



material handling  **logistics conference**
SPONSORED BY HK SYSTEMS

Motivating A Multi-Generational Workforce

Track 2 Session 5



Supply Chain  **Forward.**

Patrick Perkins, Ph.D.

**Corporate Psychologist
Leadership Development Worldwide, LLP**

patrick.perkins@ldw-w.com

212.744.2907

Abstract

- ▶ **Recruiting, motivating and retaining top talent requires an appreciation for what makes them tick. This presentation will demystify the differences in motivation, attitude and loyalty among the three primary generations and help managers customize their approach for maximum mutual reward.**

Agenda

- ▶ **Three Primary Generations in the Workforce Today:**
 - ◆ **Case examples, Your ideas, Common descriptions**
- ▶ **Tension Among Generations (As viewed by each generation)**
- ▶ **Common Elements Desired by All Generations**
- ▶ **Generation-Specific Factors**
- ▶ **Management Suggestions for All Generations**
- ▶ **Effects of Current Economic Climate on Workforce**
- ▶ **Key Takeaways**
- ▶ **Questions**

Three Primary Generations in the Workforce

- ▶ **Baby Boomers: Born between 1946 and 1964**
 - ◆ **Currently 45 to 63 years old**
- ▶ **Generation X: Born between 1965 and 1979**
 - ◆ **Currently 30 to 44 years old**
- ▶ **Generation Y: Born between 1980 and 1991**
 - ◆ **Currently 18 to 29 years old**

Name That Generation

- ▶ **Example 1**
- ▶ **Example 2**
- ▶ **Example 3**

Word Association Test

- ▶ **What is the first thing that comes to mind when you think of:**

Baby Boomers

Word Association Test

- ▶ **What is the first thing that comes to mind when you think of:**

Generation X

Word Association Test

- ▶ **What is the first thing that comes to mind when you think of:**

Generation Y

Common Descriptors of Each Generation

▶ **Baby Boomers:**

- ◆ **Older**
- ◆ **Current leaders**
- ◆ **“Live to work”**
- ◆ **Not interested in providing training and development**
- ◆ **Optimistic**
- ◆ **Checked-out**
- ◆ **Team-oriented**
- ◆ **Want flexibility**
- ◆ **Long-term focused**

Common Descriptors of Each Generation

▶ **Generation X:**

- ◆ **Slackers**
- ◆ **Value flexibility, work/life balance**
- ◆ **Independent**
- ◆ **Job-hoppers**
- ◆ **Highly educated**
- ◆ **Skeptical of authority**
- ◆ **Current leaders or on cusp of significant leadership roles**
- ◆ **Overlooked**
- ◆ **Pragmatic**

Common Descriptors of Each Generation

▶ **Generation Y:**

- ◆ **Information and tech savvy**
- ◆ **Demanding**
- ◆ **Entitled**
- ◆ **High-maintenance**
- ◆ **Job-hoppers**
- ◆ **Question authority**
- ◆ **Short-term focused**
- ◆ **Close to parents; slower to “grow up”**
- ◆ **Want impact**
- ◆ **Want flexibility**
- ◆ **Lazy**

Tension Among Generations

- ▶ **According to a survey by Lee Hecht Harrison:**
 - ◆ **More than 60% of employers report experiencing tension among employees from different generations**
 - ◆ **More than 70% of older employees are dismissive of younger workers' abilities. Almost half of employers report that younger workers are dismissive of older workers' abilities**

Tension Among Generations

- ▶ **“This Boomer Isn’t Going to Apologize”**
 - ◆ **Stephen Moore, Wall Street Journal, June 19, 2009**
- ▶ **“The Baby-Boomer Generation Owes No Apologies,” Letters to the Editor**
 - ◆ **Bradford J. Shafer, Deborah Rivers-Hacker**
 - ◆ **Wall Street Journal, June 23, 2009**

Tension Among Generations

- ▶ **“Gen-X: The Ignored Generation?”**
 - ◆ M.J. Stephey, Time, April 16, 2008
- ▶ **“You Raised Them, Now Manage Them”**
 - ◆ Nadira Hira, Fortune, May 28, 2007

Getting Beyond Generational Generalizations

- ▶ **There are common elements across all three generations that can be targeted to motivate and satisfy your workforce**
- ▶ **And, there are specific factors for each generation that are critical to understand and address**

Common Elements Desired by All Generations

- ▶ **The Sloan Center on Aging and Work**
 - ◆ **Age & Generations Study (March 2009)**
- ▶ **Eight Characteristics of Employers-of-Choice:**
 1. **Wellness, Health & Safety Protections**
 2. **Opportunities for Meaningful Work**
 3. **Provisions for Employment Security and Predictabilities**
 4. **Workplace Flexibility**

Common Elements Desired by All Generations

- ▶ **Eight Characteristics of Employers-of-Choice (*Continued*):**
 - 5. Culture of Respect, Inclusion, and Equality**
 - 6. Promotion of Constructive Relationships at the Workplace**
 - 7. Fair, Attractive, and Competitive Compensation and Benefits**
 - 8. Opportunities for Development, Learning, and Advancement**

