Identifying Strategies to Minimize Workplace Conflict
due to Generational Differences

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Abstract

Generation Yers, also known as Millennials, are now entering the workforce in great numbers, and workplace conflict is arising with former generations. Workplace conflict of any type can be counterproductive and stressful, and can create an environment that does not encourage employee longevity. The purpose of this research was to determine what strategic policies, procedures, training techniques, and/or cultural changes can be implemented by companies, large and small, to mitigate potential conflict between generations. A review of the literature examined whether there are published strategies addressing generational conflict in the workplace. Additionally, interviews were conducted of human resource professionals and business owners to gauge the issue. The data was analyzed and compared to existing literature. The results yielded little evidence of proven strategies that companies are using to mitigate generational conflict, but three strategies were identified that companies were using to address generational conflict.

Keywords: workplace conflict, generational differences, Millennials, Generation Y

INTRODUCTION

The new millennium offers many challenges and opportunities for businesses in an increasingly complex world. Diversity in the workplace is growing with four generations currently working side by side. Macon & Artley (2009) point out "Many organizations in today's business world are comprised of four generations of employees with ages that range over 60 years" (p. 1). With many Baby Boomers set to retire over the next decade, conflict is possible as Generation Yers, also known as the Millennial generation, enter the workforce. Generation Yers have been brought up in a world filled with technology, and at a time when parents catered to their every need, creating a generation that responds differently to the work environment than any previous generation.

The goal of this research project was to better understand Generation Y's character traits and to determine methods, policies, or techniques that businesses can use in an effort to integrate the Millennials into the workforce and to minimize, or mitigate, generational conflict. Sacks (2006) suggests that if businesses do not address this generational conflict, they are subjecting themselves to lower productivity, higher turnover, and frustrated employees, which will ultimately lead to reduced profits. Sack (2006) describes the situations as follows:

> Managers will be challenged to minimize the friction and maximize the assets of
> distinct sets of work values and styles simultaneously. The latest generation to join
> the mix is disruptive not only because of its size but because of its attitudes. (p. 72)

It is important to understand the dynamic characteristics that make up Generation Y. Without a clear understanding of who the Millennials are and why they think and behave in a way that is perhaps different than older generations, business managers will be at a disadvantage when communicating, assigning teams, training, and setting company policies with workers from

the newest generation to enter the workforce. There is adequate research data available to clearly identify and understand the character traits of Generation Y individuals, but limited research to guide managers on how to better incorporate this generation into the workplace. The researchers found very little research which employed quantitative methods to support the findings, and almost no research has offered recommendations on alternative management styles or techniques that could be used to create a more productive, cohesive work environment between generations.

Due to the lack of research on tested methods to support the researchers' purpose, the researchers conducted their own qualitative survey by interviewing key owners or human resource professionals of companies in an effort to determine if there are in fact companies that have discovered strategies to integrate Millennials into their places of business with minimal generational conflict.

GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES

Definitions of Generations

Veterans – Born in years prior to 1945, this generation is generally referred to as Veterans, Silent's, Traditionalists, Matures or Pre-Boomers. They have had their life experiences shaped by events such as the Great Depression, Lindbergh flying across the Atlantic, the Hindenburg disaster, construction of the Empire State Building, Golden Age of Radio, World War II, and the Korean War. There are approximately 50 million of this generation still in the workforce (Smith & Clark, 2010).

Baby Boomers – Born between the years 1945 and 1964, this generation is typically called Baby Boomers. Their life experiences were shaped by the Vietnam War, Woodstock, the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Civil Rights Movements, the Cold War, the United States landing on the moon, the Kennedy assassination, and Women's Rights Movements. Economic prosperity

has been a strong influence for this generation. There are approximately 85 million of this generation in the workforce (Murphy et al., 2010).

