



# LEADING IN A MULTI- GENERATIONAL WORKPLACE

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# OBJECTIVES

Explore the attributes of various generations present in the workplace






Discuss strategies for effective leadership and teamwork in multi-generational workplaces

# GENERATIONS IN THE WORKPLACE

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# The 5 Generation Workplace

Traditionals	Baby Boomers	Generation X	Generation Y (Millennials)	Generation Z (Digital Natives)
<p><b>DOB:</b> 1900–1945</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Loyal to the company</li><li>• Dedicated</li><li>• Disciplined</li><li>• Job for life</li><li>• Retiring later</li></ul>	<p><b>DOB:</b> 1946–1964</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dedicated to work</li><li>• Optimistic</li><li>• Committed</li><li>• Team orientated</li><li>• Experimental</li></ul>	<p><b>DOB:</b> 1965–1980</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Open-minded</li><li>• Appreciate diversity</li><li>• Work–life balance</li><li>• Competitive</li><li>• Entrepreneurial</li><li>• Independent</li></ul>	<p><b>DOB:</b> 1981–1996</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Career determined by switching roles often</li><li>• Keen on mobility</li><li>• Socially vocal</li><li>• Tech-savvy</li><li>• Immediacy</li></ul>	<p><b>DOB:</b> 1997–2015</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Critical and selective</li><li>• Career multitaskers</li><li>• Technology is intuitive</li><li>• High expectations</li><li>• Coached, not managed</li></ul>
				



# WHAT DO WE MEAN BY GENERATIONAL GAP?

Differences in values,  
attitudes, and behaviors of  
different people belonging  
to different generations



**How would you rate your emoji game?**



**What Generation do you generally fall into?**

# GROUP ACTIVITY

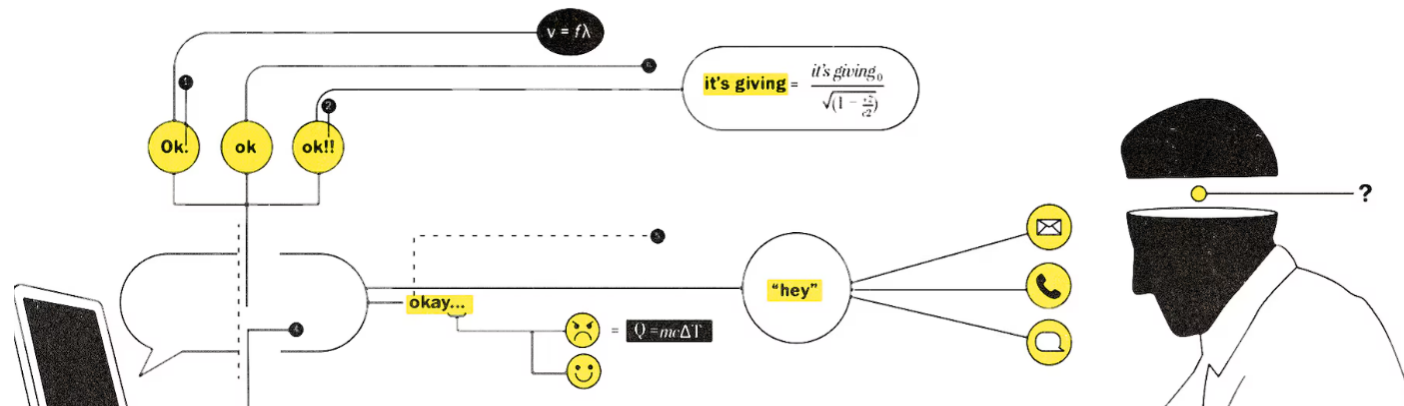
Brainstorm a list of things/events that shaped each generation:

- Traditionalists (1900 to 1945)
- Baby boomers (1946 to 1964)
- Generation X (1965 to 1980)
- Millennials (1981 to 2000)
- Generation Z (2001 to 2020)



# Do you talk more like a millennial or a boomer at work? Take this quiz to find out.

What your communication habits at work say about you and how that might differ from your boss and colleagues



## POP QUIZ!

COURTESY OF THE WASHINGTON POST

QUESTION 1 OF 8

It's time to update a co-worker on a team project and touch base on a few outlying things. How do you reach out?

