

# **Generational Collaboration: It can be done!**

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# Disclosures

Joseph Gilhooly  
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Have documented that  
they have nothing to  
disclose.

# Goals of the workshop

- Review generational characteristics 10 min
- **Input from participants:** What are your issues? 10 min
- Generational Values 5 min
- Values translated to the work environment 20 min
- **Input from participants:** What you have learned? 15 min
- **Input from participants:** What are your solutions? 30 min
- Improving the academic environment 10 min
- Q&A 10 min

# 4 Generations in the Workplace

- Silents 1920-1940
- Baby Boomers 1940-1960
- Generation X 1960-1980
- Millennials 1980-2000

# The Current Events

“Generations shape parenting”

*USA Today, September 28, 2006*

“Will the real Gen Y please stand up”

*The Oregonian, March 5, 2007*

“The Most-Praised Generation Goes to  
Work”

*The Wall Street Journal, April 20, 2007*

Slide from David Leach

# Generational Issues

## Generation X

Independent problem solving  
Technology savvy  
Need Immediate feedback  
Want control over their learning  
Ambitious  
Pessimistic

## Millennials

Learn in community  
Technology from birth  
Learning Portfolios  
Various learning styles  
Confident  
Optimistic

# Why are Generational Differences now an Issue?

- 4 generations at one time working together
- No physical separation of the generations at work
- Workplace is spatially compact

# Are Generational Differences Real?

- Shared life experiences create similar values
- Generalizations, not stereotypes
- We are not ignoring individuality

**“The development of a person does not happen in isolation; it occurs through exposure to the attitudes and habits of social groups to which they belong.”**

Kurt Lewin

*Field Theory in Social Science*, 1951

# **Why is an understanding of generational differences important?**

Understanding generational differences is critical to create a productive work environment.

# Titanium Rule

“Do unto others keeping their preferences in mind”

*Claire Raines*

Knowing about others improves communication.

# The Water Cooler

- They're just a bunch of slackers.
- If you are looking for loyalty, buy a dog.
- A hiring bonus!? At his age I was just grateful I had a job.
- I have a life, I don't attend meetings after 5.
- If I hear we tried that in '87 one more time I'll hurl.

# **The Generations:** *An Overview*

# Silents 1920-1940

- “American Values”
- Respect authority
- Live to work
- Hold the majority of CEO positions in Fortune 500 companies
- Hold 75% of the US financial assets
- “A thousand points of no.”

# What they say about Silents

- Boomers
  - Rigid and resistant to change
- Xers
  - “They’ve got all the money”
- Millennials
  - Brave and trustworthy

## **Best Silent Quote:**

“We tried that once...  
it didn't work”

# Boomers 1940- 1960

- “Joe Cool”
- Don’t trust anyone over 30:  
Hippies
- Live to work...and make money:  
Yuppies
- Power, Control, Status
- Me Generation → We Generation
- Not budget oriented

# What they say about Boomers

- Silents
  - They are self absorbed
- Xers
  - Workaholics: “Lighten up, its only a job”
- Millennials
  - They’re cool but they work too hard

## **Best Boomer Quote:**

“Let’s have a group hug.”

# Generation X 1960- 1980

- “Latchkey Kids”
- Not intimidated by authority
- Hate labels, like Generation X
- Work to live
- Like informality
- Creating family at work

# What they say about Xers

- Silents
  - They aren't respectful
- Boomers
  - Slackers, won't wait their turn
- Millennials
  - "Cheer up"

**“They got to the cocktail party  
20 minutes too late, and all  
that’s left are those little wieners  
and a half-empty bottle of Zima”**

Dennis Miller

**“So, Gen X, welcome to life  
over the hill”**

***Kurt Cobain Action Figure***

The icon of modern rock is immortalized based on his appearance in the 1991 breakthrough video "Smells Like Teen Spirit." This stunningly detailed action figure of Kurt Cobain...

*Tom D'Antoni, The Oregonian  
January 29, 2007*

## **Best Xer Quote:**

“Just tell me, is this going to be on the test?”

# Millennials 1980 - 2000

- “Street smart”
- Parents are cool
- Affinity for the Silents
- Work ethic is team oriented
- Advocacy oriented
- Using technology from birth
- Environmentally conscious

# What they say about Millennials

- Silents
  - Well mannered, smart, but need to toughen up
- Boomers
  - Cute, but need too much attention
  - “Stop calling me at work!”
- Xers
  - “Here we go...another self-absorbed generation of spoiled brats.”

## Best Millennial Quote:

“My life is great. Everything around me has contributed to my happiness.”

