GENERATIONAL PREFERENCES OVERVIEW

by Beth Armknecht Miller

" *Today employers have to manage the performance and the expectations of up to four generations at the same time, while also managing the fast pace of technological change. In order to attract and retain skilled talent that will drive the organization forward, companies must understand the unique characteristics of each generation (and also how those characteristics can lead to conflict in the workplace that can potentially stymie growth and innovation).*

GENERATIONS

INFLUENCING WORKPLACE FACTORS	Traditionalist/Silent	Boomers	Gen X'ers	Gen Y'ers/Millennials
Communications	face-face, phone, written, personal notes, formal	face-face, phone, email, structured networking, formal	email, text, voice mail, video conferencing, casual	text, social media, blogs, instant messaging, collaborative, casual
Performance Management	little need, annual performance, direct feedback	multi-annual reviews, fair & judicious, informal feedback	two-way feedback, positive, sincere, immediate & to the point	two-way feedback, positive, sincere, and immediate
Leadership Styles	command and control, respect authority, policy driven	establish clear direction, be democratic and authentic	situational leaders, open and informal, leaders they can trust	team-based assignments, individual freedom, inclusive and creative
Work Schedule	clearly defined, in office	long hours at office	flexible work schedules at office and home, autonomy	flexible work schedules at office and home
Recognition	quiet, understated, infrequent, have experience and contributions acknowledged	symbols of achievement, promotion	development opportunities, mentoring	flexibility, professional development
Rewards	tangible symbols of loyalty and service-plaques, certificates, watches, etc…	personal attention, promotion	spontaneous rewards which include free time, development opportunities-mentoring and knowledge-sharing, certifications	more immediate awards, certificates, monetary rewards that reflect their contrbutions
Learning Styles	informational, traditional classroom, coaching	coaching, mentoring, learning on the job	e-learning, using technology and media, easy access to needed information, self-paced, collaborative training	integrate technology and media in short segments, personalize learning by customizing to individual

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