Generation X – born between 1965 and 1979, this is the smallest generation – approximately 50 million – in the workforce. Events that shaped their lives included Three Mile Island, the Iran Contra affair, MTV, AIDS Crisis, Challenger disaster, Desert Storm, Los Angeles Riots, and the Iranian hostage crisis. They are considered the latchkey kids as most of them had two working parents and they spent considerable time at home alone. Technology has been a big part of their lives. (Murphy et al., 2010)

Generation Y – The newest generation to join the workforce were born between 1980 and 1999. Other names for this generation include Millennial, Echo-Boomers, and Net Gen. Their lives have been shaped by events such as the Oklahoma City bombing, the Waco Branch Davidian Massacre, school violence, the digital age, Enron and other corporate scandals, reality TV, 9/11, the War on Terror, and Web-based social networking. There are approximately 76 million of this generation now entering the workforce (Murphy et al., 2010).

Stereotypes Associated with the Generations

Veterans – Intense loyalty to their employers, consistent performance, and strong work ethic along with conservative financial views. Employees of this era strive to do what is best for the organization before worrying about their own successes or failures. (Macon & Artley, 2006)

Baby Boomers – Boomers are considered idealistic, driven individuals who are willing to make both personal and professional sacrifices to achieve consensus, which requires teamwork and collaboration. They are also considered to be political micromanagers who despise laziness. (Macon & Artley, 2006)

Generation X – They have feelings of pragmatism, alienation, and cynicism. They are poor at networking and somewhat skeptical of authority. They are considered to be more independent and disloyal, and more likely to change jobs in order to improve skills for their next opportunity. We see the first hint of work-life balance coming into the workplace with Generation X. (Macon & Artley, 2006)

Generation Y – The most confident generation by far. They have a high level of optimism but expect and demand instant feedback. Generation Y is perceived to have poor communication and problem solving skills. Personalized careers drive this generation. They are willing to job hop until they find a job that suits them. They have been given an inflated sense of self and taught to believe they can achieve anything. Fearless, blunt, and not afraid to tell you they know a better way, regardless of your position. Being immersed in technology has changed their thought patterns, as compared to former generations (Macon & Artley, 2006; Sacks, 2006).

As these are stereotypes, there are certainly exceptions, and these characteristics can overlap, particularly for employees born in the cusp years that may have experiences from, or exposure to, events from two distinct eras.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This paper seeks to present practical strategic applications for managers to incorporate within their workplace when integrating Generation Y employees into their businesses with minimal conflict. Generally speaking, the majority of the literature reviewed for this report discusses at length the key character traits of Generation Y, such as their background, interest, habits, and other behavioral patterns. Limited research, either quantitative or qualitative, was examined regarding key strategies for different business sizes and recommendations to use in an effort to reduce generational conflict. No information was located in the literature that

specifically discussed alternative methods of managing generational conflict. The literature reviewed does, however, point to a number of critical factors regarding generational conflicts that are becoming a larger problem in today's workforce. A few articles provided anecdotal recommendations on ways to minimize generational conflict.

A Further Examination of Generation Y Characteristics

Generation Y is the most technically literate, educated, and ethnically diverse generation in history, and tended to grow up having more discretionary income than previous generations (Eisner, 2005). Eisner (2005) stated Gen Yers:

tend to want intellectual challenge, need to succeed, seek those who will further their professional development, strive to make a difference, and measure their own success. Meeting personal goals is likely to matter to Generation Yers, as is performing meaningful work that betters the world and working with committed co-workers with shared values. Making a lot of money tends to be less important to Generation Y than contributing to society, parenting well, and enjoying a full balanced life. In the workplace, Generation Y tends to favor an inclusive style of management, dislikes slowness, and desires immediate feedback. (p. 20)

Growing up, Millennials have been told over and over that they can do anything, and they tend to believe it. They have also lived with strong social stressors, ranging from pressure to excel in school to parental divorce and one-parent homes (Macon & Artley, 2009). Rawlins, Indvik & Johnson (2008) make the point that the "Millennials earn to spend, with minimal thought given to saving. Work and the job itself do not excite many of the members of this cohort. They work so they can pay their debts and buy things" (p. 5). In terms of finances, Dugas (2010) noted that this generation faces some steep financial hurdles. Unfortunately,

Millennials are entering the workforce during the worst economy since the Great Depression. At the same time, Dugas (2010) points out that this younger generation does not seem to have any idea how to manage their finances. "They have a huge amount of debt, relative to the income, and they clearly spend more than they earn. Their generation is the first in a century that is unlikely to end up better off financially than their parents" (Dugas, 2010, p. 1).