Bobby Green Halgh, 17 years

# The Way They See the World

Generation at Work, Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak

	<b>Silents</b>	<b>Boomers</b>	<b>Xers</b>	<b>Millennials</b>
<b>Outlook</b>	practical	optimistic	skeptical	hopeful
<b>Work ethic</b>	dedicated	driven	balanced	ambitious
<b>View of authority</b>	respectful	love/hate	unimpressed	polite
<b>Leadership</b>	hierarchy	consensus	competence	collaboration
<b>Relationships</b>	personal sacrifice	personal gratification	reluctant to commit	loyal
<b>Perspective</b>	civic	team	self	civic

# Group Discussion

- What are the issues you see in your residency programs?
  - For Program Directors
  - For Faculty
  - For Coordinators
  - For Chief Residents
  - For Residents

# Issues in the Work Environment

“Today’s residents are brilliant and articulate. They have lives. They love [caring for patients], and they’re high-quality individuals. But they have different values.”

*Claire Raines, Connecting Generations, 2003*

# Values

Definition:

Principles, standards, or  
qualities considered  
worthwhile or desirable by the  
person who holds them

# Silent Generation Core Values

- Dedication
- Practicality
- Sacrifice & Hard work
- Conformity
- Respect for authority
- Adherence to rules
- Patience & Delayed rewards
- Duty before pleasure

# Boomer Core Values

- Optimism
- Team oriented
- Personal growth
- Youthfulness
- Health and wellness
- Career and status
- “Change the world”
- Philanthropy
- Want to be liked

# Generation X Core Values

- Diversity
- Thinking globally
- Balance in their lives
- Technology
- Fun at work
- Informality
- Self-reliance
- Pragmatism
- Themselves

# Millennial Core Values

- Optimism
- Civic duty
- Confidence
- Achievement
- Sociability
- Morality
- Diversity

**So, how are these  
generational values  
affecting the work  
environment?**

# State of the World: 2007

- Silents might retire someday
- Boomers will not retire soon and have all the offices with windows
- Xers are most of the residents and “junior faculty”
- Millennials are just beginning to enter residency programs

# **Silents vs. Boomers: *No Room at the Top***

College and university presidents are older and staying on the job longer than at any other time in the past 20 years. The proportion of presidents age 61 or older grew from 14 percent in 1986 to 49 percent in 2006.

*Study by the American Council on Education*

**Former OHSU President Peter Kohler is named Vice Chancellor of University of Arkansas Medical School.**

**Kohler, 68, retired last year after serving 18 years as president of OHSU.**

**“[My wife’s] not wholly pleased with this.”**

***The Oregonian*, April 26, 2007**

# No Room at the Top

- Silents
  - Their identification is their work (their work is their life)
  - Making the major decisions...from their golf cart
- Boomers
  - Can't afford to retire
  - Don't consider themselves old
  - They like the power

# Jimi Hendrix Turns Eighty

by Tim Sandlin

“We grew up thinking it would be different when the old farts died off. It wasn't. If anything, our generation is worse. We became the old farts ourselves.”

*Rocky in the year 2022*

# Plastic Surgeon survey of faculty members

- 71% Stated there were problems relating to residents' work ethic
- 57% Had a problem with understanding “where the residents are coming from”

*DL Larson. Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery.  
2003;112:1656-61*

**It's all about  
understanding and  
respecting the  
values of each  
generation.**

# **Xers: Values affect their attitudes toward work**

- Attend first to their own well being
- Work to live
- Looking for a job they can love
- Believe in change
- Look to themselves and their friends
- Hate to be micro-managed
- Need feedback
- Technology is their ally

# Xers: Values affect how they work

- Xers are fast and efficient
- Small teams producing practical results
- Teams must support the individual
- They don't like "sink or swim"
  - Need clear expectations
- Like to set their own schedule
- They don't like to "jump through hoops"
- Leadership based on best skill set

# Values affect Loyalty

- Boomers: Loyal to the institution
  - Work at work, work at home
  - Want to look good in front of the boss
  - It's their career
- Xers: Loyal to self
  - Skeptical toward institutions (No Tenure!)
  - Work and play at work
  - Value relationships at work
  - It's just a job

# Xers: Loyal to Self

- Building their personal assets
  - Desire for learning
- Want to belong
  - Making a valued contribution
- Search for family
  - Relationships at work
- Innovative ideas
  - Want to define problems and develop their own solutions
- Need for feedback
  - Monitor the success of their performance

# Xers Value Relationships at Work

- Relationships at work are important
  - “Friends”, “Grey’s Anatomy”, “Scrubs”
- Little things are important
  - Breaks
  - Free lunch
  - Parties
  - Having fun
- Preference for casual attire
- Personalization of workspace

# Expectations for Feedback

- Silents
  - “No news is good news. If I am not yelling at you you are doing fine.”
- Boomers
  - “If you weren’t getting yelled at, you felt like that was praise.”
- Xers
  - Expect instantaneous, frequent feedback
- Millennials
  - Do they need frequent praise or feedback?

