

# Generations At Work

Dr. Scott Morrell – Stone Arch Organization Development

## Description

We live in unprecedented times where someone born in 1945 (Traditionalist) may own/lead an organization, a Baby Boomer born in 1960 leads a division of employees, a Generation X'er born in 1975 manages a team of Millennials that were born in 1988.

They grew up with different role models, music, clothing/hair styles, technology and philosophies for life and work.

Organizations that recognize the differences of each generation and leverage the strengths of those generations are more likely to outperform those that do not.

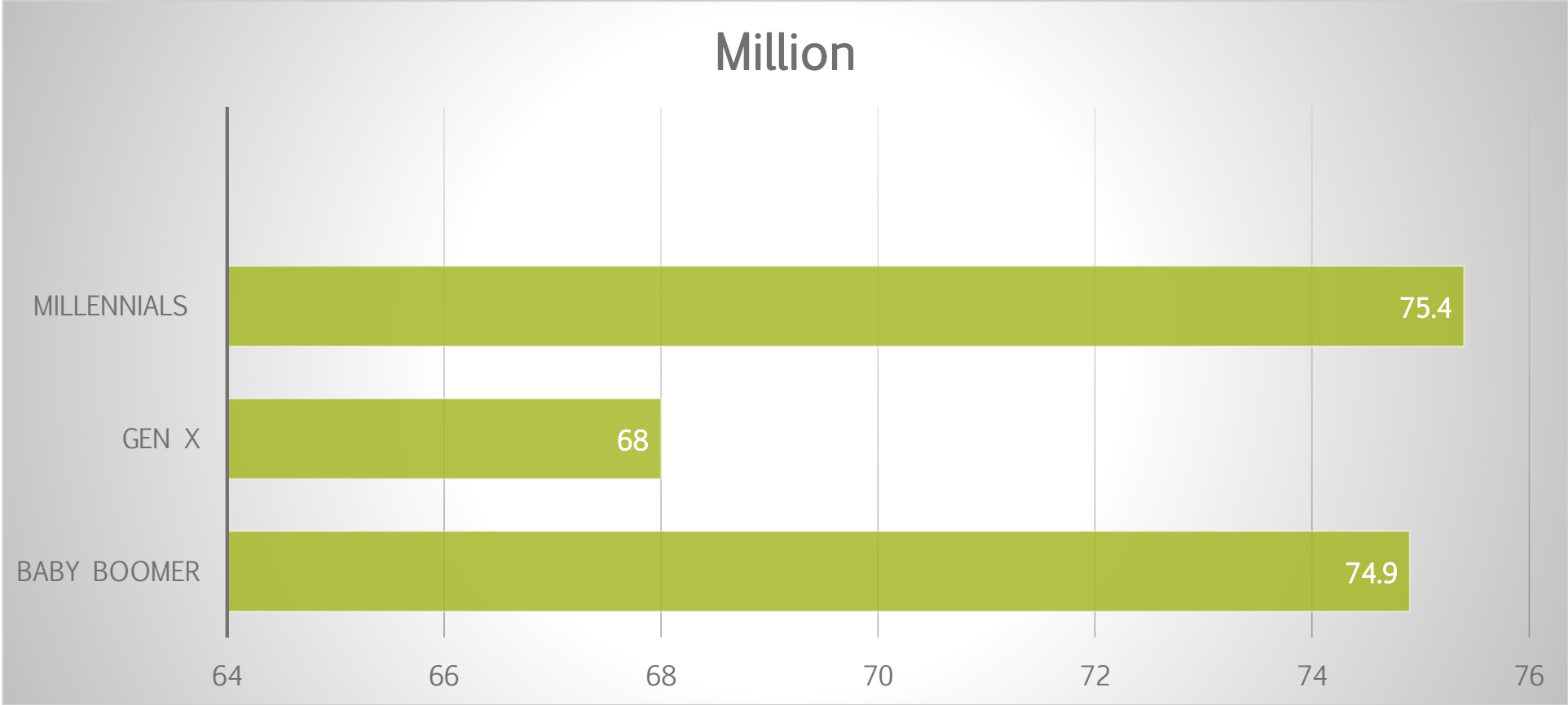
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# Agenda

