There were no pantyhose, air conditioners, dishwashers, or clothes dryers – the clothes hung out to dry in the fresh air.

Man had not yet walked on the moon.

Your grandfather and I got married first then lived together.

We were before computer-dating, dual careers, day-care centers, and group therapy.

We thought fast food was what people ate during Lent. Pizza Hut, McDonald's, and instant coffee were unheard of.

Having a meaningful relationship meant getting along with your cousins.

Time-sharing meant time the family spent together in the evenings and weekends – not purchasing condominiums.

We never heard of FM radios, tape decks, CDs, electric typewriters, yogurt, or guys wearing earrings.

We listened to Big Bands, Jack Benny, and the President's speeches on our AM radios.

In my day, “grass” was mowed, “coke” was a cold drink, and “pot” was something your mother cooked in.

“Aids” were helpers in the principal’s office, “chip” meant a piece of wood, “hardware” was found in a hardware store, and “software” wasn’t even a word.



How old is this grandma?

How old do you think this grandma is?

Grandma is 78 (born 1946).

# Why Are the Generations so Different?

# Defining Events and Trends

Veterans / Traditionals

Patriotism - Great Depression - WWII

Baby Boomers

Vietnam - Civil Rights - Women's Lib

Generation Xers

Watergate - Single-Parent Homes - MTV - HIV

Millennials / Gen Y

School Violence-Oklahoma City – Multiculturalism

Gen Z / iGen

Digital/Cloud Natives – 2008 Recession – Social Media

# Markings

Traditionals - Coats, ties, nylons, golf clubs, mixed drinks

Boomers - BMWs, Designer everything, whatever is trendy, designer suits – designer bodies

Gen Xers - Nose & naval rings, tattoos, Japanese cars

Millennials – Gen Z – mobile devices, text messaging, smart phones

According to Pew Research, an Indeed study found 78% of Millennial and Gen Z job seekers use mobile to search and apply for jobs.

# So, What's the Big Deal?

Traditionals complain about how the younger generations expect to be given so much so fast without paying their dues.

Boomers complain how they have given years to the organization only to be passed over or laid off in favor of younger employees who are more knowledgeable about technology and cost less money.



Gen Xers complain how tired they are of being treated like lazy slackers and ask why the other generations don't seem to like them.

# I Give 100% at Work!

12% - Monday

23% - Tuesday

40% - Wednesday

20% - Thursday

5% - Friday

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Millennials complain about being put in the same category with Gen Xers and want to be judged on their own merits.

Gen Xers resent Traditionals for being resistant to change and unwilling to handover the reins.

Boomers resent Gen Xers for finding it so easy to change jobs whenever they feel like it and for demanding balance in their lives that the Boomers would never have thought to ask for.

Traditionals resent Millennials for their entitlement mentality when Traditionals had to work for everything they' ve gotten.

Millennials resent Boomers for leaving the planet a mess when they were supposed to be the ones to clean it up.



The EPA was established by President Richard Nixon in 1970. Air pollution is down by 70%. America's polluted waterways has been cut from 2/3 in 1970 to about 1/2 today. The hole in the ozone layer is healing.

A culture that has been shaped by the values, standards, and policies of one generation isn't necessarily going to be compatible with the next generation.

The technological revolution has exacerbated the situation.

And on it goes...Culture clashes among the generations directly affect turnover.

**So, do we have anything in common?**

I went into a coffee shop that didn't have WiFi because they wanted people to actually talk to one another.

*The only thing we talked about was we wished we had WiFi.*

A 101 year-old man graduated from high school  
and is going to college.

What does he have in common with his college  
classmates?

He has exactly the same chance of paying off  
his student loans.

According to the American Student Assistance survey, revealed that 76% of Millennials and Gen Z said that student debt assistance would be a deciding factor to accepting a job.



# Spending Style

Traditionals - Save and pay cash

Boomers - Buy now, pay later –with plastic

Gen Xers - Cautious, conservative

Millennials / Gen Z - Spend their parents'  
money as fast as they can

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In an Eventbrite study, 78% of Millennials and Gen Zers prefer spending money on events and experiences rather than possessions.

