

Do Different Generations Need to be Managed Differently?



For many years, managers have been encouraged to adapt their management style to their teams just as businesses have adapted their products and services to meet the needs of their customers.

Should different generations of staff be managed differently? Or do younger generations simply have higher and perhaps unrealistic expectations which managers shouldn't pander to?

A multi-generational workforce

There are three distinct generations in the workforce today; Baby Boomers (1945-1964), Generation X (1965-1979) and Generation Y (1980 onwards). Younger generations travel more, have children later and crucially have no personal experience of the 'job for life'.

Generation Y employees seek more personal fulfilment than Baby Boomers, and they will change jobs for this reason, where Baby Boomers are more likely to seek long term security, perhaps in keeping with their greater sense of home and family life.

Increasing demands on employers

As education, work and social activities continue to evolve, younger generations have higher demands of employers. They seek personal development opportunities such as sabbaticals and professional development, and they seek greater autonomy and freedom in their jobs.

Generation Y staff seek greater job flexibility and the opportunity to move through different roles, so it is important that managers ensure they can provide flexibility and variety without a detrimental impact on other staff or the organisation. However, Onetest's 2008 Graduate Opinion Survey revealed that over 50% of graduates intend to stay with their employer for at least 3 years. The same survey also showed that the top priority for Generation Y is salary, followed by employer reputation. This seems to indicate a shift in expectations compared to Baby Boomers and even Generation X staff, who are more likely to look for stability and suitable working conditions, regardless of the reputation of the company.

Retention and turnover

The reasons why staff move on are changing, and this demands a change in management focus.

The top 5 reasons for resignation, according to the Insync Surveys Retention Review 2009, are:

| TOP 5 REASONS FOR RESIGNATION | | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| | Baby Boomers | Generation X | Generation Y |
| 1 | Lack of job satisfaction | Lack of job satisfaction | Lack of job satisfaction |
| 2 | Lack of career advancement | Lack of Professional development | Lack of professional development |
| 3 | Workload related stress | Lack of career advancement | Lack of career advancement |
| 4 | Lack of challenge in role | Work life balance | Pay and working conditions |
| 5 | Work life balance | Workload related stress | Work life balance |

Tricks of the Trade:

Manage the Generational Difference



By 2012 Gen Y is expected to make up 25% of the workforce. Is your organisation equipped to get the best performance out of this generation? The three films below will help your organisation better understand this 'so-called' high maintenance workforce to help you build the highest performing workforce in history.

"Mixing Four Generations in the Workplace"

This film will educate and stimulate positive interaction among your employees, dramatically reduce workplace conflict and provide strategies for dealing with recruiting, retaining, and motivating, using the generational differences in a positive way.

Duration: 35 minutes.

"Awesome" - Two Part Program

The two-part program of Awesome will help you prepare for the task of engaging, inspiring and effectively channelling the energies of Generation Y. Hear from managers as well as a wide range Gen Y employees to learn about what makes them tick.

Duration: 20 minutes.

"Not Everyone Gets A Trophy"

Presented by Bruce Tulgan, this wise and humorous film takes a look at the challenges of managing the newest generation of employees, and is packed with laughter, stories and practical techniques to transform this young workforce.

Duration: 29 minutes.

What these results indicate is that younger generations:

- Are more autonomous and look less to their employer for opportunities
- Seek portable professional development rather than advancement within their employer
- Demand higher pay and will move jobs to get it
- Suffer less from stress, perhaps because their levels of commitment to an employer and family are lower

Evolving management practices

Managers are having to adapt their traditional leadership styles, and HR managers need to support this by putting in place packages and working environments that meet the diverse needs of a multi-generational workforce.

- **Baby Boomers:** Seek greater security and a sense of value through recognition and career advancement.
Management Tip: Measure and recognise their achievements and offer a defined career path in return for loyalty and high performance.
- **Generation X:** Are more mobile than the Baby Boomers. As their priorities shift from career to family, high workloads can lead to stress.
Management Tip: Manage them with shorter term goals and more ambitious career development options. However, also provide them with clearly defined roles and responsibilities to give them a sense of security and control over their work life balance.
- **Generation Y:** Are even more mobile and seek shorter term achievements that advance their own careers, and there is a danger that they could suffer from work life balance and stress issues sooner.
Management Tip: Manage them with more ambitious personal development plans in the short term and a defined career path with close management support in the long term. Specifically, use secondments, job rotations and relocation opportunities to manage this generation.

Overall, younger generations of staff are less tied to an employer and are investing more in their own careers than in loyalty and length of service, in contrast to Generation X and Baby Boomers. Leading employers of the 21st Century will need to know the latest HR strategies and market-leading techniques to manage every generation, to ensure their organisation runs as smoothly as possible for the future. ●

SPECIAL OFFER:
Receive 3 films for
the price of 2*!
*limited time only

Visit <http://www.mindresources.net/online-shop.html> for more details on each film or call us to enquire about the special offer.