



Celebrating 50 Years of Excellence



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NEXUS

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A MAGAZINE FOR BUILDING HR PROFESSIONALS



MANAGING MULTI GENERATIONAL WORKFORCES



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EDITOR'S NOTE

We are happy and delighted to bring you our monthly magazine **THE NEXUS 2024** for the month of July, 2024. The magazine has always made an effort to pique readers' interest in human resources. In the same Vein, we hope the readers will appreciate and from the information.

We would like to thank Brig. Dr. Rajiv Divekar, Director, SIMS Pune for constantly guiding us through thick and thin.

Last but not least, we would like to thank The People Tree's senior and junior team members for their efforts and valuable contributions.



Srijani Karan



Dr. Suruchi Pandey,
Faculty In Charge,
Professor, SIMS



Anurag Bajpai



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MANAGING MULTIGENERATIONAL WORKFORCE: BRIDGING THE GENERATION GAP

Hello, working people! Let's discuss something everyone has noticed but probably didn't directly express:

The multigenerational workplace of today.

More generations than ever are represented in the workforce, whether it be Gen Z starting their first job or Baby Boomers who continue the legacy with all the years of experience.

Like that big ol' family reunion where your teenage cousin is trying to tell you all about vinyl albums, and Grandma's teaching you TikTok dances.

Amazing and confusing, right?

Remember, variety fuels creativity. Well, the changing views, experiences, and talents of generations are just as key to a diverse workforce as is racial and gender diversity.

Managing a multigenerational workforce is akin to mixing a cocktail. You have a number of flavored ingredients at your command—a few generations. Once you get the balance right, each ingredient will complement the other like a perfect blend.

Therefore, remember to be thankful for the mix in your environment the next time you are frustrated because of one quirk or another of a particular generation in the workplace. Accept the challenge of closing the gap and remember: a multigenerational workforce isn't a problem to be solved; it's an opportunity to be seized.

1. RECOGNIZE, AVOID STEREOTYPING

Stereotypes are easy to slap on people. "Millennials and their avocados!" and "Boomers and their landlines!" When used in a work setting, these can be really limiting, even though they might be funny in a joke. Never forget that every person brings different views and experiences to the table, regardless of age. Know the general characteristics of the different generations, but always view any person as an individual

2. EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION IS THE KEY

If one had to select a crux of most intergenerational misconceptions, it would probably have to be communication. Gen Z is all about those direct messages, while the Baby Boomers are about in-person conversations. The challenge lies in developing a blended communication strategy. Add in some old-school, in-person meetings with the newest technology. Also, set up a session through which team members can make a presentation of favorite techniques. Maybe someone has something very useful to teach others. Also, set up a session through which team members can make a presentation of favorite techniques. Maybe everyone has something useful to teach someone else.

3. FOSTER REVERSE AND FOSTER MENTORING

Innovative thought: Mentoring need not necessarily take place from the older towards the younger. Because of their years of experience, there is a lot that the more senior professional can teach, but juniors will be trained in all the latest tools, techniques, and trends. Seek out partnerships where there will be mutual sharing of information.

4. CELEBRATE DIFFERENCES

Embrace and celebrate generational differences instead of dismissing them. Organize themed days where people across generations contribute items related to music, fashion, or technology. You would sometimes be surprised at how much common ground you share, and often it may even be educational and light-hearted.

5. PROVIDE FLEXIBLE TRAINING PROGRAMS.

Some may be very tech-savvy; others less so. There are so many different modes of training that you can accommodate these different learning preferences. You can ensure everyone is on the same page through online courses or interactive workshops, or even one-on-one meetings.



KEY STEPS TO REDUCE DIFFERENCES IN GROUP

“Generations are a lens through which to understand societal change, rather than a label with which to oversimplify differences within the group.”