**Pick up the phone and call the person**

**Quickly send a short email that gets directly to the point**

**Send an instant message, or text, summarizing everything in one block of text**

**Send one, or a series of quick instant messages, or texts, as long as you have a friendly, social relationship**

## QUESTION 2 OF 8

The past several weeks have been a doozy. You've worked long days and nights, met crazy deadlines and dealt with problems at work and home. To top it off, this morning you slept through your alarm and spilled coffee on your shirt, and your power went out. You're at your mental edge. What do you do?

**Tell your boss you're anxious, or burned out, and need a mental health day.**

**Suck it up and get your work done. You don't highlight your personal struggles at work, you deliver.**

**Take the day off to decompress but refrain from explaining. All your employer needs to know is you're taking a sick day.**

**Try to address your work and mental health at the same time by going for a run midday and working late.**

### QUESTION 3 OF 8

During your annual review, your manager lists off areas for improvement to advance. This is the first time you're hearing this feedback, and you disagree. What do you do?

**Ensure you get to respond and request more regular feedback and context.**

**Agree to do better because you respect the chain of command and want to progress.**

**Get discouraged and consider looking for a new job.**

**Listen and realize you may not need to progress to be happy and focus on balance in your life.**

#### QUESTION 4 OF 8

It's the middle of the workday, and you need to send your colleague a text to ask about the meeting that will begin in an hour. Which best describes your approach to the message?

**Always start with a salutation and name (Dear Amy, Good afternoon Amy), and use punctuation and capitalization to separate sentences**

**Often use punctuation and capitalization but you're less formal and consistent**

**Often don't use punctuation and capitalization, rather separate your thoughts with different messages**

**Never use periods or capitals unless you're trying to emphasize something and keep messages short**

QUESTION 5 OF 8

You are on a work chat about the latest strategies for an upcoming project. Your colleague makes a lighthearted joke that you find funny. How do you respond?

**Say that was funny**

**LOL**



**QUESTION 6 OF 8**

A colleague sends an email asking you for an update on a project.  
What are you most likely to do in your response:

**Double space between sentences**

**Use a lot of exclamation points or count them if you're worried about being too enthusiastic**

**Use a less formal salutation like "hey" or "hi" followed by the recipients' name**

**Avoid emailing for other quicker messaging options, if possible**

QUESTION 7 OF 8

Your colleagues discuss work all day long on Slack. During video meetings, they also use the chat function to chime in while you or other people are speaking. How do these chats make you feel?

**Overwhelmed. The chatting feels disruptive and too hard to keep track of**

**Included. Chat tools make it easier to communicate with colleagues and participate without speaking**



**QUESTION 8 OF 8**

You send a colleague you have a friendly relationship with a text or chat message during the workday about a project. Which of the following are you most likely to include in that message?

**GIFs**

**Words and phrases like “unalive” or “it’s giving”**

**Emojis that mean what they are**

**A signature at the end of my comment**

# TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION ACROSS GENERATIONS

**Baby Boomers** – Adopt technology when needed, may prefer structured training.

**Gen X** – Adapted to tech over time, balancing digital and traditional methods.

**Millennials** – Grew up with the internet, early adopters of tech and are more willing to try new things.

- **Gen Z** – Digital natives, usually prefer automation, and AI-driven solutions.

# COMMUNICATIONS NORMS ACROSS GENERATIONS

- **Baby Boomers** – Prefer in-person and on phone. Use some online communications.
- **Gen X** – Email preferred. Phone also works. Can bridge pre-digital & digital natives.
- **Millennials** – Please don't call. Online, digital tools/chats preferred. **Only** Gen who doesn't prefer face-to-face/in-person in their top three modes.
- **Gen Z** – Value the visual. Online/digital is a norm. Prefer face-to-face communication at work (can include video chats). Informal language in writing (emojis).

# WORK PREFERENCES ACROSS GENERATIONS

- Remote vs in office
- Structured vs flexible schedules
- Hierarchical vs flat organizations
- Routine vs varied working assignments
  
- Also consider:
  - Workplace relationships
  - Work/life balance
  - Purpose driven work

# GROUP ACTIVITY 2

In your group, identify the stereotypes and superpowers for each generation...

