Engaging Employees: Bridging the Generation Gap

Rae Ann Bruno
President, Business Solutions Training, Inc.
rbruno@businesssolutionstraining.com

Session Description

Many organizations focus on attracting and retaining employees, but to get the results we desire, we need to motivate and engage our employees and teams to deliver better customer service. With several generations in the workforce, a "one size fits all" approach to motivation and engagement doesn't work. Attend this session to learn what motivates each generation and how you can create an environment where your teams will be highly engaged, productive, and successful.

Speaker Background

Rae Ann Bruno, president of Business Solutions Training Inc., consults and trains in various areas of ITIL, KCS, communications, internal marketing, metrics, and process improvement. Rae Ann holds several ITIL certifications, is a faculty trainer for HDI, and author of the HDI focus books Translating IT Metrics into Business Benefits and What Have You Done for Me Lately? Creating an Internal Marketing Culture. She’s also a member of the HDI International Certification Standards Committee.
Session 109
Engaging Employees: Bridging the Generation Gap

Rae Ann Bruno
rbruno@businesssolutionstraining.com
Goals Today

- Recognize the value of engagement & why companies should focus on it
- Understand how engagement differs by generation
- Discover ways to motivate and engage your employees (all generations) and bridge the generation gap.

Engagement

- Many companies focus on attraction and retention, however, Engagement is the differentiator.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Three Types of Employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ENGAGEMENT = BETTER CUSTOMER SERVICE

The Benefits of Engaged Employees

- 70% of engaged employees are strong on customer service.
- 17% of disengaged employees are strong on customer service.
- 78% of engaged employees would recommend their company.
- 13% of disengaged employees would recommend their company.

Source: Employeeincentives.com

WHAT MAKES AN EMPLOYEE HIGHLY ENGAGED?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highly Engaged</th>
<th>Low or No Engagement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Someone has talked about their progress</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Someone encourages their development</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They have been praised recently</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They have opportunities to learn and grow</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They have a best friend at work</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Their manager cares about them</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They view their job as important to the company</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Their opinions count at work</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Their colleagues are committed to quality work</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They are able to do their best every day</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They have equipment needed to do their job</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They know what is expected of them at work</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Go to: Kahoot.it
2. Type the pin Number
3. Type your nickname
4. Wait for the question!
Distinctly Different

Each generation has different cultural backgrounds, goals, life influences and behaviors.

**Traditionalists**
- **1922-1945**
- Grew up in a "do-without" era
- Believes in hard work and sacrifice
- Uncomfortable with change
- Dedicated

**Baby Boomers**
- **1946-1964**
- Grew up in a healthy economic era
- Tend to be optimistic
- Often defined by job
- Team-Oriented

**Generation X**
- **1965-1978**
- Grew up in an era of distrust for national institutions
- Tend to be cynical, pessimistic
- Comfortable with change
- Self Reliant

**Generation Y**
- **1979-1997**
- Grew up in an era of financial boom
- Used to instant gratification
- Comfortable with multitasking
- Tech Savvy

---

**Most Important**

- **World Peace**
  - 51%
  - 45%
  - 40%
- **Climate Change**
  - 15%
  - 16%
  - 12%
- **Clean Water**
  - 12%
  - 14%
  - 16%

---

**World Peace**

What does a better world mean to you?

---

**Climate Change**

Who's responsible is it to create this better world?

---

**World Peace**

When businesses talk about sustainability what sort of information do you think you should expect to receive?

---

**Climate Change**

Who can we trust?
More than one in three American workers today are Millennials (ages 18-34)

The U.S. Workforce Today

Other generations are finding themselves hired and managed by younger people.

The oldest of the GEN 2020’s about to graduate from college and enter the workforce.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditionalists</th>
<th>1925-1945</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Characteristics</strong></td>
<td><strong>About them:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Patriotic loyal “waste not want not”</td>
<td>• Value Logic and Discipline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Faith in institutions— one company career</td>
<td>• Don’t Like Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Military influenced top down approach</td>
<td>• Want to Build a Legacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Team players</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Indirect in communicating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Loyal to the organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Dedication and sacrifice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Respect authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Duty before pleasure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Adhere to rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Respond well to directive leadership</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Baby Boomers</th>
<th>1946-1964</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Characteristics:</strong></td>
<td><strong>About them:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Idealistic</td>
<td>• “Me” Generation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Competitive</td>
<td>• Money, Title, Recognition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Question Authority</td>
<td>• Want to build a stellar career</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Personal gratification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Health and wellness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Big Picture/systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Bring fresh perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Do not respect titles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Disapprove absolutes/structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Optimistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Team oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Uncomfortable with conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Personal growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sensitive to feedback</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gen X
1965-1980

Characteristics:
• Eclectic
• Resourceful
• Self-reliant
• Distrustful of Institutions
• Highly adaptive to change and technology