Altes (2009) suggested "Generation Yers are technically able, highly informed and confident, but lacking in direction, they are more likely to rock the boat than any prior generation" (p. 2). Behrens (2009) stated:

> Gen Y is likely to equate job satisfaction with a positive work climate, flexibility, and the opportunity to learn and grow more than any prior generation. Compared with other generations, Gen Y tends to have less respect for rank and more respect for ability and accomplishment. It is likely to trade more pay for work it feels is meaningful at a company where it feels appreciated. (p. 5-6)

Many Generation Yers, particularly males, grew up playing video games and in that way learned to be competitive, continually trying to improve on their previous performance benchmark (Tulgan, 2009). When translating this type of competitiveness at work, one Generation Yer said, "I'll do whatever they want me to do. Just tell me someone is keeping track of all this stuff I'm doing. Tell me I'm getting credit for it, that I've been racking up points here like mad. Tell me someone is keeping score" (Lowe, Levitt, & Wilson, 2008, p. 2-3). With respect to Generation Y entering the workplace, Josiam, et al. (2009) stated, "They think visually, want immediate gratification, and emphasize fun and excitement. They have a better education, are more technology savvy, and value personal creativity. Generation Yers have been treated more as individuals than any other generation" (p. 6). According to Simons (2010),

ongoing training is one of the most important job-related issues that a Millennial worker is

concerned with, and encourages companies to recognize and prepare for this:

> First, you can't hire them if you don't invest in them. Second, people go to work to get
>
> better, so you have to have a change in attitude. Gen Y workers figure they're helping
>
> you so you need to help them. It's a transaction. Thirdly, you'll get top talent keeping
>
> these characteristics in mind. (Simons, 2010, p. 6)

Streeter (2007) analyzed what is most important to the Millennial generation, as shown in

Table 1 (Appendix). As Table 1 indicates, intellectual stimulation, potential personal growth,

and opportunity were ranked higher than all other categories.

When describing the Millennials, Gilburg (2008) states that "*Fortune* recently called

them the most high-maintenance, yet potentially most high-performing generation ever to hit the

workforce. They are coming in with more information, greater technological skills, and higher

expectations of themselves and others than prior generations" (p. 40). Gilburg (2008) also points

out that Generations Yers do not want to be slaves to their jobs like their perception of their

Boomer parents, and insist on a greater work-life balance. At the time that Generation Y was

raised, our country was going through a tremendous reinvestment in childhood development and

parents were involved in everything with, and for, their kids. Their lives have been heavily

scheduled from soccer practice to specialized one-on-one training. Their parents have hovered

over them, watching them every step of the way, thus leading to the term "helicopter parents".

Gilburg (2008) stated:

> Parents have smothered this generation to the point they are not equipped to make
>
> decisions on their own without parental involvement, or approval. The Millennials
>
> have been a part of the self-esteem movement that swept the public schools in the 1990's

and proclaimed that all children are winners; there are no losers. Consequently, members of Generation Y repeatedly have been told that they're special. They have received acclaim for all activities in which they participate and as a result tend to expect a continuous flow of praise from authority figures to encourage their efforts and validate their accomplishments. (p. 41)

Due to this heavy emphasis on achievement and being winners, the Millennials have a hard time with processing failure and criticism, since they have always been protected from feeling unsuccessful.

