



ADAYANA®



White Paper

The Power of 4

The Four Generations:
Who They Are

Solution Design Group

Challenge

The salad bowl of the American workplace is heaping and more colorful than ever. The workforce of today is seeing the biggest mix and most diverse set of values, views, ambitions, demographics, and mindsets it has ever seen before. A key reason for this diversity lies in the fact that four distinct generations are, for the first time, working side by side, cubicle to cubicle, together.

Millennials, the youngest generation, have begun to join the workforce with, from oldest to youngest, the Silents, Baby Boomers, and Generation Xers, which has resulted in the growing realization of misunderstandings between the older and younger employees. With each generation being different, conflict is inevitable. According to a survey by Lee Hecht Harrison, more than 60 percent of employers say they are experiencing tension between employees from different generations. The survey found more than 70 percent of older employees are dismissive of younger workers' abilities, and nearly half of employers say that younger employees are dismissive of the abilities of their older co-workers. Each generation has its own work ethic, pattern of communication, motivational factors, and values that drive them, so this tension between the four is not going to change. An understanding between each generation is needed to relieve the tensions of many workplaces today.

Building generational understanding allows the needs of all employees to be fulfilled and fully accepted and also bridges the gap in understanding how one may view him or herself as an employee. Each generation has a preferred way of being managed, so managing these four generations together effectively will and should become a vital goal for further organizational development. Acknowledging generational differences offers companies access to a wider array of creative ideas, and also ensures the current talent pool is always fully tapped.

As Ron Zemke says in his book, *Generations at Work*, "There is a growing realization that the gulf of misunderstanding and resentment between older, not so old, and younger employees in the workplace is growing and problematic. It is a rift that will not heal itself or just go away, as so many organizations – those even aware of it—fervently hope. It is a problem based on economics, demographics, and world views that must be confronted to be solved."

*The descriptions described in this paper are broad overviews of the four generations according to research. They may not fit each employee's personality exactly, but they describe the generations as a whole according to research and observation.

Silent Generation

Those born between 1922 and 1943 are referred to as “Veterans,” or the “Silent Generation.” The use of the term “Silent Generation” to refer to this group of people was coined by Time magazine in a cover story in 1951. They were described at the time as having characteristics such as being grave, fatalistic, conventional, expecting disappointment, but desiring faith. The silent generation was caught between the “get it done” mindset of the previous “Greatest Generation” and the out-to-change the world mindset of the Baby Boomers.



The Silent Generation was born during the years that followed the Great Depression and throughout the Second World War. Those born in this generation were typically too young to remember World War I and for the most part missed the Korean War. The Silent Generation was too old for the

Vietnam War. Despite the lack of participation in these wars, the Silent Generation had “super heroes” for role models. These included high profile presidents such as Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman, along with war heroes such as Generals Eisenhower and Patton. From these role models, the Silent Generation typically responded favorably to experience and accomplishments of others. Interestingly, the Silent Generation has yet to produce a US President; however, this generation has produced the most acclaimed leaders from the Civil Rights and Women’s movements. As Ann Fishman, an expert on the habits of different generations has said, “The major contribution of the

Silent Generation was to humanize their world and now, they want to help ensure a safe world for their grandchildren.”

Unlike most of the generations that have followed them, the Silent Generation is made up primarily of conformers. They value discipline and have a respect for authority. The Silent Generation was primarily centered around the traditional/“nuclear” family most commonly pictured in television shows such as “Leave it to Beaver” and “Ozzie and Harriet.” As they have aged, the Silent Generation is redefining how people age. This generation sees itself as a vital and active group of people with a continued zest for life and a desire to contribute to society in general, and their workplace specifically. As more and more of the Silent Generation retire, they continue to be a factor in their communities with an exceptionally high rate of participation as volunteers.

The Silent Generation values hard work and the notion of sacrifice and work coming before fun. This generation values following rules and has that expectation of those with whom they work, as well as those they respect in the community. The Silent Generation is used to and values a directive and authoritative management style. Since this generation values experience, the people from this time had an expectation that their own experiences held an unmeasured value. As the four different generations collide in the workplace, those who flaunt the machinations of the workplace bureaucracy may clash with the Silent Generation.