# Attitude Toward Authority

Traditionals

Chain of Command

Baby Boomers

Change of Command

Gen Xers

Self-Command

Millennials

Don't Command – Collaborate

Gen Zers

Value Leaders Who are Transparent

According to Gallup, 88% of Millennials and Gen Zers would rather work in a collaborative culture than a competitive one.

# Career Goals

Traditionals

Build a Legacy

Boomers

Build a Stellar Career

Gen Xers

Build a Portable Career

Millennials

Build Parallel Careers

Gen Zers

Lucrative and happy careers

# Rewards

## Traditionals

Satisfaction - job well done.

## Boomers

Money, title, recognition, corner office

## Gen Xers

Freedom is the ultimate reward

## Millennials

Work that has meaning for me

## Gen Zers

Perks that align with their personal lives and values

According to Great Place to Work's research, Millennials and Gen Zers who found “special meaning” in their work were 6X more likely to plan to stay at their workplaces.



# Balance

Traditionals

Support me in shifting the balance

Boomers

Help me balance everyone else and meaning

Gen Xers

Give me balance now, not when I'm 65

Millennials

Work isn't everything - I need flexibility

Gen Zers – Prioritize work-life balance and mental health

A study by Millennial Branding, 45% of Millennials and Gen Z will choose workplace flexibility over pay.

# Changing Jobs

Traditionals

Job changing carries a stigma

Boomers

Job changing puts you behind

Gen Xers

Job changing is necessary

Millennials

Job changing is part of my daily routine

Gen Zers

90% are considering different job changes

According to Forbes, 91% of Millennials and Gen Z expect to stay in a job less than 3 years.

In a study by RecrutiFi found that while 83% of employed Millennials and Gen Z understood that job hopping can look bad on a resume', 86% still said that would not stop them from changing positions.

According to Gallup, 60% of Millennials are open to a new job opportunity right now.

According to Forbes, 90% of Gen Z are open to a new job opportunity right now.

# Feedback

## Traditionals

No news is good news

## Boomers

Feedback once a year with documentation

## Gen Xers

Sorry to interrupt - how am I doing?

## Millennials

Feedback - when I want it - push of a button

Gen Zers - Feedback that's constructive, specific, frequent

# Training

## Traditionals

I learned it the hard way

## Boomers

Train them too much and they' ll leave

## Gen Xers

The more they learn, the longer they stay

## Millennials

Continuous learning is a way of life

## Gen Zers

Mixed media and visually stimulating



# Retirement Personal/Professional Outlook

Traditionals: Reward

Boomers: Retool

Gen Xers: Renew

Millennials: Recycle – Repurpose

Gen Zers: Take breaks and travel now

# Veterans / Traditionals

## Born before 1946

### Core Values

Dedication

Hard work

Respect for authority

Honor

# Veterans / Traditionals

## Born before 1946

### Personality

Like things done on a Grand Scale

Past-oriented and History-absorbed

Believe in Law and Order

# Veterans / Traditionals

## Born before 1946

### On-The-Job

Assets: Stable - Thorough - Loyal - Hardworking

### Liabilities:

Inept with ambiguity and change

Reluctant to buck the system

Uncomfortable with conflict - Reticent

# Veterans / Traditionals

## Born before 1946

Messages that Motivate:

“Your experience is respected here.”

“It’s valuable to the rest of us to hear what has -  
and hasn’t - worked in the past.”

# Veterans / Traditionals

## Born before 1946

Recruiting:

Be open-minded - part-time, projects, consultant,  
mentor, coach

*“I could use your help and experience on this project.”*

Clear enunciation, good grammar, please,  
thank you, avoid profanity

# Veterans / Traditionals

## Born before 1946

### Orienting:

Inform them what to expect, policies, who's who

Share the history of the department and organization

Emphasize long-term goals and their contribution

# Veterans / Traditionals

## Born before 1946

### Opportunities:

Stress long haul, discuss months and years

If your clients are seniors

- you need senior employees

Keep gender roles in mind

- lifestyles men/women different



# Basic Black: Why Do Women Wear It?

1. “It makes me look thinner.”
2. “It’s sexy.”
3. “It’s easy to accessorize.”
4. “It’s the only thing I can afford that looks expensive.”
5. “I’m going to an art opening.”
6. “I live in New York.”
7. “I wish I lived in New York.”
8. “I’m in mourning for my life.”
9. All the above.

