Maximizing the Strengths of a Multi-Generational Workplace

Stacie Abbott, Erica Salinas, and Danielle Metzinger
Statewide Workforce Planning
GENERATIONS IN THE WORKPLACE

1. Traditionalists (born 1925-1945)

2. Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964)


NATIONAL POPULATION IN 2011

- Traditionalists: 1925 - 1945
- Baby Boomers: 1946 - 1964
- Generation X: 1965 - 1981
- Generation Y/Millennial: 1982 - 2004

Source: United States Census Bureau
CALIFORNIA POPULATION IN 2011

- Traditionalists (1925-1945) - 11%
- Baby Boomers (1946-1964) - 23%
- Generation X (1965-1981) - 33%
- Millennials (1982-2004) - 33%

Source: California census 2011
CALIFORNIA STATE WORKERS IN 2013

- Traditionalists (1925-1945) 3%
- Baby Boomers (1946-1964) 44%
- Generation X (1965-1981) 39%
- Millennials (1982-2004) 14%

Source: Position Benefits Table 2013
OBJECTIVES

• Know your workforce
• Bridge the generation gap
• Maximize generational strengths to accomplish your mission
• Address generational challenges to implementing an effective workforce plan
• Workforce Planning tools and resources
TRADITIONALISTS: 1925 - 1945

You know you’re a traditionalist when...

– Plastic bags were still good after the third wash.

– You often seem to ‘recall a time when back in my day...’
SEMINAL EVENTS

- **1929** Stock Market Crash; Great Depression begins
- **1933** The New Deal
- **1937** Hindenburg tragedy
- **1937** Disney’s first animated feature (Snow White)
- **1941** Hitler invades Russia
- **1941** Pearl Harbor; U.S. enters World War II
- **1945** World War II ends in Europe and Japan
- **1947** Jackie Robinson joins major league baseball
- **1947** HUAC investigates film industry
- **1950** Korean War begins

CHARACTERISTICS

- Loyalty
- Hard work
- Conformity
- Conservative
- Traditional
- Disciplined
- Respect for authority
- Sacrifice
- Practical
- Patient
BABY BOOMERS: 1946 - 1964

You know you’re a Baby Boomer when...

- You know what “duck and cover” means and in elementary school you believed doing that would save you from a nuclear bomb.

- Growing up, your home telephone wasn’t a “land line”…because what else could it have been.

- You can sing all the lyrics to the Mickey Mouse Club.

- Your eighty-something year old mother thinks you’re a genius about computers and wireless communication, but your twenty-something year old child thinks your technology questions merit eye rolling.

- You know where you were and who you were with when you watched Neil Armstrong’s “small step for man and giant leap for mankind”.
**SEMINAL EVENTS**

- 1954 First transistor radio
- 1955 Civil Rights Movement begins
- 1960 Birth control pills introduced
- 1962 John Glenn circles the earth
- 1963 Martin Luther King, Jr. leads march on Washington
- 1963 President Kennedy assassinated
- 1965 U.S. sends troops to Vietnam
- 1967 World’s first heart transplant
- 1968 Martin Luther King, Jr. assassinated
- 1969 U.S. moon landing
- 1969 Woodstock
- 1970 Women’s liberation demonstrations

**CHARACTERISTICS**

- Team oriented
- Cooperative
- Adaptive
- Competitive
- Question authority
- Personal gratification
- Personal growth
- Idealistic
GENERATION X: 1965 - 1981

You know you’re a Generation Xer when...

- You remember "Friday Night Videos" before the days of MTV.

- A predominant color in your childhood photos is "plaid."

- Your hair, at some point in time in the 80's, became something which can only be described by the phrase "I was experimenting."

- You've recently horrified yourself by using any one of the following phrases: "When I was younger...", "When I was your age...", You know, back when..." or "I just can't <fill in the blank> like I used to."