The communication style of the Silent Generation tends to be formal, focused on the idea of properly putting information into a well crafted memo, rather than the “off the cuff” communication style of e-mails and text messages. Silent Generation members tend to have a learning style that is focused on the classic classroom based instruction, with learning provided in a linear format with clear feedback. Those from the Silent Generation will most likely be less inclined to multi-task like the generations that came after – Generations X and Y.

In line with the Silent Generation’s preference for hard work and experience, the people in this group are motivated by the formal recognition of a job well done. Informality and lack of respect for formal rules can be de-motivating to those in this generation. Additionally, the reward to overzealous ambition instead of those with seniority can demotivate these individuals.

Baby Boomers

Nearly 80 million people were born between the years 1943 and 1964. The beginning of this time frame coincided with the end of World War II, and this generation has had a profound effect on popular culture, public policy, the growth of prosperity across the world, and the demand for public services in countries like the United States.

The Baby Boomers were the first generation to be raised in front of a television. With the successful advent of televisions entering homes from coast to coast, in rural and urban areas, people in diverse locations were exposed to the same shows, news, music and jokes. From their living rooms, the Baby Boomers saw assassinations of leaders, saw a man land on the moon, and watched as cultural phenoms left a burning trail across the entertainment universe. Music, Rock and Roll in particular, became a defining expression of the Baby Boomers.

Education for the Baby Boomers was dramatically different than previous generations. More and more of the Baby Boomers were able to complete high school, and college was not just for the elite,



but became, for the first time, a viable choice.

The large size of the Baby Boomers has brought much attention to this generation. From both the size of the generation as well as their impact to society, Baby Boomers have strong sense of self and a desire for involvement in their world, particularly at work. They have a strong work ethic, and a desire to receive rewards commensurate with their efforts.

Like the Silent Generation, Baby Boomers are hard workers, to the point of being considered “workaholics.” While valuing hard work, the Baby Boomers are also focused on personal fulfillment and are willing to question authority. Work is an exciting adventure for the Baby Boomers, especially since they have seen such prosperity and the incredible growth of the middle class, especially in the United States. The Baby Boomers are direct communicators and have an improved adaptability to technology and modern communication techniques. The Baby Boomers adapt with learning styles, and can succeed with traditional instructor-led training as well as self-directed training techniques.

Baby Boomers are good team players and enjoy a collegial sense of work. They enjoy recognition and desire monetary rewards for their personal investment in their work. They respond to work incentives such as enhanced job titles, perks such as personal parking spaces, and status symbols that separate them from their peers. Due to their large size, it has commonly been said that the Baby Boomers are competitive because they had to distinguish themselves from their peers.

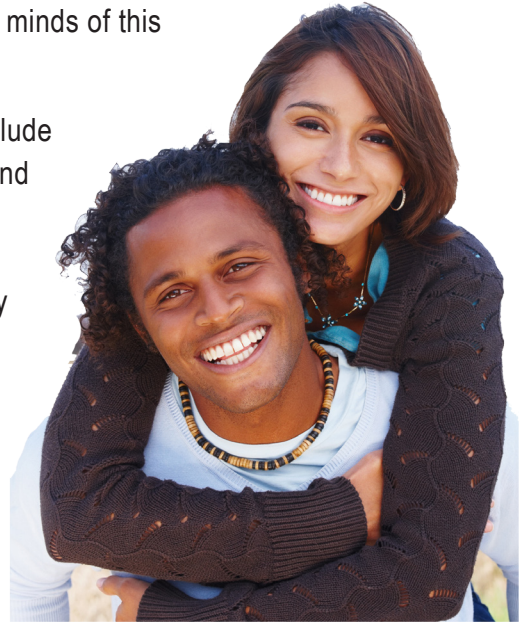
Again, due to its size, the Baby Boomers have and will continue to change the size and structure of the workplace. In 2008, the oldest Baby Boomer qualified for retirement , and it was the first year they were able to draw from Social Security. This large cohort has increased the average age of the US work force since it entered the work force. From the year 2000 to 2025 the population of those 55 years of age and older will be the fastest growing age group. This has an impact to society in the need to provide services for these individuals. Additionally, as these individuals leave the workforce, there is an enormous opportunity for businesses to capture the Baby Boomers knowledge and experience prior to exiting in retirement.