Generation-Specific Factors

▶ **Baby Boomers:**

- ◆ **Some on verge of retirement or coming back to workforce from retirement—want flexibility in schedule and how they work**
- ◆ **Need for security; loyal employees**
- ◆ **Want respect for their knowledge, skills, and abilities**
- ◆ **May be invested in developing Gen X and Gen Y employees**
- ◆ **Ask them directly what they need; assess their perceptions of other generations**

Generation-Specific Factors

▶ **Generation X:**

- ◆ **Want independence, not micromanagement**
- ◆ **May ultimately be leaders; need development and refinement of leadership skills**
- ◆ **Need feedback**
- ◆ **Work/life balance; want flexibility and options**
- ◆ **May feel like “middle children”; ensure that you are checking in with them regularly**
- ◆ **Want to be loyal to company; ask why they left former jobs and what they still need to be satisfied**

Generation-Specific Factors

▶ **Generation Y:**

- ◆ **Feedback is essential!**
- ◆ **Need a roadmap; provide structure, performance expectations**
- ◆ **Development and learning opportunities are desired**
- ◆ **Internal job opportunities**
- ◆ **Want flexibility**
- ◆ **A feeling of connection and identity to their work drives them**
- ◆ **Money is important; realistic expectations?**
- ◆ **Voice needs to be heard**
- ◆ **Expect IT to be solid: company website, recruiting efforts, blogs, podcasts**
- ◆ **Parents are their advisors**

Ten-Year Forecast of Three Generations

Generation	Ten Years From Now
Baby Boomers	55 to 73 years old No longer the largest workforce group Some still in key leadership positions Interested in preserving their legacy
Generation X	40 to 54 years old Many in mid and senior management Managing Boomers' retirements, Gen Y, & Next Generation (Gen Z)
Generation Y	28 to 39 years old Largest workforce group Still maturing; Tension with Gen X managers and competition with Gen Z

Management Suggestions for All Generations

- ▶ **Examine YOUR own assumptions, beliefs, and knee-jerk responses**
- ▶ **Find ways to offer flexibility, e.g., telecommuting, flextime, compressed workweeks, reduced hours**
- ▶ **Provide feedback—when and how much; the more specific, the better**
- ▶ **Be a mentor or coach**

Management Suggestions for All Generations

- ▶ **Ask employees what is most important to them, what is missing; ask individually and let groups submit responses anonymously**
- ▶ **Spend time with them**
- ▶ **Listen, listen, listen!**
- ▶ **Take action to respond to their needs**

Effects of Current Economic Climate

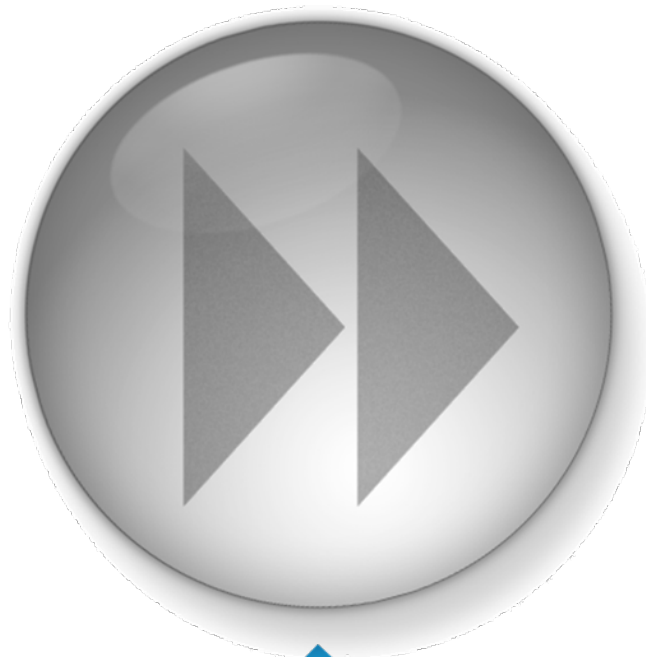
- ▶ **Workers are feeling anxious**
- ▶ **Need for security is at all-time high**
- ▶ **According to Gluskin Sheff, 55-and-older group in the U.S. gained 630,000 jobs in past year, but more than 6 million workers under 55 lost jobs (Barron's, June 29, 2009)**
- ▶ **“Last one in is becoming first one out”**

Effects of Current Economic Climate

- ▶ **If possible, reassure employees of their job security**
- ▶ **If recruiting, you can be more selective due to large numbers of candidates; conduct careful interviews, probing into candidates' motivations and assessing their fit and long-term potential**
- ▶ **When economy recovers, retaining top talent will be challenging, so prepare now**

Key Takeaways

- ▶ **Managers will benefit from: 1) being aware of own generational assumptions; 2) asking each group what they need; and 3) articulating shared needs across generations as a way to build cohesion and reduce tension**
- ▶ **While there are critical differences among generations, a refined management approach identifies elements shared by all generations, but also targets generation-specific factors**
- ▶ **Given current and future changing work dynamics, it will pay off to be attentive to needs of all generations—it will impact your selection, development, and retention efforts**



material handling  **logistics conference**
SPONSORED BY HK SYSTEMS

Questions?