Workforce Needs

Times are, indeed, changing … and so is the world. The profile of the workforce is evolving, and the values people place on both their personal and professional lives suggest that what's important to the next generation of workers will not necessarily be what was important to the last one. These needs are not linked exclusively to the workers age, but also to their lifestyle and their particular behaviours. Following is a tool to help analyze and develop a better understanding of characteristics of each group.

Babyboomers	Generation X	Generation Y
	Approximate current age and work environment	
• 40-59 • employed at a company	• 30-39 • employed at a company, self employed, telecommuting	• 18-29 • telecommuting, global working arena, internet based jobs
	Vision of work	
• hierarchal structure • specific role in the organization • have a retirement plan • want to "believe" in their company • want to find employment in their work again • regret having made work too much of a priority	• team structure • participation in projects • have a career plan • are loyal provided they're getting something out of it • assume that work and enjoyment should go hand in hand • put their personal and professional lives on the same level	• community structure • free agent • have a life plan • look for loyalty from co-workers • assume that work should be enjoyable • consider work to be an extension of personal lives
	Motivational factors	
• fair distribution of tasks • availability of resources • delegation of authority based on required tasks • participation in decision making • recognition of their experience and expertise	• ability to balance personal and professional lives • expectation of partnership with company • alignment of personal and company values [a] desire for openness and transparency • desire for personal growth through work	• opportunity for new work experiences • look for challenges, varied tasks and opportunities for promotion • freedom, flexible hours • participation in decisions • friendly work environment
	Retention factors	
• company's stability, employee benefits • job security until retirement and advancement in the company • recognition of their contribution to the company's success	• relaxed company culture • growth of expertise and ability to advance quickly • recognition of their contribution to the team	• company's technical savvy • self-actualization, opportunity to learn new things • recognition for their contribution within their community

As firms look to build their workforce, they should keep these general characteristics in mind. The key to attracting and retaining good employees means taking into account the generational differences in needs and attitudes towards work and life in general. In addition to new generations of workers joining the workforce, new situations are rising in the workplace that may need you to rethink your management skills.

Adding to the complexity of having these different generations working together under the same "roof", management is faced with the added pressures of a marketplace of customers whose needs and attitudes may or may not be changing at the same rate as the workforce or changing at a faster rate … the generational differences can and will jump up and cause 'life to be interesting' and full of challenges.

In these challenging times, we can all use a helping hand. Please call if there is anything we can do to provide you and your company with a helping hand.

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