

The changing natures of work

By STEVE MacNAULL
The Daily Courier

Terms like 'situational leadership' and 'employee engagement' were thrown around at the recent Taking Human Resources to New Heights Symposium at Silver Star Resort near Vernon.

The Daily Courier had a chance to talk to two of the guest speakers at the two-day symposium.

Giselle Kovary of N-Gen Performance Inc.

Author and trainer Kovary says go ahead and treat everyone at work differently.

"This is the only time in history there's been four generations in the workplace," said the author of *Loyalty Unplugged: How to Keep and Grow All Four Generations in the Workplace* (202 pages, Ixibris, \$26.50).

"They all need and want different things, so employers and managers have to use situational leadership in order to recognize that and engage and motivate employees of all ages."

Traditionalists are those age 62 and older, baby boomers are 43-61, generation Xers 27-42 and gen Y seven to 26.

"It's the most dynamic and most challenging workplace because you have four generations and need four different approaches," said Kovary.

"Most workplaces are set up to the boomer culture because it is the biggest. But it has to be more customized if employers are going to successfully recruit and retain workers from each generation."

Traditionalists tend to be loyal to the organization and like to keep regular office hours.

Boomers tend to be more loyal to a team and also like to keep regular office hours.

Gen Xers tend to be loyal to a manager or mentor they like and are the biggest proponents of work-life balance.

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Author Giselle Kovary



Contributed

Speakers at the Taking Human Resources to New Heights Symposium at Silver Star Resort near Vernon were Toronto-based Giselle Kovary and Vancouver-based Brian Fraser.

Gen Y tends to be loyal to co-workers they like and admire and want a fluid life where they work when they want to using technology.

"Offer flexibility to all," suggested Kovary.

"It may be difficult to manage up front, but it will be better for all employees and the organization in the long-run. For the most part employees want to contribute and do a good job so the work will get done."

Brian Fraser, Jazzthink, Vancouver

Executive coach and speaker Brian Fraser's business is called Jazzthink because he loves that genre of music and feels the teamwork, trust and fun a jazz group has mirrors a successful business operation.

At the conference, Fraser's group watched music videos from Diana Krall's *Live in Paris* and were inspired to brainstorm on leadership and teamwork.

"Jazz brings out creative thought," said Fraser. "For the most part, the wisdom was in the room. It just needed to be brought to the forefront keeping in mind a business structure that can change and adapt. Jazz also has a structure or melody line, but can change and adapt as well."

At the end of the session, the group had come to the conclusion that there are four essentials to employee engagement.

- Allow workers to tap into their passion by making sure they are in the right job and allow them to do a good job their way.

- Capacity build by identifying people's talents and growing them through mentoring, training and challenging work.

- Develop collaboration through good teambuilding and putting people in the right positions so they respect and support each other.

- Provide the right structures and tools so people can enjoy and do their jobs effectively.