Generations at work: A Quick Reference Chart

	Traditionalists (71+) 1945 and earlier	Boomers (52-70) 1946-1964	GenX (40-51) 1965-1976	Millennials (21-39) 1977-1995	GenZ (20-) 1996 and later
How to Engage	Discrete Present your story in a formal, logical manner. Show respect for their age and experience. Use good grammar and manners (no profanity). Deliver you message based on the history and traditions of the company. Use formal language. Respect their time. Use inclusive language (we, us) Focus on words, not body language Can be slow to warm up Memo Like hand-written notes, less email and more personal interaction	Diplomatic Face-to-face communication best. In person Use body language to communicate Present options and ask for input. Answer questions thoroughly and expect to be pressed for details Avoid manipulative or controlling language Like the personal touch Get consensus-include them or they may get offended. Establish a friendly rapport; okay to use first names Learn what is important to them personally Emphasize the company's vision and mission and how they contribute to it.	Use straight talk, present facts Use email first Use an informal communication style Talk in short sound bites Share information immediately and often Has the potential to bridge the generation gap between youngest and oldest workers. Don't mico-manage. Use direct, straightforward approach. Avoid buzz words and company jargon Tie your message to "results" Emphasize what's in it for me in terms of training and skills to build their resume	Use email and texts as your go-to communication tools. If important, meet in person. Watch tone – they will resent being "talked down to". Be positive, respectful, and motivational. Use action verbs Use language to portray visual pictures Be humorous-show you are human Demonstrate link between corporate goals and your ask of them.	Unlike Millennials, GenZ prefer in person communication (phone, video-conference or in-person). Use social media channels. Always on, always connected Keep it short and simple you don't have a lot of time to grab their attention Be authentic – they have the ability to sniff out fakes and won't hesitate to call you to task on social media if needs be Email is to GenZ what snail mail is to GenX – too slow. Bite-sized is best
Messages that Motivate	We look to you for wisdom.	We value and need you.	You will have the freedom to get it done.	You will work on a team with other bright, creative people	You will build on experiences with others.

Career Development	Not really an option for the Traditionalists. Just taught to keep their nose to the grindstone. The ultimate goal was simply to move up within the organization, but realized this happened only to a few.	Boomers focused on developing their careers through opportunities within one organization or at least one industry. Moved up based on seniority, not always based on skill and expertise. Market new career development as a way to further enhance relevance to younger workers and add value to corporate intellectual property.	"Advertise" the value of greater education and hands-on experience as an investment in the individual. GenX sees that this is a mutually beneficial exercise – the company gets greater expertise, the individual becomes more marketable.	Focus on providing more experience and opportunity. If they don't get it at their work, they will seek it elsewhere. Delineate a career path to mark the way forward for career advancement.	Personal brand is critical to GenZ and they are keenly aware of how that image is portrayed Help them build expertise – they want to be, and be seen as, experts
Training and Development	Training should contribute to the organization's goals	Training is a contribution to the organization's goals, but is also a path to promotion and additional compensation.	Training enhances their versatility in the marketplace and investment in their future. Not necessarily loyal to the company who trained them. Use a mix of group and individual learning. Adaptive to technology.	Risk-takers that are willing to make mistakes. View mistakes as learning opportunities. Engage with multimedia in a group setting to amp up knowledge transfer.	Want to create and play as they learn; gamification is key for effective knowledge transfer. Just-in-time training will be more prevalent. Use puzzles, surprises etc.
Motivated by…	Feeling respected Security	Being valued, needed Money	Freedom from rules Time Off	Working with bright people Time Off	Self-determinism Social and environmental responsibility Global connectivity
Money is…	Livelihood	Status symbol	Means to an end	Today's payoff	Not motivating (invisible?)
Work and Family Life Balance	Keep work and family entirely separate. Now looking for a way to work flexible hours (i.e. consult as an expert).	Consumed with work – hard to separate personal identity and work identity. Now starting to want more flexibility and some balance, having "put in their time". May be interested in consulting gigs.	Hard-working – the first generation of "latch-key" kids, but saw parents laid off and economic downturns so. . .balance is important. Will sacrifice balance, but only occasionally and for an important goal. Work to live.	Work to support lifestyle. Balance is important. Will occasionally upset the work-life balance, but only if personally motivated. Value their lifestyle more than upward mobility. Will choose lifestyle over a big promotion	Idealistic and industrious – they want to build or make things that make a difference in the world. 9-5 won't cut it; peak productivity hours can be in the middle of the night, not at prescribed times.