Generational Conflict

As a result of the different character traits described above, as well as value systems and behavioral patterns, generational conflict is becoming a much larger topic of discussion among human resource professionals, managers, and business owners. Murphy, Gibson, and Greenwood (2010) describe the situation as follows:

The difficulties of managing an age-diverse workforce, with its potential for conflict, are widely accepted. The remedy is better understanding of what the different generations want and need. Understanding such differences can help managers design motivation systems, reward and compensation programs, and leadership approaches that recognize their associates' fundamental value structures. Finally, managers, working with human resource groups, must recognize the importance of HR interventions in resolving conflict. (p. 42)

Armour (2005) identified a number of differences between Millennials and previous generations, that range from their desire for more casual dress and tattoos to a need for constant feedback and a much more visible emphasis on work-life balance. Penttila (2009) mentioned

additional behaviors that tend to cause generational conflict, such as the use of technology during the work day for personal use and a desire to work away from the office. All generations recognize the struggle over respect – each generation wants the other to respect them, but is not always willing to recognize the value in the other generations. Unresolved conflict can lead to unhappy employees, high turnover, lower productivity and lower profits (Penttila 2009).

Eisner (2005) reported, "already, nearly 60 percent of HR professionals in large companies report conflict between younger and older workers, and cite impending labor shortages as increasing the value of every employee" (p. 4). The point is well taken that in 2005, the majority of HR professionals were dealing with some kind of generational conflict, and if Eisner did the same study today, it would perhaps be even higher as former generations have to work longer than they expected to due to their diminishing retirement nest eggs. Additionally, Eisner (2005) concluded that his paper began with what appeared to be an obvious, but simple question: "Will Gen Y's presence in the workplace present strategic challenges for managers?" The question was anything but simple, and six years later there are continuing to be challenges as a result of a growing number of Gen Y's entering the workforce and older generations working more years into retirement age due to economic conditions.

Generational Cohesiveness

Other authors paint a somewhat different view of generational conflict. DiRomualdo (2006) stated, "Unquestionably, there are real differences, misunderstandings, and tensions among workers born in different eras - but the assertion of great divisions and conflict is, in my view, overblown" (p. 18). DiRomualdo (2006) conducted a survey examining respondents' interaction with workers from other generations. The overall picture, DiRomualdo (2006) concluded, was that the top five answers showed a positive trend. "These responses indicate that

workers of different generations are working together extremely well, taking advantage of their different perspectives and skills to get the job done more effectively and learn from each other in the process" (DiRomualdo, 2006, p. 18). There was, however, some evidence of tension among the respondents. For example, it was noted that conflict existed regarding acceptable work hours between workers of different generations, communication breakdowns between workers of different generations had occurred, employees stated that workers from other generations were either too reliant, or not reliant enough, on technology, employees from different generations took others less seriously, and employees from other generations do not respect them in a way that they viewed positively. Two major differences identified in the survey were differing work values and communication styles (DiRomualdo, 2006).

Wesner & Miller (2008) stated, "Stereotypes associated with the four generational cohorts currently in the workplace fail to hold up to closer scrutiny and that the motivation of workers, no matter the generation they belong to, has been remarkably stable over time" (p. 89). Their research focused more on the attitudes of Baby Boomers and Millennials, of which they concluded were similar for their respective times. Both Baby Boomers and Millennials were more educated than their predecessors when they entered the workforce. They both questioned authority and were not afraid to blaze their own paths. Both embraced technology and Baby Boomers were more likely to change jobs than the Traditionalists, just as the Millennials are more likely than previous generations. Baby Boomers and Millennials both desire meaningful work and the ability to create a better environment. Wesner & Miller (2008) concluded "there was little empirical research to support that major differences exists in workplace expectations and motivations between the newest generation in the U.S. workers and more mature workers" (p. 95).

DiRomualdo (2006) and Wesner & Miller (2008) suggest generational conflict is not really anything new at all, but simply a changing way of thinking that has occurred before.

Resolving Generational Conflict

Minimal empirical data is available regarding effective solutions to generational conflict. However, a substantial amount of anecdotal recommendations are available. Of over thirty articles reviewed in this research paper, almost half had some form recommendations to address generational conflict. Table 2 (Appendix) summarizes many of these recommendations.