About them:
• Possibly most misunderstood generation
• Need to have a balance between work and life-freedom
• Flexible and motivated
• Want to build a portable career
• Informal-balance
• Want a lot to do and freedom to do it their way

Viewpoints:
• Positive attitude
• Impatient
• Goal orientated
• Multi-tasking
• Thinking globally
• Self-reliant
• Flexible hours-informal work environment
• Just a job
• Techno-literal
• Question authority

Gen Y-Z (Millennial)
1981-2000

Characteristics:
• Globally concerned
• Realistic
• Cyber literate
• Personal safety is number one concern

About them:
• Value diversity and change
• Have been involved entire life
• Want work to be meaningful
• Results-oriented

Viewpoints:
• Confident
• Social
• Moral
• Street smarts
• Diversity
• Collective action
• Heroic spirit
• Tenacity
• Technological savvy
• Lack of skills for dealing with difficult people
• Multi-tasking
• Need flexibility
Top 5 Engagement Drivers Globally

1. Senior management sincerely interested in employee well-being

2. Improved my skills and capabilities over the last year

3. Organization’s reputation for social responsibility

4. Input into decision making in my department

5. Organization quickly resolves customer concerns

Gen Y/Millennials least Engaged

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Engaged</th>
<th>Enrolled</th>
<th>Disenchanted</th>
<th>Disengaged</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Millennials</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen X</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boomers</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Towers Watson Global Workforce Study, 2010
“RULES OF ENGAGEMENT”

MOTIVATION ACROSS GENERATIONS

Creating a Motivating Environment

Source: Survey analysis: Employee Motivation by Generation Factors Seleste Lunsford

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditionalists</th>
<th>Baby Boomers</th>
<th>Generation X</th>
<th>Generation Y/Millennial</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Help craft case studies to reinforce their perception of the good being done by the organization and their role in it</td>
<td>Look for easy-to-identify process improvements that will save time for individuals and the organization</td>
<td>Help rewrite job descriptions to define desirable career options</td>
<td>Jointly develop personalized learning paths with their leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-facilitate training sessions as SMEs</td>
<td>Play devil’s advocate to test new ideas</td>
<td>Participate in coach-the-coach development</td>
<td>Hone leadership skills by chairing community service projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be personally exposed to the external business realities that are necessitating change</td>
<td>Participate in scheduled formal 1:1 meetings with their leaders for feedback (in person, if possible)</td>
<td>Define the organization’s employee value proposition</td>
<td>Use technology platforms to share knowledge gained in self-study exercises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AND AVOID THESE COMMON MISTAKES...</td>
<td></td>
<td>Help interview new-hire candidates</td>
<td>Lead “after action reviews” at the completion of key projects to formalize on-the-job learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send them to training “cold,” without a pre-assessment to identify skill/knowledge gaps</td>
<td>Ask them to mentor a new hire without giving them training on how to mentor</td>
<td>Assume they can innately lead both younger and older generations</td>
<td>Provide constructive feedback without context</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Vital Strategies for Achieving Goals

Figure 2
Methods for Achieving Goals, by Generation

Source: Survey analysis: Employee Motivation by Generation Factors Seleste Lunsford

Motivators by Generation

Figure 1
Most Important Goal

Source: Survey analysis: Employee Motivation by Generation Factors Seleste Lunsford
### Millennials

- “Millennials: Leading a New Way of Working” (Christina Miller and Matt Beran)
- Popularly considered to be impatient and distracted and have a sense of entitlement
- The most diverse and educated generation.
- Prefer flexibility over all else.
- Desire independence and trust.

---

**WORKPLACE CHARACTERISTICS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Work Ethic and</strong></td>
<td>Hard work</td>
<td>Workaholics</td>
<td>Eliminate the task</td>
<td>What's next</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Values</strong></td>
<td>Respect authority</td>
<td>Work efficiently</td>
<td>Self-reliance</td>
<td>Multitasking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sacrifice</td>
<td>Crusading causes</td>
<td>Want structure and</td>
<td>Tenacity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Duty before fun</td>
<td>Personal fulfillment</td>
<td>direction</td>
<td>Entrepreneurial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adhere to rules</td>
<td>Desire quality</td>
<td>Skeptical</td>
<td>Tolerant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Question authority</td>
<td></td>
<td>Goal oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Work is ...</strong></td>
<td>An obligation</td>
<td>An exciting adventure</td>
<td>A difficult challenge</td>
<td>A means to an end</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A contract</td>
<td>Fulfillment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership Style</strong></td>
<td>Directive</td>
<td>Consensual</td>
<td>Everyone is the same</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Command-and-control</td>
<td>Collegial</td>
<td>Challenge others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ask why</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interactive Style</strong></td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Team player</td>
<td>Entrepreneur</td>
<td>Participative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Loves to have meetings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communications</strong></td>
<td>Formal Memo</td>
<td>In person</td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>E-mail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Immediate</td>
<td>Voice mail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Feedback and</strong></td>
<td>No news is good</td>
<td>Don't appreciate it</td>
<td>Sorry to interrupt,</td>
<td>Whenever I want it,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rewards</strong></td>
<td>news</td>
<td>Money</td>
<td>but how am I doing?</td>
<td>at the push of a button</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Satisfaction in a</td>
<td>Title recognition</td>
<td>Freedom is the</td>
<td>Meaningful work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>job well done</td>
<td></td>
<td>best reward</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Messages That</strong></td>
<td>Your experience is</td>
<td>You are valued</td>
<td>Do it your way</td>
<td>You will work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Motivate</strong></td>
<td>respected</td>
<td>You are needed</td>
<td>Forget the rules</td>
<td>with other bright,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>creative people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Work and Family</strong></td>
<td>No man or the woman</td>
<td>No balance</td>
<td>Balance</td>
<td>Balance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Life</strong></td>
<td>shall not eat</td>
<td>Work to live</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Millennials

