

Generational Characteristics Cheat Sheet



| | Greatest Generation Pre-1945 | Baby Boomers 1946-1960 | Gen X 1961-1980 | Millennials 1981-1997 |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|---|---|
| Percentage US workforce 2017* | 2% | 25% | 33% | 35% |
| Key experiences | Second World War Rock and Roll Nuclear Families Duty before fun | Cold War Moon Landing Civil Rights Youth Culture Vietnam War | Fall of Berlin Wall Personal computers MTV Video games World Wide Web | 9/11 Social media explosion Economic downturn School shootings Global warming |
| Aspiration | Home ownership | Job security | Work-life balance | Freedom & flexibility |
| Learning preferences | Memorization Lecture | Course learning Books/manuals | Hands on PowerPoint | Elearning Gamification |
| Interaction style | Individual | Meetings/discussions | Entrepreneurial | Participative |
| Feedback | Less is more | Don't appreciate it | How am I doing? | Immediate & often |
| Leadership style | Command & control | Workaholics | Everyone is the same | Participative at all levels |
| Communication channel preferences | Print materials/letters | Phone or face-to-face | Email | Text, Social Apps, Digital |
| Technology | Too challenging | Self taught | Early adapters | Digital natives |
| Rewards | Personal satisfaction | Money & advancement | Work-life balance | Flexibility to pursue my interests |
| What I want at work | Milestone recognition, respect for experience | Titles, retirement security, peer recognition | Skills training & workplace culture | Mentorship & career opportunity |

*Generation Z-1998-2018 comprises 5%