Additional suggestions included having candid talks without hype and with a sense of humor, movement toward cultural openness and transparency, and investing in programs which encourage teamwork and flexibility. Roles and responsibilities should be well defined and written for all generations, especially the Millennials. Task lists and timelines should suggest how and when to reach goals (Streeter, 2007). Providing additional training and education is a must if employers are to hire and retain Generation Yers. Employers must be flexible, offer challenging work, show an organizational interest in technology, and maintain a willingness to look at organizational issues in new or different light (Statesman, 2008).

Wagner (2007) states, "Everyone brings something really important to the workplace. If you could take all four of these [generations'] value systems and absorb them into one culture at the workplace, you would have much happier and productive workers" (p. 30). One of the largest conflicts in the workplace is the issue of time management. Baby Boomers are accustom to arriving early and staying late to get their work completed; Generation Y is more interested in completing the task at hand and having more free time for a greater life balance between work and family (Chiles, 2005).

To date, insufficient empirical research has been completed to provide interested parties, such as employers, practical strategies to incorporate Millennials into the workplace, especially in smaller companies. It would appear that detailed examples would be one way that would perhaps allow employers to clearly understand strategic processes or procedures which have proven to work well within a multitude of diverse workplaces.

METHODOLOGY

In an effort to determine if companies are successfully developing and incorporating policies and procedures into their work environment to minimize generational conflict, interviews were conducted of key personnel who would have firsthand knowledge of this subject. This study used a qualitative research methodology. The data was collected by completing one-on-one interviews with key managers from large (over 500 employees), medium (between 50 and 500 employees), and small (less than 50 employees) companies. These managers were asked questions regarding not only generational conflict that their companies might have experienced, but also how they were able to resolve these conflicts, possibly by changing their strategies, techniques, or policies. Once the interviews were completed, the data was compiled. Patterns were analyzed to determine if there were any practical management strategies employers may incorporate into their workplaces to minimize conflict between Generation Yers and former generations. Table 3 (Appendix) is a summary of the company size, type of company, interviewee titles, and the percentage of Millennials in their respective companies. All companies were located in Central Texas, although a number of the larger companies have employees throughout the United States.

A conscious effort was made to provide a good cross section of company sizes and types in an attempt to determine if certain industries handle generational conflict to a higher degree.

Several questions were asked of each interviewee. Responses were written down and later typed.

The questions asked in the interview were:

1. Generation Y is narrowly defined as individuals born between the years of 1980-1999, or 12 to 31 years of age. What characteristics of Generation Y are you familiar with that are perhaps different from former generations?

2. Do you have any Gen Yers working within your company, or have you in the past?

3. Have you experienced any generational conflict between Gen Yers and former generations, such as Generation X or Baby Boomers? Generation X are those individuals born between 1965 and 1979, and Baby Boomers are those born between 1945-1964. Generation Xers are currently in their 30's and early 40's and Baby Boomers are in their late 40's through mid 60's.

4. If so, what contributing factors do you think caused the most conflict within your company?

5. Has your company developed a strategy to address generational conflict? If so, what strategy was the most effective, and why is that?

DATA ANALYSIS

The responses were compiled and an attempt was made to identify patterns of conflict and resolution. The responses were also compared by company size and type of industry. The responses clearly suggest that generational conflict is a concern in companies of all sizes today, and industries, with the exception of the retail industry.

Interestingly enough, all interviewees were more than happy to discuss the topic of generational conflict, and even appeared over-anxious to have someone express an interest in this

area of concern. Generational conflict was particularly at the forefront among the human resource professionals.

Table 4 (Appendix) provides a compilation of the responses to Question 1 regarding characteristics of Generation Y. In reviewing the responses, it is apparent that the majority are focused on seemingly negative characteristics, such as "work ethic is not as good" and "not interested in putting in their time", while a few were neutral, such as "more knowledgeable about technology." Few observations from the respondents were inherently positive.

All fourteen interviewees responded "yes" to the second question, indicating that they all have, or have had, Millennials working within their companies. Additionally, all respondents indicated on the third question that their company had experienced at least some level of conflict between generations. However, the two respondents in the retail industry indicated they had relatively little generational conflict. The reason that the retail respondents gave for the minimal generational conflict was a direct result of the majority of their employees being Generational Yers. The other twelve respondents indicated generational conflict is one of the biggest challenges they have faced in their careers thus far.

