

n-gen's New Book is Coming!

In This Issue

[Managing an Experienced Workforce](#)

[Preview Our Table of Contents](#)

[Chapter Overview](#)

[Generational Considerations](#)

[Work Style](#)

[Communication](#)

[Risk Taking](#)

[Respect](#)

[Respect](#)

[Your Questions Answered](#)

Join Our GAC

Click [here](#) to learn about our **Generational Advisory Council**.

GAC members are entered into a monthly draw to win a \$50 gift card!

Congratulations

Congratulations to **Danielle Wallace**, who won this month's GAC draw!

E-Learning

n-gen's e-learning course, **Four Generations**, is now available for individual purchase.

Click [here](#) to visit the n-gen store.

Sneak Peek Our Chapter: Managing an Experienced Workforce

We are pleased to announce that n-gen's 2nd book will be released in Spring 2012. Aligning to our mission of providing Generational 2.0 solutions, this book offers practical tips by focusing on the "top 10" skills leaders need to effectively manage within a multigenerational workforce. We provide the knowledge, practical advice and techniques required to be a successful leader. In the coming months, via our newsletters and webinars, we will be providing you with a brief synopsis of the key topics from our book.

In this newsletter, we highlight the topic of *Managing an Experienced Workforce*. The results from this month's Generational Advisory Committee (GAC) survey are also incorporated to provide insights into how managers and employees respond to this workplace issue.

A Preview of Our Table of Contents:

Career development
Performance management
Managing an experienced workforce
Building an engaging work environment
Empowering and delegating
Change management
Rewards & recognition
Managing virtual/remote teams
Leveraging social media
The future of leadership

Chapter Overview

For the first time in working history, younger generations are managing older generations in the workplace. In fact, it is becoming increasingly common for Gen Xers and Gen Ys to be managing employees from the Baby Boomer and Traditionalist cohorts. It used to be the case that supervisors were older than their employees, because they possessed more knowledge, competencies and experience. Today, the percentage of university and college graduates is higher, resulting in graduates who were exposed to a lot of information (in a 24/7 Internet world) during their formative years. Thus, they enter into the work world with a wide range of competencies and skills, which often allows them to leap frog over the older generations into supervisory positions. Additionally, with the institution of strong performance management systems, organizations now have a stronger focus on results and are able to track, measure and make decisions based on objective criteria, namely the demonstration of competencies and results achieved.

Generational Considerations

This new workplace reality, in which younger supervisors manage older employees, brings with it an interesting dynamic. Just as many Baby Boomers and Traditionalists are confused about how to manage Gen Xers and Gen Ys, conversely the younger generations are not always confident that they manage their older employees effectively. The root of the issue is that, while the different generations may use the same words or concepts in the workplace, each generation defines those words and concepts differently based on their experiences. These varying experiences actually result in different behaviours and approaches to work. That's where the confusion, the missteps, and the misunderstandings are rooted - in our differing definitions and behaviours. When it comes to Gen Xers and Gen Ys managing Baby Boomers and Traditionalists, there are essentially five fundamental differences in the way work is approached.

Five Differences in the Way We Work #1 - Work Style:

Gen Xers and Gen Ys have a very flexible and fluid work style. They like to work on multiple tasks at the same time and blend their personal and professional lives. Due to Traditionalists' work histories, (which is often present in very traditionalist industries, sectors and companies) there is a preference for working in a very linear fashion, and a strong focus on rules, processes and policies.

Within our GAC, 75% of Gen Ys and 70% of Gen X say that a flexible work environment is very important to them, compared with 50% of Baby Boomers.

#2 - Communication

While Baby Boomers and Traditionalists often complain about a lack of face-to-face communication skills demonstrated by Gen Xer and, in particular, the casualness of Gen Ys, the younger generations are frustrated with the number of meetings they attend that are too long, involve too many people, and don't result in action plans and accountability assignments.

50% of our GAC members manage employees who are older than they are.

#3 - Risk Taking

Generally speaking, younger generations have been exposed to, and are more comfortable with, change. Consider the widespread adoption of new technologies and the rate at which they change. Gen Xers and Gen Ys tend to have a higher tolerance for risk taking than Baby Boomers and Traditionalists, and therefore are more likely to challenge the status quo and expect an on-going state of change.

Only 18% of our GAC members believe that they, and the employees that they work with, easily adapt to change.

#4 - Respect

The older generations typically respect authority based on title, seniority and tenure. For the younger generations, time served or title has less value than the ability to achieve results, possess competencies and successfully get the job done.

"When I managed older colleagues, I was able to draw on their expertise, as they may have seen situations I had not yet experienced in my industry. It was incredibly valuable! I sometimes found my youth was challenged, but I was able to overcome these challenges by demonstrating an earnest desire to learn - older colleagues saw that I was actually doing their job in order to understand what worked/didn't work and that gained respect."

- Gen X GAC Member

#5 - Time

For many Baby Boomers, they grew up in an environment where dedication to the job was measured by the amount of hours they put in. In contrast, the younger generations' motto is to work smarter, not harder. This means that time spent isn't the measure of success, but rather the outcome achieved.

"The older colleagues are used to the way work has been done for many years. The younger team members want to do the work more effectively. For example, the older colleagues work long hours to do every little thing that needs to be done whereas the younger team members focus on what is important to get done."

- Gen X GAC Member

Your Questions Answered

As with all leaders, Gen Xers and Gen Ys who manage experienced employees must learn to become great situational leaders. Our Managing an Experienced Workforce chapter will answer your questions about how to lead an older workforce by outlining how to:

- Acknowledge your value judgments
- Demonstrate respect.
- Learn from & recognize Baby Boomers
- Create greater team collaboration
- Focus on the results, not the process
- Use formal feedback mechanisms
- Show compassion for catastrophic life-events
- Provide learning support

What are we up to?

Check out n-gen's [online calendar](#) for upcoming speaking engagements, webinars, and other events.

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