# Basic Black: Why Do Men Wear It?

*“I thought it was navy blue.”*

# Veterans / Traditionals

## Born before 1946

Developing:

When training - avoid chance of “losing face”

Older trainers - teach younger - Traditionals’  
language

Use larger text in printed materials

# Veterans / Traditionals

## Born before 1946

Motivating:

Use personal touch - handwritten notes

Traditional perks - visual symbols and plaques

Take photos of them with important visitors/leaders

# Veterans / Traditionals

## Born before 1946

### Mentoring:

Find a coach – respected – experienced

Improve performance – long-term goals

Establish rapport – acknowledge background and experience

# Baby Boomers

## Core Values:

Optimism

Team Orientation

Personal Gratification

Personal Growth

# Baby Boomer?

## Survived the 50' s and 60' s

We had no childproof lids on medicine bottles, doors or cabinets.

We rode our bikes without wearing helmets.

We would ride in cars with no seat belts or air bags.

Riding in the back of a pickup on a warm day was a treat.

# Baby Boomer?

## Survived the 50' s and 60' s

We drank water from the garden hose and not from a bottle.

We fell out of trees, got cut, broke bones and teeth and there were no lawsuits.



# Baby Boomers

## Personality:

Pursued personal gratification - uncompromisingly

Searched their souls repeatedly, obsessively,  
recreationally

Boomers have always been cool

- Boomers still think they' re cool

# Hits of the 60's Revisited

It was fun being a baby boomer – until now.

Some of the artists of the 60's are revising their hits with new lyrics to accommodate baby boomers (again).

# Hits of the 60's Revisited

The Bee Gees –

*How can You Mend a Broken Hip?*

# Hits of the 60' s Revisited

Bobby Darin –

*Splish, Splash, I was having a Flash.*

# Hits of the 60' s Revisited

Ringo Starr –

*I Get By with a Little Help from Depends.*

# Hits of the 60's Revisited

Johnny Nash –

*I Can't See Clearly Now.*

# Hits of the 60's Revisited

Paul Simon –

*Fifty Ways to Lose Your Liver.*

# Hits of the 60's Revisited

The Commodores –

*Once, Twice, Three Times to the Bathroom.*



# Hits of the 60's Revisited

Willie Nelson –

*On the Commode Again.*

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# Baby Boomers

## **Assets:**

Service-oriented, Driven, Team players

## **Liabilities:**

Not budget-minded - process ahead of result

Uncomfortable with conflict

- reluctant to go against peers

Overly sensitive to feedback - self-centered

# Baby Boomers

## **Messages that Motivate:**

“You’re important to our success”

“You are valued here”

“Your contribution is unique and important”

# Baby Boomers

## Recruiting:

Change Agent Challenge:

“You’ re going to come in here and really  
make a difference”

Show them how they can be a STAR

Stress that this is a warm, humane, dynamic place

# Baby Boomers

## **Orienting:**

Discuss the near future

Focus on challenges. Boomers want to solve problems and turn things around

*“We really need your talent here.”*

# Baby Boomers

## **Opportunities:**

Get to know each Boomer as an individual

Boomers put a high value on unique,  
personalized treatment

Show them how they can use this opportunity to  
“Make a Difference”

# Baby Boomers

## **Developing:**

Provide developmental experiences - Gold Stars

Give them projects they can cite

Encourage Boomers to con't. their education  
- books, DVDs, conferences, seminars



# Baby Boomers

## **Motivating:**

Try the Personal Touch

*“I really need YOU to do this for me”*

Give them lots of Public Recognition

Reward their hard work ethic and long hours

# Baby Boomers

## **Mentoring:**

Be nice. Be warm. Respect them.

Ask questions to get to the issues

Don't call a Boomer: "Sir" "Ma'am" "Mr." "Ms"

# Gen Xers

## Core Values:

Techno-literacy

Informality

Self-reliance

# Gen Xers

## **Generational Personality:**

Gen Xers want balance

Approach to authority is casual

Skeptical

# Gen Xers

## **Assets:**

Independent - Not intimidated by authority -  
Creative

## **Liabilities:**

Impatient - Poor People Skills - Inexperienced -  
Cynical

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# Poor People Skills?