Factors Contributing to Generational Conflict

The fourth question posed the most insight into why the interviewee felt they were experiencing generational conflict within their company. The question was posed in such a manner that to be answered properly, the interviewee had to expound on their knowledge of the exact conflict occurring within their workplace. This is where the majority of the interviewees explained how their experiences over the past few years had changed significantly with regards to the task of hiring, training and evaluation, and with their benefits policies. Additionally, all interviewees reported that the Millennial generation has required them to rethink many of their

policies and procedures in an effort to minimize the generational conflict. Interestingly, the smaller company owners admitted they try to avoid hiring Millennials if at all possible. The primary reasons for this were a lack of adequate resources to deal with the conflict and, being in such a small office environment, the conflict creates a bad working atmosphere.

Table 5 (Appendix) provides a list of behavior traits considered as factors that caused the most conflict between generations. In the course of the interviews, it became evident that the opinions by the former generations, to a large degree, have already been formed regarding the Millennials, regardless of any individual Generation Yers performance. Clearly, there are exceptions regarding the generalization used in defining a generation's characteristics, but the responses by these participants points to a number of key issues. The older generation's perception is that Yers simply do not have as strong a work ethic as former generations do. They often come to work late, which is a big negative to former generations, and Millennials tend to change jobs often, which is viewed by older generations as a lack of stability.

Strategies to Address Generational Conflict

The final question posed to the participants was to identify whether companies have developed proven policies, procedures, or techniques to minimize, or mitigate, generational conflict. Surprisingly, most of the interviewee's companies were doing very little with regards to training, nor making any pro-active steps towards understanding and managing generational conflict. As one might expect, larger companies directed more resources towards the issue of generational conflict. The following lists strategies that companies are using to attempt to address generational conflict:

1. Have policies during the work hours that limit texting and the use of non-work-related technology. Install software to limit access to social media sites.

2. Provide clear communication and expectations up front. The desire to advance their career tends to reduce many conflict issues in CPA firms.

3. Require job shadowing by certain levels to appreciate others' efforts. Develop a learn/leadership program, offer classes and maintain a library with books on generational issues.

4. "Hire around" the younger generation.

5. Work with local colleges to teach young people how to act and what will be expected of them in the workplace.

6. Periodically bring in speakers on the topic of generational differences

7. Provide awareness training when employees are hired, especially regarding covering tattoos and piercings.

8. Offer a flexible work schedule, allowing telecommuting one day per week. Provide casual dress attire five days per week.

9. Since the owner is traditionalist and isn't flexible, all employees are expected to adhere to established norms. We reinforce the rules and expectations often, clearly defining expectations when an employee is hired. Offer casual dress attire one day per month.

10. We periodically rewrite job descriptions so that a Millennial cannot qualify, just to avoid dealing with the potential conflict.

Of the actual policies or procedures that appear to be working, three that appear to have some merit for further consideration are: (1) provide clear communication and expectations up front; (2) require job shadowing by certain levels to appreciate others' efforts; and (3) work with

local colleges to teach young people how to act and what will be expected of them in the workplace,

It may be challenging to overcome some of the stereotypical opinions shared by the older generations regarding the Millennials. Perhaps over time, as more and more Millennials enter the workplace and begin to show their abilities to make contributions within the organizations, these opinions will change. One thing is certain, generational conflict will continue to be source of disruption in the workplace until a better understanding of proven strategies are developed and implemented which encourages an understanding and appreciation of the strengths of all generations.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADDITIONAL RESEARCH

