

Steps To Creating A Successful Multi-Generational Workforce

A combination of generations in the workplace can be a successful venture but only if all sides are willing to comply with one another. Older generations have built a career on the knowledge and experiences they have gained. Newer generations, often fresh out of college, think they know everything. They have spent the previous four years studying in a higher learning institution and have earned their place, no matter the starting position, in your company. In order for a multi-generation workforce to garner respect from one another and become assets to the company, they must possess an acceptance and the willingness to learn from one another.

Sizing up Cross-Generation Competition

Do not let age deceive you or become the basis of the opinion you form of an older or younger employee or coworker. As the age of retirement is pushed upwards, more and more "baby boomers" are staying in the workforce and all but demanding a certain level of respect they have worked so hard to establish.

Sizing up a co-worker based on their age is a fruitless venture. Focus on the person's attributes and contributions to the company rather than age.

Focusing on age tells you nothing about your coworker except maybe they are too young to be the next leader of our country or that they may have amassed a clan of grandchildren. More importantly, it won't help you establish a line of communication or show you how to work alongside one another in a productive manner.

In order to create an industrious working relationship and workforce, you will need to focus on the information that pertains to the contributions you can make to the company together.



The Assessment Report

The assessment report contains vital information necessary in building a strong, multi-generational working relationship. The assessment report will tell you what the other persons values are, what motivates them to take action and the personal skills they bring to the job at hand. Taking the time to read the assessment report will hand you details about your coworker that you never would have taken into account based on their age. Look for these characteristics.

- Hands on
- Personal accountability
- Takes initiative
- Gets the job done
- Able to focus
- Makes steady contributions
- Natural team builder
- Talkative
- Embraces new ideas
- Willingness to learn new skills
- Capable of decision making

Making the Adjustment

With a better understanding of your co-worker, it is time to come together and compromise. All people, no matter their generation have a preferred method of communication. Older generations tend to be more "stuck in their ways" so to speak, so it may be more conducive for the younger generation to make a larger adjustment when it comes to communication. *At least at first.*

You know how you communicate the best. After reading your co-worker's assessment report, you have a better understanding of which communications methods work best for them and which ones they prefer. Make establishing an open and constructive line of communication between generations a priority. Find your common ground and work from there.

Once an open line of communication has been established, determining how you can boost and compliment one another's job performance will appear easy. You may realize that your co-worker from an older generation has a library of experience and has the tools it takes to complete the project at hand. A co-worker from the older generation can learn new techniques and styles from the newer generation. Combining these two aspects as well as others can create an explosive new way to enhance one's job skills making contributions to the company excel.

Not only will one generation benefit from the next, the company as a whole will benefit profitably and favorably. ♦

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