

LESSON 7-6: Multi-Generational Leadership

Respect, Loyalty, Work Ethic, Knowledge Transfer

“Each generation goes further than the generation preceding it because it stands on the shoulders of that generation.” – Ronald Reagan

“Our attitude towards others determines their attitude towards us.” – Earl Nightingale

WELCOME & PRAYER

PREVIOUS LESSON FOLLOW UP

- Did you treat any decisions over the past two weeks differently based on what you learned in Lesson 7-5?

KICK OFF QUESTION

- Think of somebody from an older generation who has had a profound impact on how you live your life. What life lessons did you learn from them? What approach did they take to influence you?

PRIMARY SCRIPTURES

“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.”
Philippians 2:3-4 (NIV)

Discussion Question:

- Think of someone in your personal or professional life that you are in a unique position to impact. How are you willing to invest in their development?

BIG PICTURE

In this lesson, we will focus on generational differences in four specific areas: respect, loyalty, work ethic, and knowledge transfer.

CONCEPTS TO UNDERSTAND

As we examine how different generations view an issue, we will focus not just on what they believe, but why they believe it.

Respect

Traditionalists:

- What: This generation seeks to understand an organization's hierarchy and find their place in it.
- Why: Family structures, military organizations, and companies they worked for early in their careers all had well-defined hierarchies.

Boomers:

- What: Felt they could gain respect by working their way up the corporate ladder.
- Why: Boomers learned that anybody could be successful and command respect through education and hard work.

Gen Xers:

- What: Will give respect if the other person proves they are worthy of respect.
- Why: In their personal and professional lives, Gen Xers saw that position did not guarantee competence.

Millennials:

- What: Respect is given to those who are competent and those who take Millennials seriously.
- Why: At an early age, Millennials were given a voice in decisions by their parents.

Loyalty

Traditionalists:

- What: Loyalty is a virtue and job-hopping is not.
- Why: Leaving the military wasn't a choice, and loyalty was rewarded with increasing seniority and pensions.

Boomers:

- What: Moving on from a company is sometimes necessary.
- Why: The stigma of leaving an organization was less, but most Boomers felt they could succeed by moving up their current organization without a move to another firm.

Gen Xers:

- What: Leaving is often necessary to be successful.
- Why: GenX has seen Boomers fill middle management positions, so Xers have had to be willing to move on to get a promotion.

Millennials:

- What: Millennials do not hesitate to change firms or careers. Even when staying with the same organization, they seek out different jobs.
- Why: Life is too short to stay in a job that doesn't fulfill their passion or provide opportunities to make a difference.

Work Ethic

Traditionalists:

- What: Work 9 to 5, unless overtime is required.
- Why: This was the norm in typical industrial and professional positions.

Boomers:

- What: Work 8 to 6 and take work home.
- Why: Boomers felt they had to differentiate themselves for advancement by working long hours.

Gen Xers:

- What: Gen Xers will strive to be productive at work, but bring work home if necessary.
- Why: Extra work is necessary, but it isn't seen as a requirement to get ahead.

Millennials:

- What: Millennials are not tied to traditional work hours because they can work remotely from home.
- Why: Getting the job done is all that matters, so rigid office hours don't make a lot of sense.

Knowledge Transfer

Traditionalists:

- What: Received through observation and verbal passing on of knowledge.
- Why: Job skills were learned from watching others and getting information directly from them.

Boomers:

- What: Received through observation and verbal passing on of knowledge.
- Why: Boomers learned by shadowing Traditionalists.

Gen Xers:

- What: Received through verbal and written passing on of knowledge.
- Why: They could learn from a Boomer or Traditionalist, or just access documentation on job responsibilities.

Millennials:

- What: Received through written passing on of knowledge and video documentation.
- Why: YouTube, podcasts, and other online sources opened up new resources for information to be accessed.

EXERCISE

In the table at the end of this lesson, identify one practical issue in your workplace that could be improved from the list of topics covered in this lesson. Write down the initials of individuals (including yourself) along with their generation, and answer the following questions:

- What do they believe?
- Why do they believe it?
- How can I/we be flexible?
- How might we leverage this issue for the benefit of the organization?

Discussion Questions

1. Which of the other generations do you struggle to respect the most? What do you need to change in your thinking to acknowledge and appreciate that generation?
2. Regarding loyalty, has your organization faced challenges retaining employees from a particular generation? Why?
3. What could be changed to make your organization more attractive to each generation?
4. What work ethic behaviors of other generations are not consistent with your values? Is your perception accurate? How might your thinking need to change, if at all?
5. Given what you have learned in this lesson series, what can you do in your realm of influence to help your company move in the right direction?

TAKE ACTION

- Nothing changes unless you make a commitment to take action to initiate change. Develop a plan to address what you should do to drive change within your organization.

CLOSING PRAYER

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- *Sticking Points* by Haydn
- *Generational Differences Chart* by Midland Family Center (<http://www.wmfc.org/uploads/GenerationalDifferencesChart.pdf>)
- *Navigating the Multigenerational Workplace* by Leah Georges at TEDxCreightonU (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kzfAOc4L6vQ>)

Issue: _____

Initials/ Generation	What do they believe?	Why do they believe it?"	How can we be flexible?	How might we leverage this issue for the benefit of the organization?