



HARNESSING THE POTENTIAL OF A MULTIGENERATIONAL WORKFORCE

Results of a Singaporean multigenerational research

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RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To obtain a clearer perspective of Singaporean individuals and the multi-generational challenges they may face in the workplace.
- To shed light on the management implications of today's multi-generational workforce.
- To recommend the appropriate strategies for inter-generational collaboration.

FOUR DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

- **Traditionalist**
(born before 1945)
- **Baby Boomer**
(born 1946 - 1964)
- **Gen X** *(born 1965 - 1980)*
- **Gen Y** *(born after 1980)*



PROFILE 3541 RESPONDENTS

	Overall results	Yers After 1980	Xers 1965 - 1980	Late Boomers 1955 - 1964	Early Boomers 1946 - 1954	Silents Before 1946
Respondents	-	22%	45%	22%	10%	1%
Male	39%	31%	43%	37%	39%	<u>67%</u>
Female	61%	<u>69%</u>	57%	63%	61%	33%
Primary and below	1%	0%	0%	3%	1%	<u>10%</u>
Secondary	16%	4%	7%	34%	<u>45%</u>	43%
Diploma	28%	<u>36%</u>	26%	27%	22%	24%
University	55%	60%	<u>67%</u>	36%	32%	24%
Director and above	3%	0%	3%	6%	2%	<u>10%</u>
Manager or Supervisor	40%	20%	<u>48%</u>	39%	<u>48%</u>	38%
Non-managerial position	57%	<u>80%</u>	49%	54%	50%	52%

RESEARCH FINDINGS

- How each generation perceives one another;
- What motivates and drives their performance and loyalty to the organisation;
- Their attitudes to work-life balance;
- Preferred communication methods;
- The way knowledge is transferred;
- Notions of fair treatment associated with ageism and
- Management style of immediate superiors.

RESEARCH FINDINGS – GEN Y



- More comfortable managing same age or younger employees
- Career & personal development are key motivators
- The value annual leave
- Appear more adaptable to change
- Have most difficulty working with Baby Boomers

RESEARCH FINDINGS – GEN X



- Gen X scores also high on customer service, work attitude
- Biggest group of managers
- Difficulties in collaboration with Baby boomers
- Experience less Work-Life harmony

RESEARCH FINDINGS – BABY BOOMERS

- Have no problems using email en social networking media
- Difficulty with Gen Ys
- Willing to work beyond contractual hours
- Elder care is more important than child care
- Interest in extended medical coverage



RESEARCH FINDINGS – TRADITIONALISTS



- Gen Ys – ‘I don’t understand them’
- Good work-life balance
- Feel comfortable in their job
- Feel treated more unfair by employer
- Feel less embraced by colleagues
- Interest in phased retirement.

HOW DO THE DIFFERENT GENERATIONS PERCEIVE EACH OTHER?

- A multi generational organisation has a positive effect on performance of the organisation.
- Majority do not find it hard to work with colleagues of other age groups.
- Strengths of all generations are ability to multi-task and work independently
- Weakness of all generations is technological areas and creativity.
- To bridge the generational differences: train employees to create awareness and respect for each other and create opportunities to work with different age groups.

MOTIVATORS TO WORK FOR AND REMAIN IN AN ORGANISATION?

- Most important motivators are: good pay and benefits
- Least important motivators are: the organisation openly supports corporate social responsibility and the organisations' reputation or having a well-known product in combination with clear values and vision
- Important benefits to be provided by the organisation are: performance bonuses, good extended medical coverage and receiving recognition.

WORK-LIFE HARMONY AND GENERATIONS

- “Work-life Harmony programmes” are beneficial for productivity.
- All generations feel that it is sometimes acceptable to work beyond (contractual) working hours.
- The younger generations experience a lower work-life balance compared to the older generation.
- Most respondents would like to work beyond the standard retirement age.
- The younger generations are less eager to work beyond retirement age.

COMMUNICATION & KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER



- Face-to-face meetings, team meetings and email are the most preferred communication channels for all the generations.
- All generations mention that the most preferred styles for learning are:
 1. learning on the job,
 2. receiving feedback from manager/supervisor in combination with
 3. mentoring and
 4. coaching programmes

WHAT DO THEY EXPECT FROM THEIR MANAGER?

- Age of their manager is for all generations not important.
- The most important characteristics of a manager for each generation are: caring, inspiring and competent.
- All generations expect from their current manager: clear directions and support, and constant constructive feedback.
- All score their current manager low in giving praise, providing feedback, recognition and rewards.
- The managers score high in giving freedom and flexibility to do their work, treating the employee as a full member of the organisation, no matter the position.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT

- Identify your multigenerational workforce
- Identify the current age stereotypes needed for the job
- Encourage multigenerational teams
- Audit existing communications
- Offer flexible learning
- Encourage mentoring opportunities
- Provide multiple rewards, benefits and compensation options
- Raise employee awareness
- Raise supervisor capability and awareness
- Engage every employee regardless of generation