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WINNING
with a
Multi-Generational Team

Presented by: Jen Martin

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Jen Martin is a 25-year veteran of the building materials industry and a strong advocate of the "credit is an extension of sales" philosophy. She earned a BS in Business Management from Regis University and is active in the credit community previously serving as an advisory board member for technology solution providers, Levelset and NetNow, as a regular online credit contributor and speaker on credit best practices.

In her current role as Director of Credit for Carter Lumber, Jen is focused on showcasing credit's value as a business partner, fostering the importance of strong relationships and charting a path to receivable and cashflow excellence thru education and empowerment of credit professionals.

Jen splits her time between Kent, Ohio and Castle Rock, Colorado. She enjoys retreating to the mountains to enjoy a glass of wine around a fire pit and singing the praises of her two "Nexter" adult kids. You can keep up with Jen and current construction credit best practices by following her on LinkedIn.

Jen Martin | LinkedIn

For the first time ever, we have 5 generations in the workforce!

All possessing differing **workstyles** and **preferences** leading to a myriad of different communication styles. Maneuvering thru this generational diversity, effectively leading and very importantly – **communicating** with an audience that spans 5 different generations can be a challenge.

If approached from the standpoint of attempting to understand and embrace generational diversity, we will realize the **opportunities to speak to our audience and WIN!**

Winning with a Multi-Generational Team

- Is it Important & is this Science?
- Overview of the Generations
- Shifting Workforce
- Challenges & Opportunities
- Communication
- Collaboration
- Learning
- Conclusion
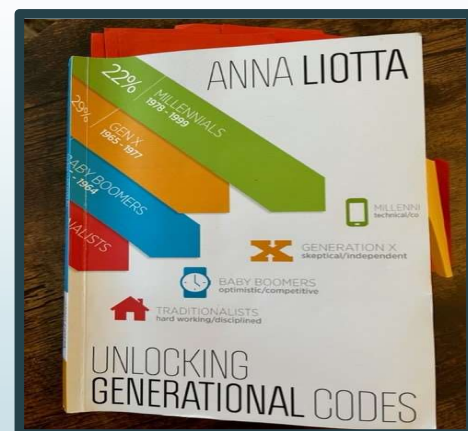
Yes & No…
It is Important, but not quite Science

- Disclaimer!
- Astrology & Science
- Just a passionate "Credit Leader", not a professional sociologist or psychologist…
  - A little bit research (noted at end) and a whole lot of experience
- Pew Research Center: 5 things to Keep in mind (5/22/2023)
  1. Generational categories are not scientifically defined.
  2. Generational labels can lead to stereotypes and oversimplification.
  3. Discussions about generation often focus on differences instead of similarities.
  4. Conventional views of generations can carry an upper-class bias.
  5. People change over time.
- Be skeptical but incorporate what works

Overview of the Generations

It is helpful to think of the "anchor points" or major world events, leaders and social moods in play during each generation's formative years - what we experienced collectively from ages 8-18 has a large impact on our view of the world.

TRADITIONALISTS

- Value loyalty
- Strong work ethic
- Human connections
- Appreciate job security
- Formal work environment

TRADITIONALISTS BORN: 1925–1945

DEPENDABLE | STRAIGHTFORWARD | TACTFUL | LOYAL

Shaped by: The Great Depression, World War II, radio and movies
Motivated by: Respect, recognition, providing long-term value to the company
Communication style: Personal touch, handwritten notes instead of email
Worldview: Obedience over individualism; age equals seniority; advancing through the hierarchy

Employers should:
Provide satisfying work and opportunities to contribute; emphasize stability

BABY BOOMERS

- Value teamwork
- Duty & loyalty
- Job security & stability
- Goal-oriented
- Recognition from superiors
- Structured work environment

BABY BOOMERS BORN: 1946–1964

65%
Baby Boomers who plan to work past age 65[3]

10,000
Baby Boomers reach retirement age every day[4]