Additional research should be done in a more geographically dispersed and demographically diverse area. The Central Texas area has a disproportionate number of older generations. Therefore, it is possible that perhaps the same study conducted in a geographical area that is more diverse or progressive in their way of thinking could yield varying results in terms of definable strategies to minimize generational conflict. Additional research could also address longitudinal changes within and among generations. For example, the question could be poised – do younger generations find themselves adjusting to the expectations of older generations, and/or do older generations learn to better accommodate differences of younger generations? A third avenue to further explore is generational differences among industries. For example, in this study, companies in the retail industry experienced relatively little generational conflict due to a large majority of their employees being of Generation Y. This study could also be furthered by determining the extent to which various companies are using the three strategies suggested in this paper, and how well these strategies are working.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to identify strategies, if any, companies are using for the purpose of addressing generational conflict in the workplace. Currently, four very distinct generations are working side by side. As a result of such different generational expectations and character traits, conflict is common among the generations as this latest generation, the Millennials, enter the workforce, bringing with them different perspectives and expectations, perceived work ethic, and motivations than former generations.

The literature reviewed and data gathered through interviews of business leaders indicates that generational conflict is not only present throughout a cross-section of industries and sizes of companies, but is expected to increase if not addressed. A lack of empirical research proposing practical strategies to minimize workplace generational conflict prompted interviews which were conducted at several companies in the Central Texas area. The evidence clearly suggests that most companies are not dealing very well with generational conflict, and only a few larger companies actually have developed identifiable strategies to minimize generational conflict. Some smaller and mid-size companies simply avoid hiring Generation Yers in an attempt to avoid potential conflict. Through this study, three practical strategies were identified, as follows:

1. Provide clear communication and expectations up front
2. Require job shadowing at certain levels to appreciate others' efforts
3. Work with local colleges to teach young people how to act what will be expected of them in the workplace
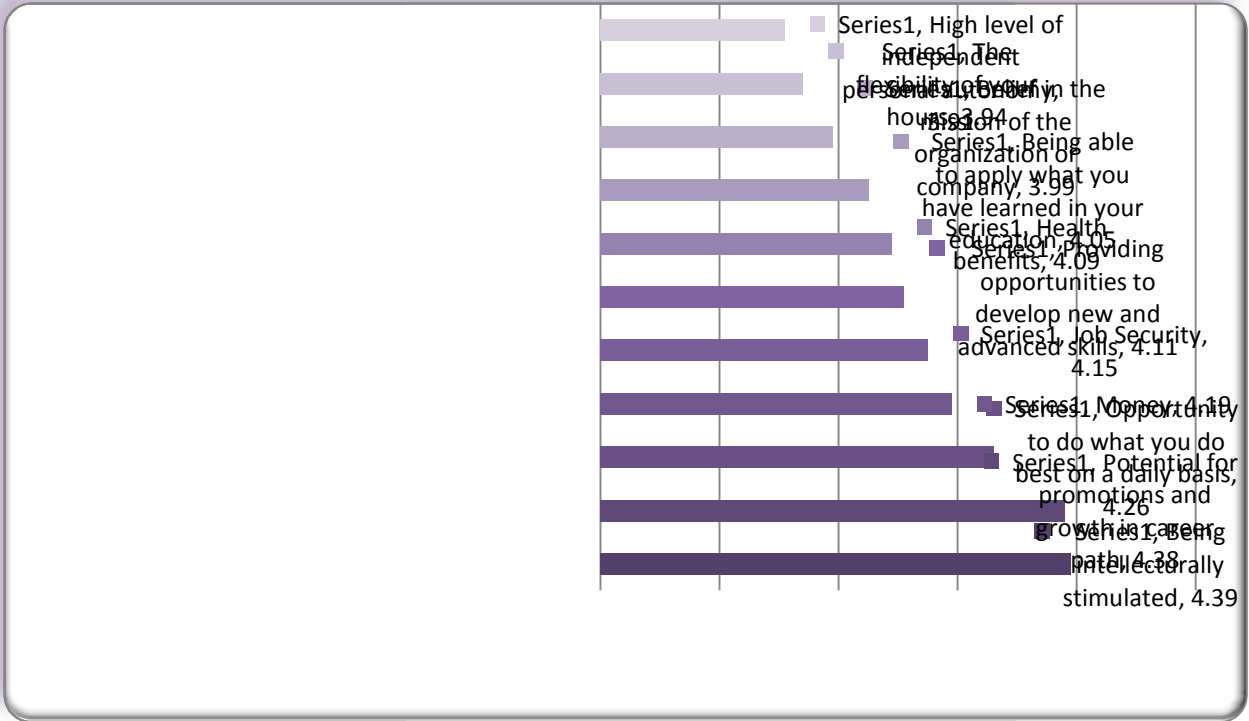
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APPENDIX