Steps are as follows:

1. MAXIMIZING THE VALUE OF MULTIGENERATIONAL WORKFORCES-

Do not make assumptions on age groups and their characteristics. Some generation Y individuals alongside those from generation Z expect all older people to be conservative as a rule. In truth, many members of Generation X, the Boomers and even some representatives of the Silent Generation were active participants in the US civil rights movement. Among the leading lights of the silent generation was two great men who were far from silent on important matters—Martin Luther King, Jr (born 1929) and Muhammad Ali (born 1942). Do baby boomers really deserve the stigma of being technology averse? Somebody forgot to inform Steve Jobs, Bill Gates and Tim Berners-Lee about that fact—all these three people are children of boom (1955).

Being aware of their own prejudices, acting with realness and responsibility for building environments where everyone feels esteemed and protected enables leaders to foster an inclusive organizational culture. (“The Three A’s of Inclusion: Awareness, Authenticity, and Accountability,” Harvard Business Publishing Corporate Learning, February 2020) By exposing generational stereotypes that exist within companies’ structures, leaders can help their organizations to address unconscious biases so as to create strong capable multigenerational teams.

2. RECOGNIZE ALL EMPLOYEES AS INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE UNIQUE, VALUABLE SKILL SETS.

You can, however, recognize the unique skills that each member of a generation has developed over time and apply those within a team.

To promote diversity and inclusion L&D must help to build and facilitate learning experiences. An example is when new hire onboarding should be focused on how one brings their authentic self to work rather than teaching them “fitting in” at their new workplace. On this note, L&D can develop some strategies to foster diversity and inclusion organization-wide including; crowdsourcing to determine learning needs of underserved groups, integrating inclusive exercises in all learning programs or ensuring the graphics used in training curriculum represent all generations as well as identity.

3. CREATE A PLAN TO PROMOTE MULTIGENERATIONAL KNOWLEDGE SHARING ACROSS TEAMS AND WORKPLACES.

There are many ways both formal and informal which encourage multigenerational knowledge sharing throughout an organization by L&D. These include structured mentorship programs, casual brown bag lunches where intergenerational groups can come together to share nuggets of wisdom.

However, L&D could combine knowledge sharing with social networking towards achieving the same authenticity that Frei claims is crucial for his beautiful people (Frei 2016).

The L&D, for that matter, must make way for the truth to be revealed by ensuring that the members of all generations feel comfortable exposing their knowledge gaps. This could be as simple as admitting one does not actually know why the former pound signs are called hashtags anymore; or another example could be asking about a particular product’s history since being hired recently.

Four key achievements in multi-generational initiatives:

- The organization retained tacit knowledge which would have otherwise been lost
- The pool of future leaders was broadened
- Young leaders in the pipeline gained more reputation and profile
- It created more teamwork and collaboration between different generations

Case study-Navigating Diversity: Multi-Generational Management Strategies at IBM

IBM has navigated the challenges and opportunities brought to it with great success by a multi-generational workforce, from Baby Boomers to Generation Z, through strategic initiatives in raising productivity and leveraging diversity across all age groups. Every generation has different preferences in working: Baby Boomers value experience and tradition, Generation X seeks work-life balance and growth, Millennials prefer purpose-driven work, flexibility, and constant feedback, while Generation Z needs the integration of technology and dynamism in the workplace. IBM has, therefore, been responsive to these preferences and altered its HR policies and management practices so that every employee feels valued and supported.

Effective communication has been central to the approach of IBM in ensuring that the channels of communication remain inclusive for both digital and traditional means of information exchange. It is this kind of inclusiveness that engenders cross-generation understanding and collaboration. Moreover, IBM has bridged this gap in the digital divide by implementing technology through trainings and support to the older generation, at the same time banking on the digital skills of younger employees in driving innovation and smoothening of processes. This is supplemented by strategic programs on diverse leadership and mentorship that facilitate knowledge exchange and bridge generational gaps in ensuring that decision-making at all levels is influenced by diverse perspectives.