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Mentoring	Investment in long term commitment Support-long term commitment Show support for stability, security and community Actions w/ focus on standards and norms Allow the employee to set the "rules of engagement" Ask what has worked for them in the past and fit your approach to that experience. Let them define the outcome. Respect their experience Emphasize that you have seen an particular. approach work in the past, don't highlight uniqueness or need for radical change.	May be experiencing a crisis of identity as end of career nears. Appreciate they paid their dues under the hierarchical rules. Teach them balance: in work, family, finances, etc. Need to know they are valued Show them how you can help them Pre-assess their comfort level with technology before new projects. Demonstrate the importance of a strong team and their role in it. Follow up, check in, and ask how the individual is doing on a regular basis, but DO NOT micro-manage.	Lighten up - offer a casual work environment and allow them to express their individuality. Get them involved with (not for) you. Emphasize creativity, flexibility, independence, learning. Be more hands off. May need help in taking responsibility for full process completion and their role in the big picture. Be prepared to answer "why" often Present yourself as an information provider, not their boss. Follow up and meet your commitments. Make sure you follow through on commitments.	View (and expect) mentorship as a continuation of education. Need to be encouraged to break the rules. Provide clearly defined goals – in steps and actions. Demonstrate respect for their optimism. Need to be flexible; offer customization-a plan designed specifically for them. Offer peer-level examples Allow options, including work from home and flex time. If they do something good, make sure to tell them.	Recognise their diversity. Communicate more frequently and in shorter bursts. Speak with them as adults – don't talk down to them as they have had a "serious" childhood. Assume they have opinions and the researched facts to back up those opinions. Be humble and approach mentorship as a collaborative process. Feed their curiosity.
Work assets	Experience Knowledge Consistent Disciplined Dependable Detail oriented Hardworking Loyalty Stable T Thorough	Anxious to please Willing to challenge the status quo Ability to break down the big picture into assignments. Team players Mission oriented Gifted with political correctness Service oriented Goal oriented Hard-working	Comfortable with change Direct communicators Independent Goal oriented Results driven Eager to Learn, Very Determined Good task managers Problem solvers Highly educated Multi-taskers Not intimidated by authority Thrive on flexibility Technologically savvy	Consumer mentality Collaborative Goal oriented Highly educated Multi-taskers Fast Optimistic Positive attitude Technically savvy Tenacious	Entrepreneurial Independent researchers Open-minded Creative Multi-taskers Thrive in fast-paced environments Crowd sourcing is second nature

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Work Ethic	Dedicated Pay your dues Work hard Respect Authority Hard work Age=seniority Company first	Work ethic = self-worth Quality and quantity	Value balance. Work smarter, not longer. Eliminate the task Self-reliant Entrepreneurial Natural skeptics	Ambitious What's next? Multitasking Tenacity Entrepreneurial	Entrepreneurial Hands-on Collaborative
Keys to working with. . .	Don't try to make work "fun". Explain procedures. Convey discipline, respect, logic and structure - especially if the workplace is more relaxed or spontaneous. Consider their feelings Respect their tendency to be conservative Like the personal touch	Tell them their ideas matter. They were valued youth, teens and young adults and expect to be valued in the workplace. Remember they define themselves by their work. They expect their work, and themselves to matter. Explain why their contribution matters, how it fits into the big picture and what impact it will have on whom. Put them in teams Remind them of their responsibilities to others Recognise their contributions publically. Don't take criticism well	Give them independence and informality. Trust them to move a project forward without micromanaging. Give them time to pursue other interests. Allow them to have fun at work. Give them the latest technology.	Want to work with bright, creative people Take time to learn about their personal goals. They expect to be treated respectfully. Never ask them to do something a certain way because that's the way it has always been done. Provide engaging experiences that develop transferable skills. Provide rationale for the work you've asked them to do and the value it adds. Provide variety Reward extra effort and excellence regularly. Pay close attention to help them navigate work and family issues. Offer structured, supportive work environment.	Use a collaborative approach. This is a generation used to crowd-sourcing decisions. Leverage the latest and greatest technologies; this group is born connected and tech-savvy. Physical locations will not hold much importance – so "field" experience may be meaningless unless you can clearly explain the need? Safety and belonging are key needs.

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