TABLE 1
What Matters to Millennials

Series1, High level of
Series1, The
independent
flexibility of your
personal autonomy, in the
hours 3.94 of the
mission
organization or
Series1, Being able
to apply what you
company, 3.99
have learned in your
Series1, Health
education, 4.05
benefits, 4.09
Series1, Providing
opportunities to
develop new and
Series1, Job Security,
advanced skills, 4.11
4.15
Series1, Money, 4.10
Series1, Opportunity
to do what you do
Series1, Potential for
best on a daily basis,
promotions and
4.26
growth in career
Series1, Being
path, 4.38
Intellectually
stimulated, 4.39

(Streeter, 2007)

Table 2
A Summary of Conflict Prevention Strategies

Source	Recommendations
Behrens (2009)	Millennials coach older generations on Technology
	Company policies/rationale on appropriate dress (e.g. Tattoos)
	Flexible work hours
	Continuously challenge Millennials
Preventing Generational Clashes at Your Law Firm (2002)	Understand and communicate generational characteristics
	Provide Millennials meaningful work
	Provide Millennials constant feedback
Bartley, Ladd & Morris (2007)	Educate each generation about each other's characteristics
	Make mentoring a constant way of leading
	Remain open to different perspectives
Murphy, Gibson & Greenwood (2010)	Training programs should consider learning styles of generations
	Open & ongoing discussion of generation needs part of culture
Fink (2010)	Personality assessments can assist in team building
	Teamwork is key to reducing generational conflict

Table 3
Interviewee Demographics

Company Size	Company Type/Industry	Interviewee Title	Total # Employees	% Gen Y Employees
Large	Distribution	Director of Labor Relations	15,000	35%
	Higher Education	Assistant Vice President. – Human Resource	525	20%
	Healthcare	Vice President, Leadership Development	12,000	37%
	Local Government	Assistant Director, Human Resources	834	21%
Medium	Technology	Vice President, Human Resources	384	35%
	Insurance	Manager, Human Resources.	90	5%
	Banking	Senior Vice President of Human Resources.	406	25%
	Healthcare	Owner	120	50%
	Retail	Manager	90	80%
	Restaurant	Owner	80	75%
Small	Insurance	Owner	7	0%
	Law	Office Manager	30	50%
	Accounting	Owner	28	15%
	Retail	Owner	43	20%

Table 4
Responses to Question 1

Frequency of Responses	Response
5	Work ethic not as good
4	Want to wear casual attire to work
4	Limited people skills, or communication, due to technology
4	Not interested in earning it or putting in their time
3	More knowledgeable about technology
3	Sense of entitlement
3	Want flexible work hours
3	Money is not the motivating factor why they work
3	Self centered
2	Want everything now, quickly
2	Don't want to be told when to show up for work
2	Yers want more for less
2	Require constant feedback
2	Life/balance a big deal
1	They don't want to work
1	Just here for a paycheck
1	Latch key kids
1	More worried about where they live than what they do
1	Much more social
1	Very protected upbringing
1	Life is one big experience, don't compartmentalize

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Table 5
Responses to Question 4

Frequency of Responses	Responses
4	They come in late all the time
4	Want everything given to them, don't want to "pay their dues"
3	Good work ethic is part of Boomers, but not Yers
3	Lack of communication on the part of all generations
3	The younger workers job hop a lot
2	Internet use for personal reasons or other technology while at work
2	Not as dedicated to work as former generations
2	The way they value time is the biggest factor
1	Things move so much faster, Yers can adapt, but other gen. cannot
1	Gen Y has a different set of values, or life choices
1	Older generations held to higher standard and they take offense to it
1	Yers do not like rules, older gen were raised to follow the rules