- 97% of Millennials prefer using their individual skills to help a cause
- Almost 1 in 4 Millennials are asking for a chance to show their leadership skills
- 28% of Millennials are already in management, a number that may reach 66% by 2024 (source: 2015 Millennial Majority Workforce study results)

BRIDGE THE GENERATION GAP:
WHAT ORGANIZATIONS CAN DO
TO INCREASE ENGAGEMENT AND MOTIVATION ACROSS GENERATIONS
### Nine Ways to Engage Staff and Please the Customer

1. Let go of negative opinions about employees/generations.
2. Provide them everything needed for their jobs.
3. Clearly communicate expectations.

#### Source: Eric Fraterman - Nine Ways to Engage Staff and Please the Customer

---

#### Source: Eric Fraterman - Nine Ways to Engage Staff and Please the Customer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Engage Staff &amp; Please the Customer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Get to Know your employees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constantly ask how you are doing in your employees’ eyes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay attention to company stories and rituals.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Source: Eric Fraterman - Nine Ways to Engage Staff and Please the Customer
Engage Staff & Please the Customer

Make sure they are trained and retrained in problem solving and conflict resolution.

Reward and recognize employees in ways that are meaningful to them.

Be consistent in the long term.

Source: Eric Fratesman. Nine Ways to Engage Staff and Please the Customer

Managing Multigenerational Teams

• Help each generation to understand each other and to work more effectively together.
• Create effective multigenerational teams by publicly identifying each person’s skills in the group
• Develop clear goals and expectations for each team.
• Hold every member accountable for their individual group participation
• Offer ongoing formal feedback to modify behavior and performance.
• Meet with each team individually to monitor their success and challenges.
Working Across Generations

Be aware of preferred work styles:

- Veterans tend to prefer detailed directions and guidance.
- Baby Boomers work best in teams, value meetings and ask for direction when needed.
- Gen Xers, many of whom grew up as “latchkey” kids, are independent, resilient and adaptable. They work best when they are empowered to work alone to get the needed result.
- Gen Yers respond well to workplace structure, challenges and coaching. Like Boomers, they work well in team situations.
Bridging the Gap

Adopt effective communication techniques:

• Veterans are used to formality — a memo, personal conversation or a phone call.
• Baby Boomers also respond best to personal contact but have adapted to voice mail and e-mail.
• Gen Xers expect the direct, immediate response that e-mail and instant messaging bring.
• Gen Yers and Millennials have communicated via technology all their lives. It’s no surprise that they find cell phones, texting, and social networking essential and effective.

Identify the most successful feedback techniques:

• Veterans understand “no news is good news” and expect feedback only when a goal is met.
• Baby Boomers expect corporate accomplishments to be recognized through promotions, a hierarchy of titles and a yearly pay raise.
• Gen Xers and Gen Yers both seek immediate and continual feedback to assure they are on target with organizational goals.
• Gen Yers, especially those raised with high expectations and much praise, appreciate immediate rewards.
Veterans and Baby Boomers believe hard work leads to success and expect to adapt personal life to the needs of the organization.

— Gen Xers enjoy challenging work but want balance in their lives.

— Gen Yers are committed to their careers but expect to use the flexibility of time and technology.

Homelanders

— They’ll be the most ethnically and racially diverse generation in history.
— Today’s early wave of Homelanders largely consists of the children of Gen Xers, who are the largest immigrant generation per-capita born in the 20th century.

To be continued...
If you’d like to have a Dropbox link for articles and resources, please send an email:

**Email:**  rbruno@businesssolutionstraining.com

**Contact Info:**

- @raeannbruno
- www.linkedin.com/pub/rae-ann-bruno/0/395/99b

**Email:**  fancymills@yahoo.com

---

Thank you for attending this session.

Please complete the short evaluation for this session on your mobile device. It is available in your email or through the conference app.