

# Generational Differences in the Courts: Creating Education to Engage NASJE/AJA October 2015

## Age Cohort Stereotypes--Caveats

- Based in some truth: events during formative years lead to generational mentality
- Should not be applied to individuals for “diagnosis,” but for dialogue
- Can give insight to expectations, values, beliefs, perceptions, preferences, world view
- No one wants to be “put in a box”

## Workforce in 2008:

- |                              |     |                                   |
|------------------------------|-----|-----------------------------------|
| • Matures (born before 1946) | 5%  | 50% Digi-Immigrants/Digi-Tourists |
| • Baby Boomers (1946-64)     | 45% |                                   |
| -----The Digital Divide----- |     |                                   |
| • GenXers (1965-1980)        | 40% | 50% Digi-Natives                  |
| • Millennials (1981-2000)    | 10% |                                   |

## Today’s Workforce:

- |                              |            |     |                                   |
|------------------------------|------------|-----|-----------------------------------|
| • Matures                    | 4 million  | 2%  | 1/3 Digi-Immigrants/Digi-Tourists |
| • Baby Boomers               | 45 million | 29% |                                   |
| -----The Digital Divide----- |            |     |                                   |
| • GenXers                    | 53 million | 34% | 2/3 Digi-Natives                  |
| • Millennials                | 54 million | 35% |                                   |

## Digi-Natives:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• finding info happens with little effort</li> <li>• greater personal choice and control</li> <li>• always connected</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• visual, interactive learners</li> <li>• info/entertainment interchangeable</li> <li>• no need to memorize facts</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

## By the Numbers:

- Matures – most have retired
- 75 million Baby-Boomers have already or will leave U.S. workforce in next 20 years
- 54 million Millennials have already joined workforce and 30 million more soon will
- Millennials will be 75% of the workforce in 10 years or less
- GenXers are stuck between two generations that are very different from each other

## Baby Boomers (1946-1964; age 51-69):

- 24% of the American population; 10,000 turning 65 every day between now and 2030
- Living longer and working harder –most work-centric generation
- Belief that face time at office proved dedication and was way to get ahead
- Decades of wisdom, depth and breadth of vision, insight, see big picture

## GenXers (1965-1980; age 35-50)

- Conservative on economic issues, role of government; liberal on social issues
- Motivated by project not position and flexibility in work schedule and location
- Value work-life balance, informality, diversity
- Self-reliant, free agent, intra/entrepreneurs, ambitious, savvy, skeptical
- High tolerance for risk, adaptable, open to change

**Millennials** (1981-2000; age 15-34; Identity still forming for youngest so tentative descriptors)

- Idealistic and generous-hearted about work: 86% reported important that their career do some good
- Not lazy but often not fully committed to the job because they are searching: 76% still looking for ideal job, progress not what they had hoped, not in field they want
- Willing to work their way up but not to be exploited
- 79% report that enjoying their job is more important than making money
- Distracted by social media at work but think that's ok
- Most highly educated generation but struggling financially; "boomerang" to live at home
- Stable work, marriage and having children happens later because takes longer to prepare for workforce and want period of freedom
- More identify as politically independent than any other generation
- Politically and socially more liberal; Highly diverse generation: 4 in 10 are non-white
- Optimistic about their own future
- Value variety, technology, social networking
- Prefer frequent communication, explanations, feedback, and recognition from supervisor

**Millennials and Learning**

- 47% deplore having to attend long F2F training for things that can be explained virtually
- Prefer highly interactive, informal learning involving choices and interaction with peers and presenter
- More experiential and exploratory as learners
- Educated with group oriented processes so want collaboration and teamwork
- Inundated with multimedia and multi-tasked when young, so bored with talking head
- Perform best when teaching connected to real life
- Prefer personalization and customization of educational assignments
- Greater learning when active learning approaches used, such as electronic audience response system and collaboration with others
- "The needs of Millennials may not actually be generational at all. . . Really, all they're asking for is for us to use good teaching practices." (Novotney, 2010)
- Topics: managing time, attention to detail, independent decision making, presentations

**Millennials: Feedback and Clear Career Path**

- In supervising and mentoring Millennials, focus on outcomes not methods
- Provide regular, timely project-specific feedback
- Millennials can use technology for more efficient method for task, so don't focus on compliance with set processes but be open to new strategies and innovations
- May need more specific feedback on business basics: dress, appropriate mode of communication, social media ethics
- Train on giving and receiving feedback (see Guidelines)
- Career path: challenging work, increased responsibility on projects, increased visibility in organization, involvement in decision-making

## **Flexible Leadership Approach Generates the Best Results (Goleman)**

### Directive/Coercive - “Do what I tell you”

- Gives specific directions and demands immediate action
- Can intimidate and discourage associates
- Works best in a crisis
- Impact on organizational climate: Negative if used exclusively

### Visionary/Authoritative – “Come with me”

- Mobilizes people toward a vision
- Provides much needed perspective and context while reinforcing firm values
- Works best when change requires a new vision or when clear direction needed
- Impact on organizational climate: Most strongly positive

### Affiliative – “People come first”

- Creates harmony and builds emotional bond
- Works best to heal rifts in team or motivate people during stressful circumstances
- Impact on organizational climate: Positive

### Participative/Democratic- “What do you think?”

- Forges consensus through participation
- Engages associates and peers in critical discussions and decisions
- Works best to build buy-in or consensus, or to get input from valuable employees
- Impact on organizational climate: Positive

### Pacesetter- “Do as I do, now”

- Sets high standards for performance
- Sets unattainable goals, micromanages, has hard time let go of tasks
- Works best to get quick results from highly motivated and competent team
- Impact on organizational climate: Negative

### Coaching – “Try this”

- Develops people for the future
- Provides long-term development and mentoring
- Works best to help employee improve performance or develop long-term strengths
- Impact on organizational climate: Positive

## **Six Leadership Styles and Outstanding Lawyers (Hay Group)**

High performing partners (revenue, client relationships, substantive skills):

- Used broader range of styles: 70% used 4 or more (vs 40% of average partners)
- More visionary than average partners; twice as participative as average partners
- Effective coaches
- Far less likely to be pacesetters than average partners
- 5 times more likely to be directive but only as one of several styles (vs. exclusive style)

## **Leadership Styles and Age Cohorts**

- Boomers: prefer consensus-building
- Gen X and Millennial: prefer collaborative, coaching, affiliative

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