Flexibility is reflected in IBM's embracing flexible work policies that ensure remote work options and flexible hours pinned to the needs of different generations. The use of technology is supported by collaboration and communication tools that facilitate smooth interaction and enhanced productivity among the geographically dispersed team members. Continuous learning and development initiatives are important, with continuous training provided in respect to different styles of learning and career stages. The investments made in digital upskilling will let employees of all ages stay relevant amidst the constantly changing technology environment, which again will be both catalytic in individual growth and contribution towards the overall success of the company.

The IBM way has been a paramount call in using inclusive communication strategies through a mix of digital platforms, town halls, and personalized feedback sessions. It allows for open dialogue, open channels of feedback, and ensures that all voices are heard and valued in sustaining a caring and inclusive work environment. This is associated with improved rates of employee engagement and retention across the diverse age groups at IBM. The organization has also witnessed more innovation and creativity due to cross-generational collaboration.

The way in which IBM handles its multigenerational workforce has not only strengthened organizational resilience but also increased agility to the fast pace within the market and technological changes. Embracing diversity and using focused HR strategies, IBM has been able to utilize the strength of each generation effectively in driving innovation, productivity, and total organizational success. This case study serves as a springboard in arguing for the need for an all-inclusive workplace culture that values and celebrates generation diversity as a benchmark of effective workforce management within the technology sector and other environments.



HOW CAN ORGANISATIONS CLOSE THE GAP BETWEEN THE GENERATIONS AT WORK?

Management involves a number of challenges and opportunities when handling a multi-generational workforce in today's dynamic work environment. From Baby Boomers to Generation Z, it means that an organization should be able to sail through a complex landscape with different expectations, work styles, and preferences in communication.

UNDERSTANDING GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES

The values and views of each generation are unique and individually shaped by their experiences. Baby Boomers show up with loyalty and strong work ethic, valuing stability and tradition. Gen-Xers are known for their independence and adaptability, taking a more balanced approach to work and life. Millennials, or Gen-Y, bring in the technology-savvy piece with an emphasis on collaboration, flexibility, and purpose in one's work. The newest entrants into the workforce, Generation Z, value innovation, digital communication, and social responsibility.

CHALLENGES IN MULTI-GENERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

Probably one of the biggest challenges facing multi-generational management is differences in communication styles. While face-to-face or even telephone calls will be more favored by Baby Boomers, Millennials and Generation Z are best served through digital communication tools. This can cause great friction and misunderstandings if not managed appropriately.

Furthermore, the career development and work-life balance vary from generation to generation. The older generation may pay more attention to the security and long-term growth with one company, while the younger workers are interested in fast-tracked progression with training in new areas and flexible employment offering telecommuting options.

HOW TO EFFECTIVELY MANAGE

Organizations should foster a culture of inclusiveness in which the strengths of each generation are appreciated and utilized in accomplishing the task of better management of a multi-generational workforce. Mentorship programs could be designed in a way to enable knowledge transfer and mutual understanding. Cross-level open communication and feedback address miscommunication and align goals.

Such policies would include flexible work arrangements that would accommodate a number of needs of employees, including telecommuting and career advancement opportunities. Moreover, the ability to acknowledge and appreciate each generation's uniqueness can allow organizations to foster an environment of harmony yet, at the same time, one of innovation and success.

In other words, multi-generational workforce management requires finesse, embracing diversity, and inclusion. It is by understanding these generational differences and putting in place strategies for bridging gaps that organizations can unlock their diverse talent pool to succeed in a changing business environment.

