LEADING MULTIPLE GENERATIONS IN THE VETERINARY CLINIC

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"The children now love luxury; they have bad manners, contempt for authority; they show disrespect for elders and love chatter in place of exercise. Children are now tyrants, not the servants of their households. They no longer rise when elders enter the room. They contradict their parents, chatter before company, gobble up dainties at the table, cross their legs, and tyrannize their teachers."

(attributed to Socrates by Plato)

We’ve all heard it – "This new generation has no loyalty and they don’t want to work! It wasn’t like this when we were their age."
Let’s explore this further.

Why is this an important topic?

Implications of these differences in the workplace:

- Misunderstanding between different generations can limit performance and increase stress
- Individuals feel devalued when they are not respected
- Can lead to attrition, lower productivity, lower commitment to the Company
- Different perspectives can increase creativity and lead to better solutions if we leverage the differences

What are the Generations?

There are currently 4 generations in the workforce

- Baby Boomers (born 1946 – 1963)
- Generation X (born 1964 – 1980)
- Generation Y or millennials (born 1981 – 2000)
- Generation Z (or post millennials or iGen) Born mid 90’s mid 2000

* While different generations exist globally, the birth years and some characteristics may differ by country/region depending on the cultural context and seminal events in each country/region.
We're influenced by our generations but not defined by them. It's all about treating people as individuals and meeting their individual needs.

This data from “Understand Millenial Generation To Manage Them Successfully by Kenneth Judd Some data that can help understand Gen Y “ can help picture better this generation:

- 85% of Millenials define themselves as loyal and hardworking when they see value in what they are doing.
- They tend to value "living in the moment" as important.
- They process information in narrative images, (i.e., think Nike™ ads).
- They consistently listed their parents as their "most admired" choices.
- They are energetic and need continual stimulation and challenge. Millenials will move on quickly if they get bored or dissatisfied.
- Their truth detectors are always on and they do not give second chances if deceived.
- Nearly nine out of ten (88%) have established specific goals for the next five years
- More than three-fourths (78%) believe they will achieve their life goals.
- A strong majority (75%) says that hard work is more important to achieving success than lucky breaks.
- 57% are willing to work more than 40 hours per week to reach their career goals.
- Only one third say that earning a high salary is an important part of their career
- Only one in four (26%) think high job prestige to be very important.
- More than three-fourths do not agree that money buys happiness.
- Honesty and integrity are the attributes Millenials admire most about a person.
- 92% of Millenials place "high value" on volunteer work.
- Millennials say their top requirements at work are having idealistic and committed co-workers and doing work that helps others.
- They expect to be asked for input regarding decisions; they grew up being asked for advice about buying computers and will expect the same deference at work.

Culture is still dominant influence around the globe… but, the world is shrinking and cultures are meshing and the younger generations will continue to challenge cultural norms as they “experience” the world through the web.

More differences in people are due to life stage (e.g., single/ married, children at home, etc.) than generation.

Fact or Myth?
Generation Y is Great At Multitasking.

Myth!

Although Gen Y is often seen listening to an iPod, text messaging, and talking about business at the same time, research shows that nobody is good at multi-tasking!

- According to Dr. David Meyer, a psychology professor at the University of Michigan, multi-tasking leads to short-term memory problems and difficulty concentrating.
- Dr. Glenn Wilson conducted a study for HP and found that the average worker’s IQ, despite generation, drops 10 points when multi-tasking

Fact or Myth?

Values significantly vary from one generation to another.

Myth!

Values do not change significantly from one generation to another!

- Research shows that when asked to indicate top values, everyone chooses family and integrity at the top of the list.

- One major difference: there is some indication that Gen Y may not value privacy as much as other generations.
  - Many individuals from Gen Y post intimate details about their lives on the web.

Fact or Myth?

Baby Boomers are easier to retain than Generation X and Generation Y.

Myth!

It is a common misconception that Gen Y employees are not loyal and will not stay with one employer.

- However, no research supports this conclusion.

- Everyone from every generation wants to be treated well at work and will be more likely to leave if not treated well.

Fact or Myth?

Gen Y has a higher need for more coaching, mentoring, feedback, and career guidance than any other generation to date.

Myth!

Newer employees (those with less tenure) often request (and usually require) more coaching, mentoring, and career guidance, but…

- Almost everyone (regardless of generation) wants to learn and grow

- Almost everyone wants a coach
Furthermore, research shows that there are no differences between generations in need for feedback – individuals from all generations want immediate, constructive feedback on their performance.

**Generational Differences:**

**How Should Each Generation be Managed?**

Tips for managing Gen X and Gen Y:

1. Provide challenging work that matters.
2. Build personal relationships – get to know them.
3. Tell the truth.
4. Listen to their ideas and input.
5. Explain the why behind work requests.
6. Communicate clearly in understood terms.
7. Look for opportunities to recognize and reward.
8. Make the workplace fun.
9. Role model the behavior you want.
10. Give them the tools/technology to do their job.
11. Train and mentor them.

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How to relate across Generations?

We’re influenced by our generations but not defined by them. It’s all about treating people as individuals and meeting their individual needs.

**Next Steps to Work More Effectively Across Generations**

Listen to Understand employees with different perspectives from your own
• You can learn valuable information that can help you become more effective from individuals with different levels of experience.

Be Flexible and Open to differences

• Be willing to change your natural style in order to work effectively with colleagues

• Individuals may have different work preferences (e.g., want to work from home; listen to Spotify while working) that do not affect their performance.
  − If it does not affect their ability to complete work, be open to change

Next Steps continued

Better leverage technology to facilitate work processes and increase flexibility

• Utilize tech-savvy employees to understand what we are lacking and what will help them work more effectively.

Respect Others

• Everyone wants to be treated with respect

Avoid stereotyping

• Do not assume that everyone born into a certain generation will behave similarly.

• Don’t judge based on how someone looks (e.g., more casual dress does not mean the employee is sloppy with their work).

As a Manager of Others

Provide challenging and meaningful work

• Discover the strengths of your direct reports and utilize them

Empower employees to make decisions related to their work

Show Pride in the culture of your clinic

Model flexibility and work-life effectiveness

• e.g., avoid sending emails late at night

As a Manager of Others

Provide Learning and Growth opportunities
Mentor and provide guidance on career and life

Provide immediate, actionable, constructive feedback on performance

What have you learned today to better leverage our differences?
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