The Multi-Generational Workforce: Challenge or Opportunity?

Cheryl Skinner, BA, RRT, CPFT
Objectives

• Discuss the four main generational cohorts and the characteristics of each generation.
• Identify personal bias regarding another generation.
• Discuss strategies to effectively work with individuals from different generations.
Activity #1: Generational Self-Discovery

• What do you think is your generational cohort?

• What world events of your youth do you remember?

• What was your favorite movie or television show as a child?

• Describe the healthcare technology and healthcare informatics from your first job.
Generational Cohorts

- Veterans/Silents (1925-1942)
  - Adaptive/Traditional

- Generation X (1961-1981)
  - Self-reliant

- Baby Boomers (1943-1960)
  - Idealist

  - Technologically savvy

Strauss & Howe, 1999
What is the Generational Mix of the KRCS Western Conference??? Let’s See!

- Veterans (1925-1942)
- Baby Boomers (1943-1960)
- Generation X (1961-1981)
Activity #2: Generational Assumptions and Biases

• Personal reflection
• Group Discussion
Things to keep in mind...

• Each generation has its own unique cohort.
  – Set of life experiences that have shaped behavior, values and perceptions of the world.

• Characteristics of generations are “generalizations” and may not reflect each individual in that generation.

• We need to accept, embrace, and try to understand the different generations.

• We need to own our bias regarding different generations.

• Having four generations in the workforce impacts each person and your organization as a whole.
This is what we want to avoid!
Let’s Explore the Four Different Generations...
Veterans (1925-1942)
Veterans/Silent Generation (1925-1942)
Characteristics of Veterans

- 73 million, but gradually dying out
- Hard working
- Learned to do without
- Grew up in time of political and economic uncertainty
- Saved for a “rainy day” - highest rate of any generation
- Traditional values
- Patriotic
- Strong faith in religion and government
- Respectful of authority

- Loyal – work at corporations that offer stability and security
- Use to “military style” of management – move up in the ranks and get rewarded when you earn it
- Detail oriented
- Disciplined, formal learners
- May struggle with technology
- Got information through radio and newspapers
- Cautious with change, but will accept and adapt rather than rebel against it
Grandad, in your day, what did you do when your server was not responding?
Baby Boomers (1943-1960)
Baby Boomers (1943-1960)
Characteristics of Baby Boomers

- Largest cohort...over 80 million...Competitive because of the large number
  - Had to stand out in the crowd
  - Believe hard work is necessary to succeed
- Work-aholics
- Competitive and driven
- Believe they can change the world
- Perceive themselves as younger than their chronological age
- Sensitive to feedback
- Don’t like authority
- Not budget minded
- Seek to please

- Believe in fairness
- Arrive early to work and view overtime as a moral obligation
- Good team players
- Value learning and a caring environment
- Come prepared for meetings
- Some may struggle with technology
- Traditional learners
  - Do not like role playing
- Like to tell stories regarding their experience
JANUARY 2011:
THE FIRST BABY
BOOMERS
TURN 65...

FAR OUT!
THE OLD
UNIFORM
STILL
FITS!

RRHHPP!
HOW TO PANIC A BABY BOOMER

1960's

THERE ARE REPORTS OF BAD ACID.

TODAY

THERE ARE REPORTS OF BAD ASSETS.

Wall Street

ARRRGH! SELL! MY RETIREMENT!
Generation X (1961-1981)
Generation X (1961-1981)
Characteristics of Generation X

- Smallest cohort
- Labeled as unmotivated – “Latch-key kids”
- Self-sufficient and independent!
- Committed to family – seeks work-life balance!
- Resourceful
- Crave stimulation
- Good team players
- Flexible
- Thrive on change and challenges
- Pragmatic – low tolerance for anything irrelevant
- Tolerant of differences
- Direct and to the point
- Value humor

- Like options and choices
- Like efficiency
- Do not always come prepared to meetings
- Have to see the value in doing something
- Informal learners, want the easiest and quickest way to learn – like learning to be fun
- Comfortable with technology
- Do not like to read, like to “do”
- Very visual
- Want to know expectations up front
YOU KIDS TODAY, WITH YOUR "CLOUD COMPUTERS" AND YOUR "GOOGLY DOCS."
IN MY DAY, WE ATTACHED FILES TO OUR EMAILS...
...AND WE LIKED IT THAT WAY.

DAVE, YOU'RE LIKE TWO YEARS OLDER THAN ME.
Millennials (1982-2004)
Characteristics of Generation Y

- First cyber generation!
- Technologically savvy
- Accustomed to having information 24/7
- Extremely diverse
- High achievers
- Optimistic
- Highly stressed to succeed
- Sheltered and protected as children
- Expect everything to be planned for them
- Poor conflict resolution skills
- Socially conscious
- High value on making money
- Strong views
- Close family ties
- Team players – like to work in groups
- Informal learners
- Need lots of stimulation in the learning environment
- Demand immediate feedback
- Impatient
- Have a short attention span
- Prefer hands-on activities versus observation
- Want to know the relevance of doing something
Isn't that nice how the birds are twittering?