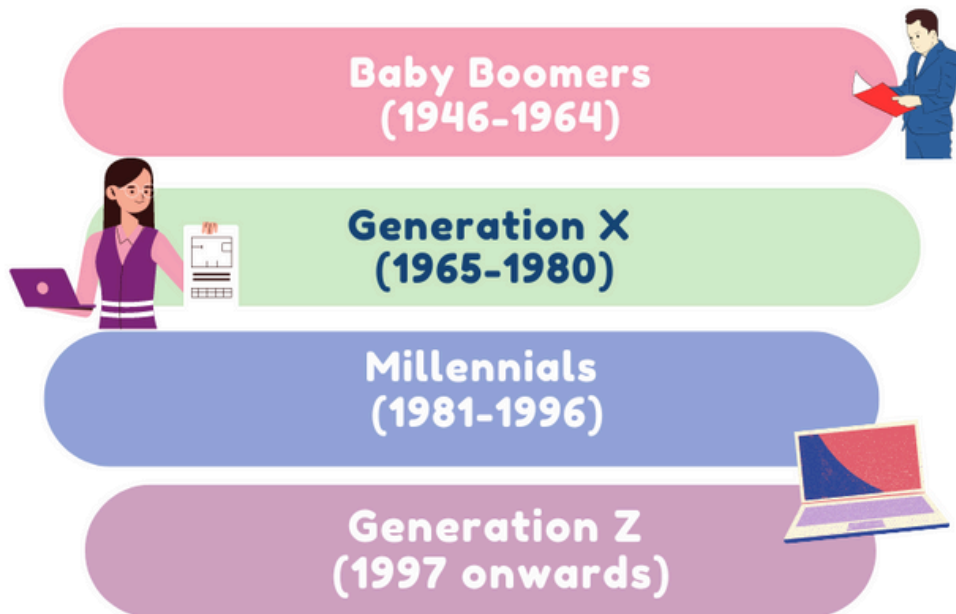


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Key Generations in the Workplace



Challenges in managing multi-generational workforce



Strategies for effective management





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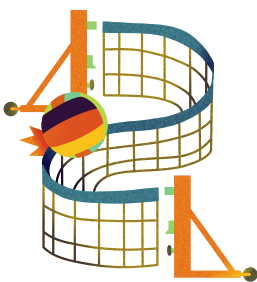
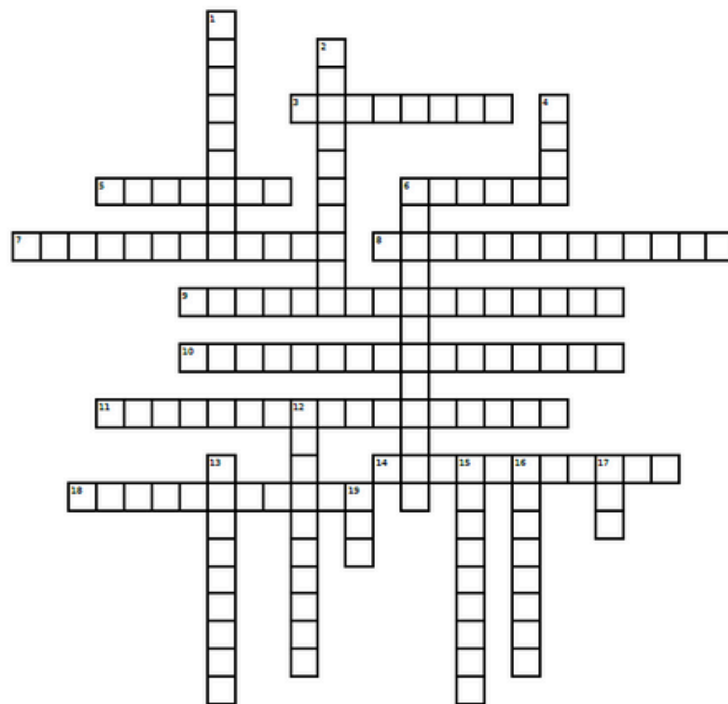


Down:

- 1. Economic theory of comparative advantage
- 2. Measure of a company's liquidity
- 4. Market analysis tool
- 6. Net profit as a percentage of sales
- 12. Organizational structure form
- 13. Long-term business strategy
- 15. Business growth strategy
- 16. Business plan component
- 17. Profit after taxes
- 19. Method for evaluating projects

Across:

- 3. Process improvement methodology
- 5. Risk management tool
- 6. Revenue minus costs
- 7. Financial statement showing assets and liabilities
- 8. Framework for business ethics
- 9. Corporate governance standard
- 10. Type of leadership that inspires
- 11. Comprehensive performance measure
- 14. Principle of finance stating money's value decreases over time
- 18. Strategy for entering a market





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Riddle Me Out

1. IF YOU HAVE TO USE IT, IT COSTS LESS THAN IF YOU DIDN'T HAVE IT. IF YOU NEVER USE IT, IT COSTS MORE THAN IF YOU DIDN'T HAVE IT.