## Approach Used to Ask for a Raise

Veteran/Traditional: Monologue about seniority and loyalty

Boomer: Steps 1-20 from a book,  
“How to Land the Raise You Deserve”

## Gen Xers

*“I need it, I deserve it, and if I don't get it,  
I'm out of here.”*



Now a new report shows Millennials and Gen Zers have terrible conversation skills.

*When asked for comment, they texted a series of crying and frowny emoji faces.*

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# Gen Xers

## Messages that Motivate:

*“Do it your way”*

*“There aren't a lot of rules here”*

*“We've got the latest hardware, equipment, software”*

# Gen Xers

## Recruiting:

Say, “*We want you to have a life here.*”

3X during interview

Make it a fun, relaxed place to work

Say, “hands-off supervision” 3X during interview

# Gen Xers

## **Orienting Gen Xers:**

Show organization's intranet

- let them show themselves around

Give them a list of people to call/email if questions

Say, *"We want you to have a life here"* 3X

# Gen Xers

## Opportunities:

Be there - when questions - then back off

Nomads - org chart - sideways-good as moving up

Inform them - training in broad range diverse skills

# Gen Xers

## **Developing:**

Let them multi-task - learning as they are doing

Keep training materials brief and scannable

Use headlines, lists, graphics, bullet points to highlight important information

# Gen Xers

## **Motivating:**

Delegate - support their self-reliance

Give many projects - they prioritize - feel control

Yearning for their absentee parent's attention

Give positive constructive feedback



# Gen Xers

## **Mentoring:**

Coach Xers to take personal responsibility

*“How do you plan to go about solving this?”*

*“How do you think you might best approach this topic in the next staff meeting?”*

# Millennials / Gen Y

## Core Values

Optimism

Confidence

Achievement

Diversity

# Millennials / Gen Y

## **Assets:**

Heroic spirit - Multi-tasking capabilities  
- Techno-savvy

## **Liabilities:**

Need for supervision and structure  
Inexperience - particularly with difficult people

A study by Dell and Intel found, 82% of Millennials and Gen Zers said that they are influenced by an organization's workplace technology when deciding to take a job.

In a Microsoft survey, 93% of Millennials and Gen Zers said technology helps them thrive at work and that having modern and up-to-date technology in the office is important.

# Millennials / Gen Y

## Messages that Motivate:

*“You’ll be working with other bright, creative people.”*

*“You & coworkers-help turn this organization around.”*

*“You can be a hero/heroine here.”*

# Millennials / Gen Y

## Recruiting:

Ask current Millennials why they chose you

Use social media to show positive community impact

# Millennials / Gen Y

## **Orienting:**

Talk about loyalty, making a difference, and the mission  
Inform them that you welcome diversity in the  
organization



# Millennials / Gen Y

## **Opportunities:**

Encourage them to network with all members

Encourage them to participate fully and provide feedback

# Millennials / Gen Y

## **Developing:**

Ask them to share their observations

Welcome their comments and ideas about community involvement

# Millennials / Gen Y

## **Motivating:**

See your Millennials as Rock Stars

Life of the party, seat at the head table, given opportunities to perform

# Millennials / Gen Y

## **Mentoring:**

Be pleasant, understanding, caring, open-minded, and respectful

In a recent survey by Intelligence Group, 79% of Millennials and Gen Zers said they prefer a boss that acts as a coach or mentor.

# Millennials / Gen Y

Establish mentoring programs - youngest  
with oldest

In a FlexJobs survey, 84% of Millennials and Gen Zers cited work-life balance as the number one factor that they consider in a job.

According to Forbes, the #1 reason Millennials leave organizations is the lack of career opportunities.



84% of Millennials voted trustworthiness as their primary leadership concern at work.

*AON – Modern Survey 2017*

# Gen Z / iGen

Self-Aware, Self-Reliant, Innovative, Goal-  
Oriented

Appear to be more pragmatic than Millennials.