OPTIMISTIC | COMPETITIVE | WORKAHOLIC | TEAM-ORIENTED

Shaped by: Vietnam War, Civil Rights Movement, Watergate
Motivated by: Company loyalty, teamwork, duty
Communication style: Whatever is most efficient, including phone calls and face to face
Worldview: Achievement comes after paying one's dues; sacrifice for success

Employers should:
Provide them with specific goals and deadlines; put them in mentor roles; offer coaching-style feedback

GENERATION X

- Value independence
- Flexibility in jobs
- Work-life balance
- Skeptical of authority
- Work autonomously

GENERATION X BORN: 1965 – 1980

FLEXIBLE | INFORMAL | SKEPTICAL | INDEPENDENT

Shaped by: The AIDs epidemic, the fall of the Berlin Wall, the dot-com boom

Motivated by: Diversity, work-life balance, their personal-professional interests rather than the company's interests

Communication style: Whatever is most efficient, including phone calls and face to face

Worldview: Favoring diversity; quick to move on if their employer fails to meet their needs; resistant to change at work if it affects their personal lives

Employers should:
Give them immediate feedback; provide flexible work arrangements and work-life balance; extend opportunities for personal development

55%
Startup founders who are Gen Xers—the highest percentage[5]

BY 2028
Gen Xers will outnumber Baby Boomers[6]

MILLENNIALS

- Value work-life balance, personal growth
- Tech-savvy
- Collaborative, Recognition of peers
- Socially conscious
- Casual work environment

75%
Percentage of global workforce to be made up of Millennials by 2025[7]

15%
Millennials ages 25–35 living at home with their parents[8]

MILLENNIALS BORN: 1981 – 2000

COMPETITIVE | CIVIC- AND OPEN-MINDED | ACHIEVEMENT-ORIENTED

Shaped by: Columbine, 9/11, the internet

Motivated by: Responsibility, the quality of their manager, unique work experiences

Communication style: IMs, texts, and email

Worldview: Seeking challenge, growth, and development; a fun work life and work-life balance; likely to leave an organization if they don't like change

Employers should:
Get to know them personally; manage by results; be flexible on their schedule and work assignments; provide immediate feedback

GENERATION Z
"Nexters"

- Tech-savvy (digital natives)
- Entrepreneurial spirit
- Socially conscious
- Value diversity & inclusion
- Work-life balance, pursue non-work passions

GENERATION Z BORN: 2001 – 2020

GLOBAL | ENTREPRENEURIAL | PROGRESSIVE | LESS FOCUSED

Shaped by: Life after 9/11, the Great Recession, access to technology from a young age

Motivated by: Diversity, personalization, individuality, creativity

Communication style: IMs, texts, social media

Worldview: Self-identify as digital device addicts; value independence and individuality; prefer to work with Millennial managers, innovative coworkers, and new technologies

Employers should:
Offer opportunities to work on multiple projects at the same time; provide work-life balance; allow them to be self-directed and independent

40%

Gen Zers who want to interact with their boss daily or several times each day[9]

84%

Gen Zers who expect their employer to provide formal training[10]

NOTE
these are ***generalizations*** about each generation.

Not everyone within a generation will share the same values or work habits.

However, understanding these potential differences can help create a more positive work environment, help you craft a message and speak to your audience in a way that resonates.

Workforce Demographics are Shifting

Generational diversity is here to stay!

- **10,000 Baby Boomers turn 65 everyday thru 2030**

- **Millennials & Gen Z make up more than half workforce in 2025**

- **Workforce is aging and there is a trend of Boomers staying in the workforce longer; it's no longer unusual to push retirement off to early 70s**

Labor Force Share, by Age Group, 2003, 2013, 2023, Projected 2033

Percent distribution of the labor force*

Age Group	2003	2013	2023	Projected 2033
65 and older	3.2	5.2	6.7	8.6
55 to 64	11.8	16.2	16.3	15.2
45 to 54	22.7	22.2	19.6	20.4
35 to 44	25.0	21.0	21.8	22.1
25 to 34	22.1	21.7	22.3	22.1
16 to 24	15.1	13.8	13.2	11.6

*Data may not sum to 100 percent because of rounding

Challenges

Communication: Different communication styles can lead to misunderstandings and conflict . Text, email, phone, face-to-face communication. Find communication styles that work for everyone.