- Baby boomers (1946 to 1964)
- Generation X (1965 to 1980)
- Millennials (1981 to 2000)
- Generation Z (2001 to 2020)

# LEADING IN A MULTIGENERATIONAL WORKPLACE

**There is immense value available through valuing and intentionally leveraging generational difference:**

- Fact: Diverse Teams return Better Results
- When making the most of diversity of thought, practice, and experience – only 8% of organizations include age
- Different Generations bring different kinds of Knowledge to a project (Know how, know what, know who, know when)



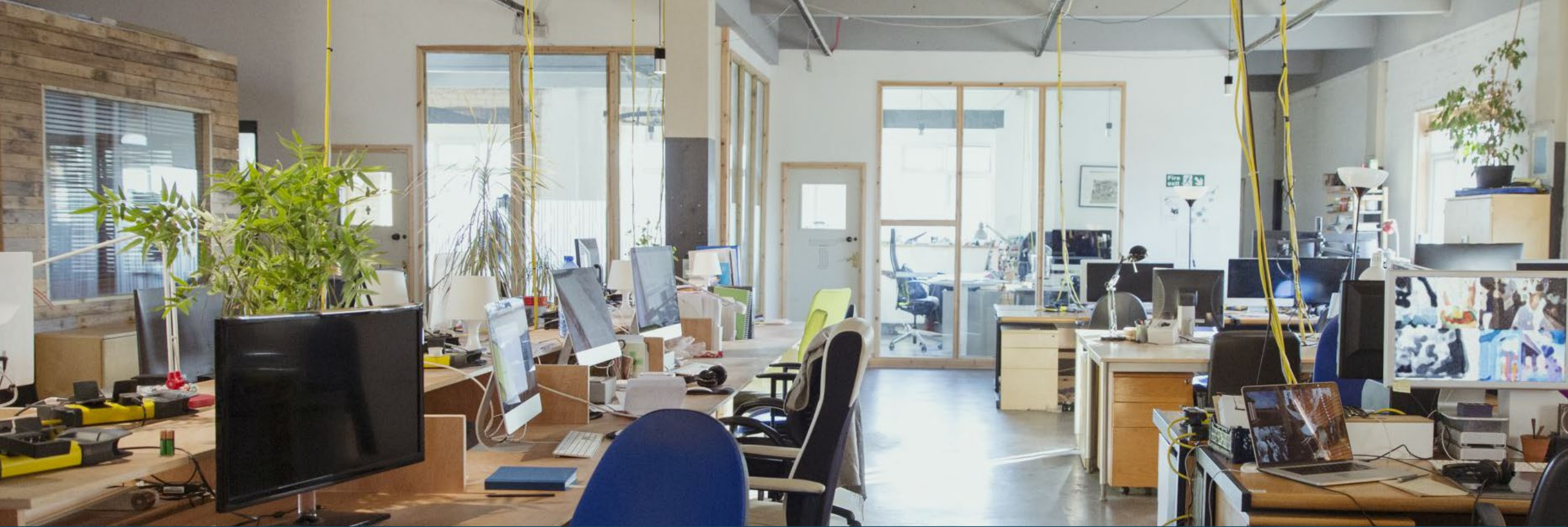
# LEADING IN A MULTIGENERATIONAL WORKPLACE

There is no cheat sheet – we need to put in the work to get know our colleagues as individuals and understand how best to lead.

# RESOURCES FOR LEADING IN A MULTIGENERATIONAL WORKPLACE

- [This is What Leadership Looks Like in Each Generation](#) (Article)
- [Leadership Strategies for a Multigenerational Workplace](#) (SHRM podcast)
- [How to Bridge Generational Gaps on Your Team](#) (HBR podcast)
- [From Strength to Strength](#), Arthur Brooks (book)
- [Gentelligence - Home Of The Gentelligence Movement](#) (book/website)
- [Strategies for Supporting Multigenerational Workplaces](#), Institute for Local Government (Webinar Recording)
- LinkedIn Learning Course: [Managing a Multigenerational Team](#)
- Washington Post Quiz:  
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/interactive/2023/gen-z-boomers-office-lingo-slang/>





*“Every generation imagines itself to be more intelligent than the one that went before it, and wiser than the one that comes after it.”*  
George Orwell