- You ever made mix-tapes, and burned out the rewind button.
SEMINAL EVENTS

1973 Global energy crisis
1976 Tandy and Apple market PCs
1978 Mass suicide in Jonestown
1979 Three Mile Island accident
1979 Margaret Thatcher becomes first female British Prime Minister
1979 Massive corporate layoffs
1980 John Lennon killed
1981 AIDS identified
1986 Chernobyl disaster
1986 Challenger disaster
1987 Stock market plummets
1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill
1989 Berlin Wall falls
1989 Tiananmen Square uprisings

CHARACTERISTICS

• “Latch key” kids
• Self-reliant
• Pragmatic
• Skeptical
• Technologically inclined
• Self-assured
• Immediate gratification
MILLENNIALS: 1982 – 2004

You know you’re a Millennial when...

– You become impatient of waiting for more than 5 seconds for a web page to load.

– You don’t know what gluten is, but it is definitely bad

– You have never cut out a coupon

– The only phone number you know by heart is your own

– You have several ‘favorites’ saved in ‘the cloud’
SEMINAL EVENTS

1990 Nelson Mandela released
1993 Apartheid ends
1995 Bombing of Federal building in Oklahoma City
1997 Princess Diana dies
1999 Columbine High School shootings
2001 World Trade Center attacks
2002 Enron, WorldCom and corporate scandal
2003 War begins in Iraq
2004 Tsunami in the Asian Ocean
2005 Hurricane Katrina

CHARACTERISTICS

- “Helicopter parents”
- Grew up with the internet
- Goal/achievement-oriented
- Optimistic
- Confident
- Easily find all kinds of resources
- Thought patterns influenced by computers
BRIDGING THE GENERATION GAP IN THE WORKPLACE

- Different generational experiences mean unique work habits and preferences
- How to engage all four generations in a meaningful and productive work environment?
## ATTITUDE TOWARD WORK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditionalists</th>
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<th>Generation X</th>
<th>Millennials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Work is duty”</td>
<td>“Live to work”</td>
<td>“Work to live”</td>
<td>“Live then work”</td>
</tr>
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</table>

## BASIC TRAITS

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Loyal, hardworking conformers</td>
<td>Driven, consensus seeking team players</td>
<td>Independent, results focused professionals</td>
<td>Optimistic, idea generating achievers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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# MOTIVATION

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<tr>
<td>When their actions connect to overall good of the organization</td>
<td>When they can make a difference and advance through hard work</td>
<td>When they can get the job done on their own schedule</td>
<td>When their actions connect to personal and career goals</td>
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</table>

# MESSAGES THAT MOTIVATE

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<tr>
<td>“It’s valuable to us to hear what has worked in the past”</td>
<td>“You can work as long as you want”</td>
<td>“Do it your way. There aren’t a lot of rules around here”</td>
<td>“You will be working with other bright, creative people”</td>
</tr>
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# FEEDBACK AND RECOGNITION

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<td>No news is good news; Satisfaction in a job well done</td>
<td>Desire respect</td>
<td>Immediate gratification</td>
<td>clear expectations, outcomes, and accountability</td>
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# EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES

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<td>Infrequent, via memo</td>
<td>Occasional/regular, via face to face</td>
<td>Consistently, via email</td>
<td>Frequently, via email</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- In the moment
- In context
- Authentic
- Tied to employee’s perception of value
FEEDBACK AND RECOGNITION CONTINUED

REWARDS

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tangible symbols of loyalty,</td>
<td>Personal appreciation, promotion, and</td>
<td>Free time, upgraded resources, development</td>
<td>Awards, certificates, tangible evidence of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>commitment, and service including</td>
<td>public recognition</td>
<td>opportunities, certificates</td>
<td>credibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plaques, certificates</td>
<td></td>
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- Link rewards to extra effort and innovation
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<td>May want to phase into part time role near retirement, but do not assume</td>
<td>Offer flexible work arrangements and time to handle family/caretaking responsibilities</td>
<td>Give lots of options for work schedule and allow to work autonomously</td>
<td>Give flexible work schedule options for educational pursuits</td>
</tr>
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# COMMUNICATION STYLE