Technology: Younger generations may be more tech-savvy which can create a knowledge gap in the workplace . Provide training and support to ensure that everyone has the skills they need to succeed.

Work-life balance: Different expectations when it comes to work-life balance. Younger generations may prioritize flexibility and work-life balance, while older generations may prioritize job security and stability.

Attitude towards change: Older generations may be resistant to change, while younger generations may be more open to new ideas and technologies . This can create tension in the workplace and make it difficult to implement new initiatives .

Respect: Different values and work habits can lead to a lack of respect for others in the workplace . For example, younger generations may view older generations as being out of touch with modern technologies, while older generations may view younger generations as being disrespectful or unprofessional .

GENERATIONS: Best Work Traits

BABY BOOMERS	GENERATION X	MILLENNIALS	GENERATION Z
Optimistic Enjoy mentoring Strong work ethic	Independent Innovative Strong communicators	Tech-savvy Collaborative Focused on the greater good	Digitally fluent Practical Flourish in diverse workforces

Let go of "RIGHT" or "WRONG"

Reframe differences to opportunities...

> *"The key to good communication in the workplace is understanding the preferred communication styles of the different generations and using them to your advantage to communicate."*
>
> - Anna Liotta, Unlocking Generational Codes
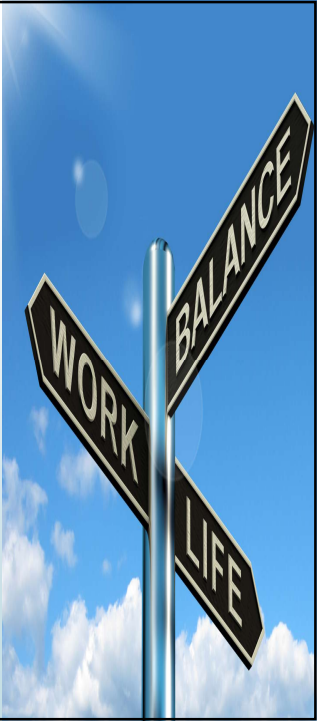
Know your audience, speak to your audience!

Communication

- **Traditionalists**: prefer **face-to-face communication** or **written memos,** tend to value **formality** and respect for authority figures.

- **Baby Boomers**: prefer **face-to-face communication** or **phone calls** . They may also value directness and a more **formal tone** in communication .

- **Generation X**: prefer **email** or **instant messaging**, may also value an **informal tone** and **appreciate humor** in communication .

- **Millennials**: prefer **text messaging** or **social media** for communication and value a more **casual** tone and appreciate **emojis** and other **visual aids** in communication .

- **Generation Z**: prefer **instant messaging** or **video chat** and likely place high value on **authenticity** and **transparency** in communication .

Views on the Role of Work…

Traditionalist	Necessary and my duty to provide for my family
Boomer	The proof of my life's accomplishment
Gen X	A means to an end
Millennial	Just one aspect of my full life, should be fun and inspiring
Nexter	Extension of social life, meaningful impact and personal growth

Collaboration & Power Dynamics

TRADITIONALISTS: **Relationships are Power**

BOOMERS: **Holding Information is Power**

GEN X: **Sharing Information is Power**

MILLENNIALS: **Knowing where and how to access Information fast is Power**

NEXTERS: **Digital natives, Information is always available - circling back to trusting relationships/sources**