Generation X

The 46 million Gen Xers in our workforce today were born between 1964 and 1981. Now in their late twenties and mid forties, many are reaching the midpoint of their careers. Gen Xers grew up in the shadow of the Boomers, and are sometimes regarded negatively as being too concerned about themselves or as cynical skeptics. Some say that the individualism and skepticism of the generation came from events that occurred during the Gen Xer’s lifetime. They were the latch-key, post-Vietnam generation that witnessed Watergate, the Challenger disaster, and the Jonestown mass suicide. They also witnessed many hard working baby boomers face the daunting fate of corporate lay-off. Gen Xers

stood around and watched as America seemed to fail politically, militarily, and economically. In response, this generation hunkered down and learned to survive in a world where not everything was brighter on the other side. In the minds of this generation, the American dream was no longer reality.

The core values and personality traits of this generation include self reliance, work family balance, informality, skepticism, and individualism. Because this generation grew up spending less time with their parents and saw them as workaholics, they became the independent, balance-desiring people they are today. Their communication styles tend to be similar to their work pace: fast, direct, immediate, and technology based. Not prone to working extensive overtime or on weekends, members of this generation tend to reject formality, rules, and protocol – all of which hamper their ability to get the job done so they can go on with their personal lives.



This generation, having been accused of having little or no attention span, actually learns and processes work in a different way. They have the ability to multi-task by handling diverse information differently. This stems from their desire in the workplace to attain the goal as fast as they can in the most efficient and effective way.

Even though the Gen Xers are disregarded by older generations who say they are too independent and only care about themselves, this generation is going to be an increasingly critical part of the workforce over the next few decades. Many of them already head their own companies, and others will follow. With their technological acuity and growing business savvy, Gen Xers are on their way up the hierarchical plane, working closely with while also competing with members of the earlier generations.

Millennials

The generation born between 1980 and 2008 consists of almost 75 million people – nearly as big as the baby boom. The Millennials, also referred to as Generation Y, Nexters, and Echo boomers, are sociable, optimistic, talented, well-educated, collaborative, open minded, and influential. This generation has just entered the workforce and is taking it by storm. Because this generation has just recently entered the workplace, managers are scrambling to find out more about this “rowdy” crowd.

As the Millennials were being born, parents’ focus on children and family was at its highest. The

Federal Forum on Family Statistics reported that national attention to children was at an all-time high (The earlier peak was in the 1960s when the Boomers were kids.) While the Gen Xer's grew up independent from their parents, the Millennials had the full attention of their parents who were



scheduling their kids for a slew of activities and allowing them to have “micromanaged” schedules. Older parents brought more maturity to their roles as caregivers and teachers, and in response have catered to the youngest generation since they were tiny.

Along with attention-giving parents, technology has had one of the biggest impacts on this generation. Millennials were the first generation to grow up surrounded by media, and it has allowed them to connect with each other globally and unite them as a generation. With the significant gains in technology and education in the 1990s, they are also the most educated generation in the workplace and are the most resilient in navigating change while deepening their appreciation for diversity and inclusion.

This age group is moving into the workplace during a time of demographic change. The oldest Boomers are facing retirement, while the GenXers only comprise a small part of the workforce. The Millennials are a hot commodity in the job market, and they are coming in with job expectations different from those who came before. This generation wants to be challenged, treated respectfully, and given flexible working hours. They also have a desire to learn new things and see a career as something they can change often for their own self fulfillment and sense of identity.

Since this generation grew up in the digital age, their communication styles differ slightly from the past generations, in that they would rather send an e-mail or text message than pick up the phone. They seek positive reinforcement and feedback from employers, teachers, and coaches, while also desiring communication that is direct, respectable, and goal-focused.

Managing this generation effectively will be crucial for maintaining a strong workforce in the future. Some say they have a combination of characteristics from all three previous generations – the teamwork ethic of boomers, the can-do attitude of veterans, and the technology savvy of Xers.

