



Managing Different Generations in the Workplace

Generation Specific Strategies for the Workplace

	RECRUITMENT	SALARY	BENEFITS	TYPE OF WORK	WORK ENVIRONMENT	OTHER KEY POINTS
Veterans	Use a combination of high-tech & traditional methods (i.e., newspaper classifieds, trade journals, executive search firms, face-to-face networking). Communicate message that “We want, need and value your knowledge and years of experience.”	Provide a competitive salary, but remember that being productive and staying active in the workforce is often even more important to this group.	Utilize benefit tiers to allow choices suited to this group (e.g., long-term care insurance, grief counseling services, etc.). Consider reduction in work hours or short layoffs (instead of firing) during tough economic times.	Offer new challenges and opportunities that capitalize on their vast experience (e.g., task forces, focus groups, problem solving teams, mentoring of other employees).	Demonstrate work flexibility (e.g., options that allow for telecommuting or working part-time).	This is a group that can adapt well to change. Many Veterans may not really want to retire if provided with the right opportunities.
Baby Boomers	As above.	Provide a very competitive salary to this group, especially since Boomers often have extra child/elder care expenses.	Utilize benefit tiers to allow choices suited to this group (e.g., child/elder care referral services, provision of paid days off work to care for sick children and/or elderly dependents).	Offer work that allows them to advance in their careers and keep work interesting (e.g., promotions, mentoring to more senior roles, job rotation opportunities, etc.).	Offer policies to help this group better manage work-life balance and stress levels (e.g., job sharing options, voluntary demotions, telecommuting).	Many Boomers may be thinking of retiring soon, so organizations would do well to look at ways to keep them on board for as long as possible.
Generation X	Use multiple technological and online methods (e.g., Web sites like Workopolis, Monster, social media sites; online job applications, etc.). Keep your Web information current and allow for regular online feedback if necessary. Keep job descriptions short and concise.	Provide a competitive salary to this group, but note they are inclined to look more at the salary and benefits package as a whole, since family happiness and work-life balance are top priorities.	Utilize benefit tiers to allow choices suited to this group (e.g., time off, on-site child care and/or sick child care, flexibility in core work hours).	Help Gen Xers to expand their knowledge, skills and abilities at work. Also see “Type of Work” in the Baby Boomers section above.	Try not to micro-manage Gen Xers; they respond best to managers who are more like mentors. Provide regular feedback on performance beyond the annual review. Create a fun and “family like” work environment. Make sure that your organization uses current technology.	Gen Xers may also be “sandwiched” employees.
Generation Y	Similar to Gen X.	Understand that expectations for good salaries and signing bonuses will be high for this group (and explain why expectations may not be met right away).	Offer choice and flexibility in salary/benefit options for this group.	Create work that is more meaningful by providing frequent and constructive feedback on performance and outline how they contribute to organizational success. Offer a variety of highly interactive/creative learning opportunities. Start with small projects they can take ownership of, and build from there, provided performance expectations are met.	Provide opportunities for Gen Yers to be social, make friends and make a difference through work (e.g., sports teams, volunteer programs). Demonstrate serious measures to protect personal safety of employees. Provide state-of-the-art technology.	Gen Yers are very compelled to stay with an organization if they feel their ideas are valued and respected by others in the workplace – especially by older generations.
Generation Z	Similar to Gen Y.	Similar to Gen Y.	Similar to Gen Y.	Similar to Gen Y. Put a special training focus on teambuilding, negotiating and conflict-resolution skills.	Similar to Gen Y.	Gen Zers have been very protected growing up, and are often not used to dealing with conflict (compared to other generations).

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