**“You get almost no positive feedback, ever, but you always hear about it when you screw up.”**

Physician in first-year internship

*Managing Generation X*

*Tulgan, 2000*

# Turning Praise into Effective Feedback

- Tell them it's coming
- Need Feedback that is "FAST"
  - Frequent
  - Accurate
  - Specific
  - Timely
- Make it two way

# Teams

- **Silents**
  - Strong leadership...but one right answer
- **Boomers**
  - Consensus building...but nothing gets done
- **Xers**
  - Fast and efficient...but have difficulty compromising
- **Millennials**
  - Inclusive and collaborative...but their challenge is face to face communication

# What about these Millennials?

- What they want
  - You to be the leader
  - Challenges and learning opportunities
  - Friendships and fun with co-workers
  - Respect
  - Flexible work hours (won't give up their other activities)
- Team oriented and collaborative
- Overly “wired”

# Millennials and Advocacy

- 26% of 16-19 year olds volunteered in 2006, twice the number of 1989
- Median time spent volunteering: 30 hours
- Choosing employment where they can continue to volunteer

*From The Oregonian, The Next Wave of Volunteers*

*April 22, 2007*

# The Challenge for Millennials

“While your lives have been powerfully shaped by 9/11, the world needs you to be forever the generation of 11/9 – the generation of strategic optimists, the generation with more dreams than memories, the generation that wakes up each morning that not only imagines that things can be better but also acts on that imagination every day.”

*Thomas L. Friedman, 2005, [The World is Flat](#)*

# Millennial Generation

“Inequality, challenges, America’s place in the world, global warming...How did my generation respond?...that is yet to be written.”

Anya Kamenetz, Author  
*Generation Debt, 2006*

**What have you learned about  
your generation issues?**

# **Solutions for generational issues in the workplace**

# Learners are frustrated.

“No news is good news. Occasionally one of the attending physicians, usually one of the younger ones, will give me a little pat on the back. But that’s the real exception. The lack of feedback can be demoralizing.”

Physician in a surgical residency

*Managing Generation X*

Tulgan, 2000

# Lessons from the Business World: *Motivating Xers*

- Respect their individuality
- Make it a learning experience
- Don't micromanage them
- Give them clear goals and expectations
- Give them feedback
- Give them responsibility

# 10 Things Faculty Can Do

- Be a good role model (walk the talk)
- Form a relationship with Xers
- Review your expectations
- Include them in decision making
- Give them independence
- Value their contributions (i.e. EBM)
- Recognize their individual achievements
- Give them immediate and direct feedback
- Let them have a good time
- Don't be abusive, it's a morale killer

# What Xers want from their Program Directors

*Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery 2003;112:1656-61*

- Good mentor and role model\*
- Advocates for the residents\*
- Honest and trustworthy\*
- Focuses on improving the program\*
- Is approachable
- Gets to know the residents
- Creates a learning environment

\*Used in a tool for resident assessment of the PD

**“Good managers today will help Xers become the leaders of the future.”**

Bruce Tulgan, Author

# Professionalism

Built on values, and as values change so will the definition of professionalism.

## **ABP Vignettes on Professionalism, 2000**

Your son is scheduled to graduate from high school this afternoon. You are trying to get out of the office when you receive a call from the ED that a child with asthma whom you follow has just been admitted with severe respiratory distress. The mother is insisting that you be contacted to come in because you are the only one who has been able to keep her son out of the hospital.

## **Setting Expectations:** ***ILPs should be “Xer friendly”***

- Have them create individual goals
- Give them feedback on their goals
- Help them inventory their skills & knowledge
- Have them determine what they need in order to achieve their goals

# Setting Expectations: The Rotation

- Orientation is critical
- Review competency-based objectives
- Define expected behaviors
  - “Practical Professionalism”
- Review learning activities
- Give feedback throughout the rotation
- End of rotation debriefing

# **Hiring: What Xers and Millennials Value**

# Recruiting Residents

- Don't emphasize
  - The prestige and size of institution
  - The formality and traditions
- Do emphasize
  - The learning environment & mentoring
  - Advocacy (chance to make a difference)
  - The social scene
  - Participation in scholarly activity
  - Life-work balance

Get rid of boring plain brochures...use a website

# Xers: Most Satisfying Aspects of the Job

- Solving challenging problems
- People you work with
- Interesting and fun work
- Doing what you are good at
- Ability to work independently
- Salary and compensation

*Amy Merrick. R&D. 1998;40:3-4*

# Current Retention issues

- Women leaving the work force in record numbers
- This could imperil their economic future due to divorce, death of spouse, or loss of work by spouse

*Feminine Mistake* by Leslie Bennetts, 2007

# Retraining

## American Medical News

**Doctors seek more help to get back in practice; refresher programs considered**

**As more physicians take extended family leave or retire early and regret it, medicine looks for ways to facilitate their return.**

*Myrtle Croasdale, AMNews staff. July 24/31, 2006*

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