Summary of Generations

Each generation has been shaped by the times from which they grew up and all members bring different skills, mindsets, and attitudes to the work environment. The Silent generation is made up of conformers who value discipline and hard work, while the Millennials are a generation of technology-savvy multi-culturists who value balance and teamwork. Baby Boomers are motivated by money and leadership opportunities, while Generation X is made up of the independent, skeptics who value informality and individualism. Even though this diversity could hamper a work setting, the sharing of knowledge and unique skills and interaction between those who differ from one another is one of the greatest outcomes of a multigenerational workplace working together. For the workplace to remain focused on ultimate goals, it will be crucial to make sure the salad bowl is stirred evenly and effectively.

What Adayana Can Do

Being a performance improvement organization focused on training and employee development, Adayana can leverage its strengths to help other companies improve their performance. Adayana represents a company with four generations working together in the workplace and can use its knowledge in this area to enhance employee performance as related to solidifying generation interaction through the following techniques:

- Use of technology to enhance learning
- Social networking to build cohesion
- Organizational strategies for successful career path development
- Blended learning solutions to appeal to different learning and communication styles

Summary of Capabilities

Adayana is a global human capital management solutions provider that maximizes business performance for clients by enhancing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of employees. This has a direct and discernible impact on employee productivity and quality of work. Adayana provides an integrated portfolio of services centered around blended and technology-enabled learning to help organizations meet their performance goals. It also specializes in procuring or providing deep industry knowledge and experience for the benefit of the clients, resulting in greater value from Adayana's thought leadership, approach to innovation, and results-oriented focus.

Next Steps

Following this whitepaper, a series of whitepapers will be created as a follow-up within the next 18 months. This series will describe the techniques and practices to effectively manage a workforce of four generations. The series will include:

- Effective communication practices for the four generations
- Learning styles and techniques for managing the four generations
- Career planning for the four generations

	Veterans Born 1922-1943 Approx 52 million	Baby Boomers Born 1943-1964 Approx 78.2 million	Generation X Born 1964-1980 Approx. 46 million	Generation Y / Millennials Born 1980-current Approx 75 million
Core Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect for authority • Conformers • Discipline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimism • Involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skepticism • Fun • Informality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Realism • Confidence • Extreme fun • Social
Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional • Nuclear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disintegrating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Latch-key kids • High divorce rate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Merged families
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A dream 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A birthright 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A way to get there 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An incredible expense
Communication Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toray phones • One-on-one • Write a memo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Touch-tone phones • Call me any time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cell phones • Call me only at work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internet • Picture phones • E-mail • Facebook
Dealing with Money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put it away • Pay cash 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buy now, pay later 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cautious • Conservative • Save, save, save 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earn to spend
Workplace				

Work Ethic and Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hard work • Respect • Sacrifice • Duty before fun • Adhere to rules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workaholics • Work efficiently • Personal fulfillment • Desire quality • Question authority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate the task • Self-reliance • Want structure and direction • Skeptical • Want Balance • Individualism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiculturalism • Multitasking • Tenacity • Entrepreneurial • Tolerant • Goal oriented • Civic minded
Work View	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An obligation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An exciting adventure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A difficult challenge • A contract • Fastest route to results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A means to an end • Fulfillment • Source of identity and fulfillment
Leadership Style	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directive • Command-and-control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consensual • Collegial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone is the same • Challenge others • Ask why 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBD
Interactive Style	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team player • Loves to have meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entrepreneur 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participative
Communication Style	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal • Memo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In person 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct • Immediate • Casual 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-mail • Text messaging • Goal-focused • Motivational

Motivational Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your experience is respected • Formal recognition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are valued • You are needed • Money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freedom/ Independence • Leading edge technology • Simultaneous tasks and projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with positive people • To be challenged • Flexible schedules • Learning new skills
Work and Family Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ne'er the twain shall meet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No balance • Work to live 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balance
Learning Preferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructor-Led training • Traditional/ Focused 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructor- Led training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured learning environment • Needs to know exactly what is expected • Prefer team projects • Prefer flexibility in learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teamwork • Technology-oriented • Structure • Entertainment • Experiential activities

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