

The Next Generation

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Win an iPod Nano!

We have begun preparations for writing the second edition of **Loyalty Unplugged: How to Get, Keep, and Grow All Four Generations**, and we would greatly appreciate your input. Have you read our book? Do you have some feedback you would be willing to share with us?



If so, we invite you to participate in our very brief online questionnaire. As a gesture of thanks, **the first 100 people to complete the questionnaire will be entered into a draw to win an iPod nano!**

Please click [here](#) to access the questionnaire. We look forward to receiving your feedback!

About n-gen

We have worked with 10 of the 14 Canadian Fortune 500 companies, as selected by Forbes magazine in 2008.

We have trained over 8000 people through our various workshops.

We have delivered keynote presentations to more than 18,000 individuals.

The Next Generation

Often after a presentation or during workshop, n-gen facilitators are asked about "the next generation", the generation following Gen Y. What will that generation be called? How will they be different from Gen Ys? How are they being raised?

The quick answer is: We don't really know. There has been some speculation over the characteristics of the next generation (those born roughly between 2001 and 2020), but since the oldest members of this generation are only nine years old, and the majority haven't even been born yet, it is difficult to theorize. The world changes so rapidly, with unforeseen events, that one can only imagine how our society will evolve in the next 11 years.

As of today, this generation remains nameless. Several names have been proposed, but no one name has been consistently referenced in generational discourse. In this newsletter, we will take a closer look at three of the most popular names being touted for the next generation: The New Silent Generation (also referred to as The Homeland Generation), Generation C, and the Nano Generation.

A well chosen name is important, because it can broadly allude to the characteristics of a generation. One of the most important factors to consider, which shapes the characteristics of any generation, is the influence of parenting. It's hard to believe, but Generation X is all grown up. They are the parents of the next generation. How will the independent, sceptical, creative and adaptable Gen Xers raise the next generation? In this month's newsletter, we will examine what the research suggests.

What's in a Name?

New Silent Generation / Homeland Generation

William Strauss and Neil Howe, leading US demographers, are known for their theories on four types of generations:

- Artist/Adaptive
- Prophet/Idealist
- Nomad/Reactive
- Hero/Civic

They believe these four generation types are on a recurrent cycle:

- Traditionalists (The Silent Generation): Artist/Adaptive
- Baby Boomers: Prophet/Idealist
- Generation X: Nomad/Reactive
- Generation Y: Hero/Civic
- New Silent Generation (Homeland Generation): Artist/Adaptive

The "New Silent Generation" was initially a proposed holding name for the next generation, but Strauss and Howe now refer to this generation as the Homeland Generation.

The values of Artist/Adaptive generations include fairness, inclusion, and family. They believe in social justice. They have a strong work ethic, not readily accepting failure in anything they undertake.

Is it possible that we will see the workplace revert back to Traditionalist values when the Homeland Generation enters the workforce? If so, we may see a resurgence of employee dedication, sacrifice, and conservatism.

Generation C

Generation C has also been used to label the next generation, with the "C" having numerous relevant meanings. To sum it up in one sentence: Generation C has been born into a highly complex world, where people in the global community stay connected to one another through various forms of creative communication (most of which are just a click way on computerized devices).

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Nano Generation

The Nano Generation is a name that conjures a technological image of the next generation - and rightfully so. Nanotechnology is the study of the control of matter on an atomic and molecular scale. It is, in a sense, the "next generation of technology". Gen Y children were the first to grow up with readily available technology, mostly in the form of personal computers. The Nano Generation is growing up with new hardware and software, which are evolving more rapidly than ever.

Like Generation Y, the Nano Generation will only know a highly digital world, but unlike previous generations, Nano children will have parents who embrace technology with them. Nano kids will have less of a "technological generation gap", between themselves and their parents.

The X-Factor: Raising the Next Generation

Gen Xers were the "slackers" who grew up in one of the most anti-child decades (according to Howe & Strauss). More children from this generation were born to single mothers than ever before. Divorce and dual-income families resulted in latchkey kids who needed to take care of themselves at early ages.

The image of the traditional nuclear family continues to give way to a much broader picture of family. Family, for the next generation, may include mothers as breadwinners, fathers as stay-at-home-dads, same sex parents, common law couples, step-parents and step-siblings, and even internationally adopted children. Given this new model of family, we believe the next generation will redefine gender roles in and out of the workplace.

Despite the fact that today's modern family may look different than it did in previous generations, we are finding that parental dynamics within the family are still quite traditional. Gen Xers tend to raise their children in a hybrid style between Traditionalists and Baby Boomers. They are not as rigid as the former, but also not as conciliatory as the latter. Gen Xer parents will say 'no', and not every discussion with a child ends in negotiation and compromise. Our hypothesis is that with parents providing clear boundaries to their children, we will see a greater tolerance for rules and boundaries in the workplace.

The next generation is growing up in a technological world, where everything is mutable - from means of information sharing to definitions of family. At this point, we can only speculate how this will influence them as working adults. Since a generation's identity is shaped in the first 16 years of life, we need to continue to monitor all the factors (e.g. school systems, economy, world events & family upbringing) that influence values, behaviours and expectations. We will then be able to project how this identity will impact organizations and people practices. As with all previous generations, however, the next generation will undoubtedly challenge organizations to evolve, and will push the boundaries of their organizational structures and culture.

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