



Panel Discussion

*“Leveraging the Generational Differences
in the Workplace”*

Moderator

*Claire Getty - Thompson Appalachian Hardwoods - Huntland,
Tennessee*

Panel Participants

▶ Baby Boomers -

- ❖ Ray Wheeland - Wheeland Lumber Company, Inc. - Liberty, PA
- ❖ Eric Porter - Abenaki Timber Corporation - Kingston, NH

▶ Generation X -

- ❖ Matt Reynolds - Baillie Lumber Company - Hamburg, NY
- ❖ Bob Miller - Frank Miller Lumber Company, Inc. - Union City, IN

▶ Millennials/Generation Y -

- ❖ Tim Brownlee - Brownlee Lumber, Inc. - Brookville, PA
- ❖ Thomas Battle - Battle Lumber Company, Inc. - Wadley, GA

Generation Time Eras

- ▶ Greatest/Silent Generation - 1921 to 1945
- ▶ Baby Boomers - 1946 to 1964
- ▶ Generation X - 1965 to 1979
- ▶ Generation Y - Millennials - 1980 to 1999
- ▶ Generation Z - 2000 to the present

Source: US Chamber of Commerce Foundation

Current Workforce Population per Generation

- ▶ Greatest/Silent Generation - 7%
- ▶ Baby Boomers - 42%
- ▶ Generation X - 29%
- ▶ Generation Y - Millennials - 22%
- ▶ Generation Z - less than 1%

Source: 4 Challenges Associations Face in Engaging Young Professionals

Generational Characteristics

LEADING THE GENERATIONS

Baby Boomers

- Tolerant
- Self-sufficient
- Hardworking
- Disciplined
- Committed
- Respect to be respected
- Believe in manners and etiquette
- Team-player

Gen X

- Want security / stability
- Effective
- Goals and objective oriented
- Adaptable
- Able to manage time
- Can multi-task
- Gets work done
- Responsible
- Team-player

Gen Y

- Work + play + fun = work-life balance
- Enjoy networking
- User of gadgets /technology
- Independent
- Creative
- Believe in collaborating and cooperating
- Achievement oriented
- Appreciate speed

Key Elements of each Generation

- ▶ Greatest/Silent Generation

Rich or poor, man or woman, they bonded over the Great Depression, World War II and the Korean War, going from economic despair to the most powerful nation in the world.

- ▶ Baby Boomers

Grew up in a healthy economic era and believe that long hours and hard work will result in success, and this success is defined by personal accomplishment.

- ▶ Generation X

Raised in a period of great socio-economic upheaval. Many of the mothers entered the workforce, leaving the kids to take care of themselves after school. These kids were called *latch-key kids*.

- ▶ Generation Y - Millennials

Extremely technologically savvy, and they believe in working smarter as opposed to working longer.

- ▶ Generation Z

Growing up with wars, school violence, and severe recession. They will look for reliable products and services and are more likely to save money than spend it. They will use technology to find solutions to problems.

Leveraging the Strengths of Each Generation

Baby Boomers

As Employees, Baby Boomers:

- ▶ Are proven hard workers
- ▶ Service oriented; want to please
- ▶ Function well in teams
- ▶ Compete to win
- ▶ May not be able to retire as early as planned

To get the best from Baby Boomers:

- ▶ Recognize their value
- ▶ Honor their experience
- ▶ Serve as mentors/coaches
- ▶ Allow for flexible schedules

Sources: Zemke, R., Raines, C. & Filipczak, B. (2000). Generations at Work: managing the clash of veterans, boomers, Xers, and nexters in your workplace, New York: AMACOM.

Leveraging the Strengths of Each Generation

Generation X

As Employees, Generation X:

- ▶ Have no fear of technology
- ▶ Adaptable; creative
- ▶ Function well individually
- ▶ Teamwork can be done but isn't their preference
- ▶ Will constantly question, "Why are we doing it this way?"

To get the best from Generation X:

- ▶ Tap their expertise in technology
- ▶ Value their competence and creativity
- ▶ Provide them with their "role" within the organization
- ▶ Give some control over their time when possible

Sources: Zemke, R., Raines, C. & Filipczak, B. (2000). Generations at Work: managing the clash of veterans, boomers, Xers, and nexters in your workplace, New York: AMACOM.

Leveraging the Strengths of Each Generation

Millennials

As Employees, Millennials:

- ▶ Embrace new technology and will change jobs to keep up with it
- ▶ Low tolerance for bureaucracy but civic minded
- ▶ Enjoy working w/Boomers
- ▶ Teamwork

To get the best from Millennials:

- ▶ Tap their expertise in technology
- ▶ Create a plan for their future
- ▶ Role rotation and cross-training
- ▶ Eliminate bureaucracy and hierarchical structures
- ▶ Mentor and coach one-on-one

Sources: Zemke, R., Raines, C. & Filipczak, B. (2000). Generations at Work: managing the clash of veterans, boomers, Xers, and nexters in your workplace, New York: AMACOM.

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5 Best Practices for Leading a Multigenerational Workforce

1. Operate from a Sophisticated Management Style

- ▶ Communicate vision, specific goals and measures to employees
- ▶ Communicate, manage and train employees based on the best management practices to get them engaged
- ▶ Include all generations for planning and decision-making
- ▶ Use multiple communication avenues and over-communicate

Sources: Goudreau, J. (2/14/2013). How to communicate in the new multigenerational office. www.forbes.com

Tolbize, A. (2008) Generational differences in the workplace. Research and Training Center on Community Living, University of Minnesota, p. 8-9. Retrieved from http://rtc3.umn.edu/docs/2_18_Gen_diff_workplace.pdf.

2. Create Workplace Choices

- ▶ Allow the workplace to shape itself around the work being done, clients being served, and people who do the work
 - This translates into decreased bureaucracy, short chain of command, a relaxed and informal environment and allowing employees to have fun.

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3. Respect Competence and Initiative

- ▶ Assume the best in people
- ▶ Provide autonomy to do the work and reward performance accordingly
- ▶ Let the workers tell you where their efforts are best employed
- ▶ Listen to their ideas
 - The next big thing for your organization may come from Twitter or the energy of a young twenty-something on your staff.

Sources: Goudreau, J. (2/14/2013). How to communicate in the new multigenerational office. www.forbes.com

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4. Accommodate Employee Differences

- ▶ Treating employees as you do your customers
- ▶ Identify and try to serve your employee's preferences
 - ❑ Work-life balance, flextime, job sharing, telecommunicating, and scheduling options to accommodate a diverse workforce.

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5. Nourish Retention

- ▶ Encouraging life-long learning
 - ❑ Offering training, one-to-one coaching, mentoring and leadership opportunities
- ▶ Offer parallel movement between jobs
 - ❑ With broadened assignments to gain experience and break down the silos
- ▶ Offer a wide variety and choices of benefits
 - ❑ Life, health, 401(k) match, etc.

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