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Memos, letters, personal notes</td>
<td>Phone calls, social interaction</td>
<td>Email or voicemail, only during work</td>
<td>Email, IM, text</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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# TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

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<tr>
<td>Stick to a formal tone and traditional written method</td>
<td>Connect with personal contact, on or off the clock</td>
<td>Be direct and strictly work related since they keep work and life separate</td>
<td>Relate by keeping it brief and using what they use most- technology!</td>
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## KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value the history of an organization</td>
<td>Possess lots of institutional knowledge</td>
<td>Autonomous</td>
<td>Want to feel meaningfully connected</td>
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</table>

## SUCCESSFUL METHODS

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<td>Formalize mentorship opportunities: Mentor</td>
<td>Develop policy and procedure</td>
<td>Create a “go-to” list of subject matter experts</td>
<td>Formalize mentorship opportunities: Mentee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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<tr>
<td>Advancement within career</td>
<td>Advancement within career</td>
<td>Career development is a necessity, not an option</td>
<td>Meaningful and fulfilling work</td>
</tr>
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</table>

## VARIOUS OPPORTUNITIES

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<tr>
<td>Offer opportunities to provide trainings to fellow employees</td>
<td>Challenge them to take on leadership opportunities with new projects and ideas</td>
<td>Offer structured professional development opportunities in varied formats</td>
<td>Schedule annual meeting to create and review Individual Career Development plans</td>
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</table>
# Strengths of Each Generation

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<tr>
<td>History, expertise</td>
<td>Leadership, knowledge</td>
<td>Efficiency, innovation</td>
<td>Ideas, fresh perspective</td>
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## Maximizing These Strengths

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<tr>
<td>Mentor younger workers, be go-to subject matter experts, create FAQ resource for new employees</td>
<td>Team building and training others, oversee mentoring, use influence to implement changes</td>
<td>Prepare for upcoming leadership through training opportunities</td>
<td>Multitasking special projects, place on problem solving task forces, mentored by older workers</td>
</tr>
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</table>
MAXIMIZING STRENGTHS: PLANNING FOR SUCCESS

• Recognize strengths in all generations
• Analyze current workforce and future needs in light of:
  – Organization’s mission
  – Anticipated changes
• Maximize generational strengths to benefit organization, now and in the future
  – Creatively use strengths of each generation to fill the gaps/needs of current and future workforce
ACCOMPLISH YOUR MISSION

1. What is the mission of your organization?
2. What high-level positions are essential to accomplish your mission?
CURRENT WORKFORCE

1. Which generations work for your organization?

2. Which generation(s) in mission-critical positions?

3. Who is retiring in the next five years? Which position(s) will be affected most by retirements?
FUTURE LEADERSHIP

1. What does it take to be an excellent leader in your organization today?

2. Will these requirements change in 5 years? What will be the same/different?
EFFECTIVE TRAINING

1. What training and development opportunities are readily available to employees?

2. Do they impart the skills, knowledge, and abilities needed in the future for mission-critical positions?
CALHR WORKFORCE PLANNING RESOURCES

- Workforce Planning Survey & Development Tool – Available Now!
- Workforce Planning Q&A Brochure - Available Now!
- Workforce Planning Assessment Tool – Available Now!
- Workforce Planning Template – Coming Soon!
- Online Forum and Discussion Board – Coming Soon!
- First Quarterly Workforce Planning Coordinator Meeting:
  Wednesday, October 2, 2013
  9:30am – 11:30am
  CalHR Leadership Conference Room
CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION

Questions or Comments? Connect with us!

• Visit our table

• Email CalHR Workforce Planning Unit: wfp@calhr.ca.gov

Thank you for joining us!