- Workplace characteristics
- Communication tips
- Generation panel discussion

# Workplace Characteristics

# Living Generational Cohorts – Pew Research & US Census Bureau



# Workplace Characteristics

|                      | Baby Boomers  | Gen X  | Millennials   |
|----------------------|---|--|---|
| Work ethic and value | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workaholics</li> <li>Work effectively</li> <li>Crusading causes</li> <li>Personal fulfillment</li> <li>Desire quality</li> <li>Question authority</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self-reliance</li> <li>Eliminate the task</li> <li>Desire structure and direction</li> <li>Skeptical</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“What’s next?”</li> <li>Multi-tasking</li> <li>Tenacity</li> <li>Entrepreneurial</li> <li>Tolerant</li> <li>Goal oriented</li> </ul>           |
| Work is....          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Long hours</li> <li>An exciting adventure</li> <li>Competitive game</li> <li>Climb ladder</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A difficult challenge</li> <li>In and outside an office</li> <li>Portable careers</li> </ul>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A means to an end</li> <li>Fulfillment</li> <li>Make an impact</li> <li>Focus on results not hours worked</li> <li>Parallel careers</li> </ul> |
| Leadership style     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consensual</li> <li>Collegial</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask why</li> <li>Challenge one another</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To-be-determined</li> </ul>  |

# Workplace Characteristics

|                        | Baby Boomers                                   | Gen X   | Millennials                                       |
|------------------------|--|---|---|
| Relationship with boss | “Yes, sir and Yes, ma’am”                      | Advocate<br>Protector<br>Get me resources                       | Desire a mentoring relationship                   |
| Interactive            | Team players<br>Enjoys meetings                | Entrepreneurial   | Participative                                     |
| Communications         | In person                                      | Direct & immediate  | Social media<br>E-mail<br>Voice mail<br>(Distant) |
| Feedback and rewards   | Money<br>Under appreciate<br>Title recognition | “Sorry to interrupt,<br>How am I doing?”<br>Freedom best reward | Meaningful work                                   |

# Workplace Characteristics

|                        | Baby Boomers                           | Gen X                   | Millennials  |
|------------------------|--|-------------------------|--|
| Messages that motivate | “You are valued.”<br>“You are needed.” | “Trust your instincts.” | “You will work with other bright and creative people.” |
| Work and Life Balance  | No balance<br>Work to live             | Seek balance            | Seek balance   |



# Communication Tips

## Communication Tips – Baby Boomers

- Boomers are the "show me" generation, so your body language is important when communicating.
- Speak in an open, direct style but avoid controlling language.
- Answer questions thoroughly and expect to be pressed for the details.
- Present options to demonstrate flexibility in your thinking.

## Communication Tips – Generation X

- Share information with them on a regular basis and strive to keep them in the loop.
- Talk in short sound bites to keep their attention.
- Ask them for their feedback and provide them with regular feedback.
- Use email as a primary communication tool.
- Use an informal communication style.

## Communication Tips – Millennials

- Encourage them to take risks and break the rules so that they can explore new ways of learning.
- Use humor and create a fun learning environment. If they don't take themselves too seriously, have fun with it.
- Seek their feedback constantly and provide them with regular feedback.
- They may cocoon, if you talk down to them.

# Panelists

## Assumptions – Panel Format – Ground Rules

- Each generation has positive and constructive wisdom to share
- Through a collaborative dialogue between generations we can experience a positive business impact
- 2-minutes per question per panelist
- Entertain comments/questions from audience at the end
- Aim for constructive comments
- Avoid broad stereo-type questions

# Generation Panelists

## Baby Boomer

Laura Kushner

HR Director - League of Minnesota Cities



## Generation X

Christine Ruzek

Human Resources Supervisor - City of Eden Prairie



## Millennial

Teresa Moody

Human Resources, City of Chaska



## Question set 1

What motivates you at work? How do you like to be rewarded for a job well done? [Motivation - Intrinsic/extrinsic rewards]

How do you like to make an impact at work? [Meaning]



## Question set 2

How do you like to be managed or coached? [Leadership]

What are your expectations for top leadership in your organization?

## Question set 3

What is your philosophy about cell phones at your desk?

Use of Facebook, or Social Media tools at work? The use of headphones and listening to music?  
[Communication/Technology]

## Question set 4

What is your thinking about working traditional 40-hour week?

Can you get work done in 40 hours? More? Less?

Philosophy of over-time? [Expectation of work hours]

## Question set 5

How did/do you develop your own career development?  
[Career]

Did the employer?

Did you take the lead in your own career development?

## Question set 6

What is your work environment like? [Work climate]

What role does physical environment play in your work place?

# Audience questions

- Aim for constructive comments
- Avoid broad stereo-type questions

Thank you for attending!

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