Respect and Preferred Feedback Styles

TRADITIONALISTS: **No News is Good News**

BOOMERS: **Formal Annual Reviews**

GEN X: **Immediate, applicable, authentic**

MILLENNIALS: **Frequent, positive, coaching**

NEXTERS: **Real time, relevant, sensitive, helping**

KEEP CALM AND respect our generation

Learning Styles

How Different Generations Learn

	TRADITIONALIST	BOOMERS	GEN X	MILLENNIALS	NEXTERS
LEARNING	Classroom Stand and Deliver Need Structure Privacy	Facilitated Link to Personal Experiences Take Notes Passive Learners (lectures ok) Open Discussion Skill Practice	Independent Self directed Frequent feedback Active (bored by lectures) Use technology Role Play Graphics	On Demand Bite size chunks Active Fully Engaged Like Structure Instant Feedback Connection with Instructor	Teamwork Technology Structured & Supervised Interactive Different Viewpoints Presented Mentoring Entertaining
TRAINING	"the hard way"	"too much and I'll leave"	"required to keep me"	"continuous & expected"	"instant feedback"

Learning ideas

➢ Speak to your audience

➢ Use multiple formats: flyers, email, text, broadcast, streaming, formal sessions, online, print docs, in-person, one-on-one, etc…

➢ Consider frequent "Micro" learning sessions

➢ Take a page from Marketing's playbook

➢ Make it fun

Leadership Ideas

➡ Use many forms of communication
➡ Reduce fear
➡ Foster Value in the complimentary skills
➡ Practice knowledge sharing across ages
➡ Promote open-minded interactive discussion
➡ Focus on people (know your audience)
➡ Communicate (and communicate again)
➡ Listen and adapt
➡ Be flexible

Seek out Differences and Create Opportunities

- **Diversity**: A multigenerational workforce brings diversity of thought, experience, and perspective – leading to more innovative ideas and solutions.
  - **Embrace it!**

- **Mentorship**: Older generations can provide mentorship and guidance to younger generations, helping develop their skills and advance in their careers .
  - **Focus on creating a positive work environment and foster a sense of community!**

- **Knowledge sharing**: Younger generations can share their knowledge of new technologies and trends, while older generations can share their institutional knowledge and experience.
  - **Create a culture that celebrates learning and growth!**

When in doubt, ask.
When not in doubt, ask.

- Source Unknown

The "golden rule" is no longer the gold standard...

A Quick Final Summary

Generation	Silent or Traditional	Baby Boomers	Generation X	Generation Y or Millennials	Generation Z
Born	1925 – 1945	1946 – 1964	1965 – 1979	1980 – 1994	1995 - 2010
Communication Style	Top – down	Guarded	Hub & spoke	Collaborative	Electro-social, highly connected
Problem Solving	Hierarchical	Horizontal	Independent	Collaborative	Global Tribe/ Independent
Decision Making	Seeks approval	Team informed	Team included	Team Decided	Sonar / Individualistic
Leadership Style	Command & Control	Get out of the way	Coach	Partner	RSS Protagonist
Learning Style	Classroom	Facilitated	Independent	Collaborative & Networked	Pocket mobile internet based
Learning Format	Formal Instructive	Relaxed Structured	Spontaneous Interactive	Multi-sensory Visual	Student centered Kinesthetic
Training	The hard way	Too much and I'll leave	Required to keep me	Continuous & expected	Playing Life
Training Focus	Traditional On-the-job Top-down	Technical Data Evidence	Practical Case Studies Applications	Emotional Stories Participative	Multi-modal e-Learning Interactive
Learning Environment	Military Style Didactic & disciplined	Classroom Style Quiet atmosphere	Round-table style Relaxed ambience	Café style Music-multi-modal	Lounge room style Multi-stimulus
Ideal Leaders	Authoritarian Commanders	Commanding Thinkers	Coordinating Doers	Empowering Collaborators	Inspiring Co-creators
Performance Feedback	No news is good news	Once per year	Weekly/ Daily	On Demand	Continuous social sonar
Technology Use	Uncomfortable	Unsure	Unable to work without it	Unfathomable if not provided	Lifelong use
Job Changing	Unwise	Sets me back	Necessary	Part of my daily routine	Improve my flexibility

Embrace generational diversity, speak to your audience(s) and WIN!

Sources

- [5 tips to remember when you hear about Gen Z, Millennials, Boomers and other generations | Pew Research Center](#)

- [Generational Differences in the Workplace   [Infographic] (purdueglobal.edu)](#)

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- Unlocking Generational Codes, Anna Liotta