2. SOMEONE IS ALONE IN A DARK ROOM, WITH A SINGLE MATCH, ONE CANDLE, A LAMP AND A FIREPLACE. WHAT DO THEY LIGHT FIRST?

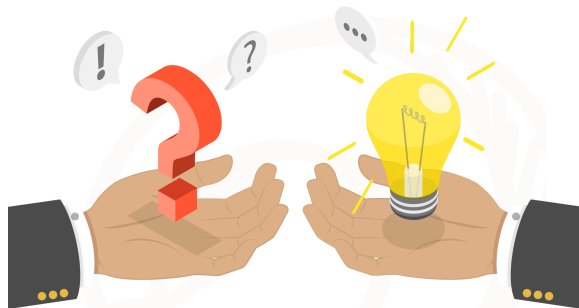
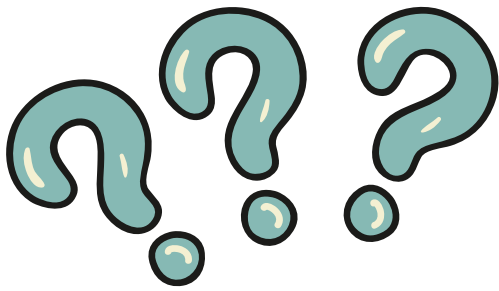
3. WHAT DOES NOBODY WANT, YET NOBODY WANTS TO LOSE?

4. I AM HIGHER WITHOUT A HEAD. WHAT AM I?

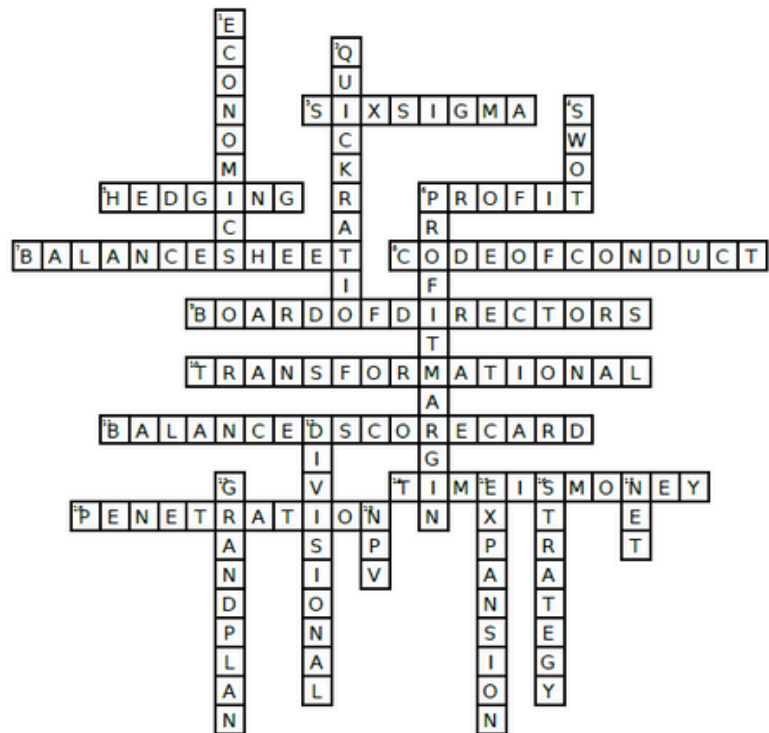
Answers

Riddle

1. Insurance
2. They light the Match.
3. Work
4. A Pillow



Crossword



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