It's called "tweeting", grandma.
“No, dude! I’m not the pizza delivery guy!
I’m the new vice president of social media!”
The next generation...
Generation Z (2005 – ??)
HI SWEETIE, HOW WAS SCHOOL TODAY?

YOU CAN READ ALL ABOUT IT ON MY BLOG, DAD.
Do you fit some of one generation and some of another?

• You may be a cusper!
Managing Generation Gaps

GENERATION GAP

DAUGHTER ASKED IF THIS WAS AN INTERCOM.

NO, HONEY. IT’S A GENERATION GAP.
Think about these topics related to communication in the workplace:

- Comfort level with communication devices
- Expectations of use
- Feedback and Coaching
Grandma!
Are you getting a lot done on the grandpa box?

The what?

The people in my generation do our work on our phones and tablets.

I also have a laptop. I'll text the nineties and let them know.
NONE OF THESE EXISTED BEFORE 2000

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<th>YouTube</th>
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Hahn’s Five Strategies

• Accommodate employee differences.
  – Use employees unique characteristics to create a friendly workplace.

• Create workplace choices.
  – Allow employees to have input into decisions.

• Operate a sophisticated management style.
  – Be direct, yet tactful.
  – Include specific goals and expectations.
  – Allow employees the freedom to perform.
  – Give frequent feedback.

• Reference: Hahn, J.A. (2011)
Hahn’s Five Strategies

• Respect competence and initiative.
  – Assume the best from your employees.
  – Set expectations high and hold employees to this.
  – Motivate employees to perform their best.

• Nourish Retention.
  – Provide employees with new work opportunities: lateral moves, promotions, or new projects.
  – Utilize staff skill to their fullest potential.

• Reference: Hahn, J.A. (2011)
Managing Different Generations...

• How do you effectively manage an employee from a different generation?
  – What are the challenges and how do you overcome them?
  – How do you move your low performers up?
  – How do you continue to engage your high performer?
Perceptions of Baby Boomers

**THE GREAT DIVIDE**
WORKPLACE PERCEPTIONS THAT BABY BOOMERS NEED TO RISE ABOVE

**HOW BABY BOOMERS DESCRIBE THEMSELVES**
- Leaders: 40%
- Willing to Learn: 61%
- Tech-Savvy: 22%
- People-Savvy: 78%
- Creative: 42%

**HOW HR PROFESSIONALS DESCRIBE BABY BOOMERS**
- Leaders: 55%
- Willing to Learn: 40%
- Tech-Savvy: 6%
- People-Savvy: 44%
- Creative: 17%

*Source: A Beyond.com survey of 6,361 job seekers and veteran HR professionals, from April 12 – May 9, 2013.*
HOW TO CARE FOR BABYBOOMERS

1. Meet by PHONE or face-to-face
2. Show PERSONAL appreciation
3. TREAT them as EQUALS
4. Be DEMOCRATIC, not bureaucratic
5. SAY: We need YOU
6. Include them
7. Collaboratively define the mission
8. Hear their INPUT
9. Offer FLEXIBLE work schedules
10. Leverage their KNOWLEDGE
   Value TEAMWORK

How to Care for Generation X

1. Communicate by Voicemail or Email
2. Reward with free time, opportunities
3. Support training & growth
4. Give them FREEDOM
5. Think GLOBALLY
6. DON'T Micromanage
7. Give timely, specific FEEDBACK
8. Provide the latest TECHNOLOGY
9. Make it FUN
10. Value DIVERSITY
Perceptions of Millennials...
WHAT MANAGERS REALLY THINK OF GEN-Y EMPLOYEES

- Easily Distracted
  - 46%
  - Of managers stated that millennials are easily distracted.
- Too Demanding
  - 51%
  - The majority of managers perceive gen-y employees as having out of line demands.

Poor Work Ethics

- 47%
- Of managers describe gen-y employees as having poor work ethics.

*Survey of 1,000 manager in the United States
Source: Millennial Branding/American Express

Image from: https://ashleymwallenburg.files.wordpress.com/2014/08/gy.jpg
How to Care for Millennials

1. Use IM or text
2. Give awards/certificates
3. Value Civic Duty
4. Be COLLABORATIVE and support them
5. COACH
6. Provide FLEXIBILITY
7. Be MOTIVATIONAL
8. CARE about their Personal Goals
9. Promote Volunteerism
10. Value their TECHNICAL SAVVY

General Guidelines for Managing All Generations Effectively

• Respect differences
• Be aware of own biases
• Set expectations
• Communicate expectations
• Hold employees accountable for expectations
• Have consequences for not upholding expectations
• Be consistent.
Thoughts to ponder...

• Rather than judge an individual from a different generation, it is important to understand how their points of view, values, culture and expectations affect them.

• Think about how you are setting expectations, communicating expectations, and upholding expectations; including consequences for not meeting expectations.

• We are all here to provide quality care to patients!
Questions???
Thank you!