# Gen Z / iGen

Some studies show that Z'ers are more cautious, more financially conservative, and more globally connected than Millennials.

# Gen Z / iGen

Concerned about humanity's impact on the environment, human rights, poverty, racial inequality.

Show your organization's social responsibility issues and activities on your web site.

MonsterTRAK.com found that 79% of college students said that the quality of the employer's web site was important in deciding whether or not to apply for the job.

# Gen Z / iGen

With the development of the internet, and as more of the world comes online, Gen Z'ers are more global in their thinking, interactions, and relatability.

# Gen Z / iGen

Gen Z is the most diverse generation

– last generation in the United States that is a Caucasian majority

# Gen Z / iGen

Hooked on their smartphones – peer-to-peer social media – messaging apps – Snapchat, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, Facebook – a full 40% are self-identified digital device addicts.



# Gen Z / iGen

- Gen Z lives in a world of continuous updates
- attention spans might be significantly lower than Millennials
- now measuring at 8 seconds

# Gen Z / iGen

Better multi-taskers – can quickly and efficiently shift between work and play with multiple distractions going on in the background

# Gen Z / iGen

Comfort with web-based research and often self-educates with online sources such as YouTube and Pinterest.

# Gen Z / iGen

Place a priority on how fast they can *find* the right information rather than on whether or not they *know* the right information.

A Stanford study says social media has made Gen Z smarter. They examined essays written by college freshmen over the last hundred years and today the papers were longer, better researched, and more complex.

*But that could be because kids cut and pasted them from Wikipedia.*

# Gen Z / iGen

Baby Boomers are their grandparents rather than their parents, and they think Millennials are old.

# Gen Z / iGen

Seeking work life integration versus work-life balance.

Interested in careers that allow work and life to coexist and often times blend together.

# Trends for Workforce 2020

Tech-Savvy

Socially Conscious

Short Attention Spans

Ambitious

Job Hoppers

Boomerang

Employees



# Success Strategies

Implement and Communicate a Solid Social Media Policy

Replace the Newsletter with an Internal Facebook site or Use Slack

Give Props to Employees on Your External Social Media Pages

# Success Strategies

Incorporate Social into Online Training –  
discussion groups/message boards

# Success Strategies

Prioritize Your People – Consider the Employee Experience in areas of attracting, recruiting, onboarding, training, internal communications, work styles, learning styles with training courses for each employee type and allow 24/7 access for self-directed learning.

# Success Strategies

## Prioritize Training in Soft Skills

Start a Mentorship program – encourage retiring employees to document the ins-and-outs of their jobs, and use this information to create relevant training courses.

# More Success Strategies

Create “snack-size” Courses – break sessions into bite-sized chunks

Incorporate Experiential Learning – engage employees by gamifying your training, keep them engaged by using simulations, anecdotes, case studies, third-party materials, learning management system

# More Success Strategies

Create Three Training Tiers to Keep Them Interested

Immediate – Intermediate - Transitional

# More Success Strategies

Develop “Focused Teams” within the Organization – instead of silo departments, use collaborative teams to solve problems – customer needs, product launches, missions, specific markets

# More Success Strategies

Establish a Command Center or Real-Time Information Network

– house all key resources and project updates so employees can quickly and independently find information they need, even from their mobile devices



# More Success Strategies

## Be Mobile

job openings, descriptions, applications,  
web site

# More Success Strategies

Create a short video to promote your workplace and its meaningful work and how it impacts the customer and the world.

# More Success Strategies

Keep Engagement at your organization high by focusing on meaning, purpose, and passion.

*Our youth now love luxury. They have bad manners, contempt for authority; they show disrespect for their elders and love chatter in place of exercise; they no longer rise when elders enter the room; they contradict their parents, chatter before company; gobble up their food and tyrannize their teachers.*

- *Socrates, Fifth Century B.C.*

In one minute  
I can change my attitude  
and in that minute  
change my entire day.

If I was an actor,  
I would get paid to play a role.  
At work I get paid to play a role.

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**[www.welchlin.com](http://www.welchlin.com)**

**[www.SeminarsOnStress.com](http://www.SeminarsOnStress.com)**

