# MULTIGENERATIONAL SUPERVISION

A Bridge Worth Building

Presented by Stephanie Mitchum and Tom Kimbark

# OBJECTIVES

- Supervision of a multigenerational teams requires not only knowledge and understanding of the values, attitudes, and work styles of each, but allowing your approach to be tailored to each member of your team.

- Making sure to tailor the approach to the mission, vision, and values of the agency/work we do to keep the different generations excited and on board with these.

- Don't automatically assume that someone from one generation or another meets the sterotypes from that generation. Don't allow the negative stereotypes to play into your supervision.

- Understanding and be mindful of your own bias towards different generations.

" MANAGERS AND EMPLOYEES HAVE TO UNDERSTAND THAT GREAT IDEAS, CREATIVITY, AND INNOVATION COME IN ALL SHAPES, SIZES, AND AGES.  WE HAVE TO HAVE A GREATER RESPECT ACROSS GENERATIONS TO UNDERSTAND THAT EVERYONE COMES TO THE WORKPLACE WITH A SET OF SKILLS AND CONTRIBUTIONS "

Dr. James Johnson, WeSpeakWorldwide.com
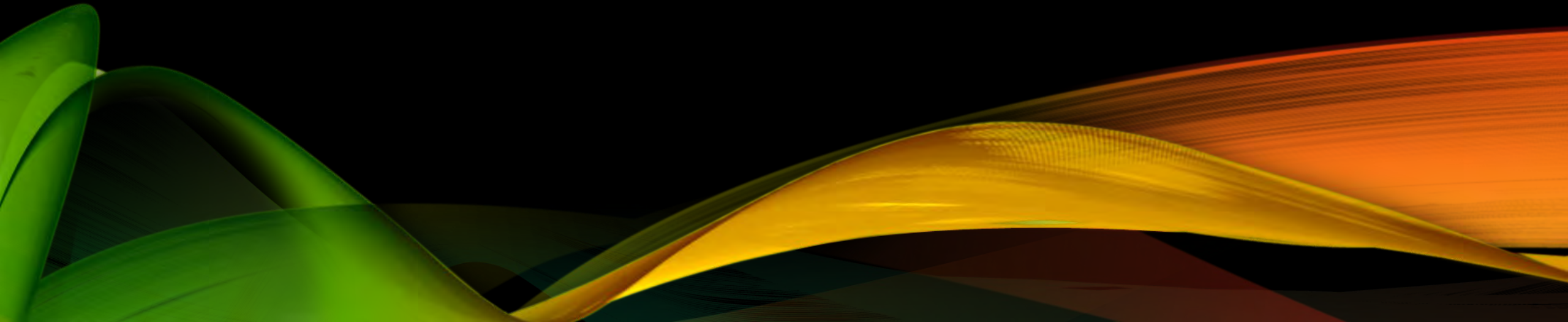
# BABY BOOMERS 1945-1960

## Common Characteristics

- Values Job Perks and Promotions
- Baby Boomers are usually not afraid of a challenge
- Usually have a strong work ethic and believe that younger generations need to "Pay Their Dues"
- Job Security is a top priority
- Most prefer face to face and telephone communication.

# GENERATION X 1961-1980

## Common Characteristics

- Values Corporate training and investment
- Generation X are usually independent and appreciate a good work/life balance.
- Usually like to be seen as leaders and sometimes has issues with trusting establishments
- Most have had to learn how to use technology to advance in job market.
- Communication preferred is email and text.

# GENERATION Y (MILLENNIALS) 1981-1995

## Common Characteristics

- Values making a difference and getting the credit for their work
- Values freedom and flexibility
- They are always connected
- Born into a world of ever changing technology.
- Communication method most preferred is texting and instant messaging.

# GENERATION Z (1996- PRESENT)

## Common Characteristics

- They have never known a life that was not completely connected (cell phones, internet)
- Sometimes referred to as the Google Generation as they have never really known a life before Google (it was founded in 1998)
- Social Justice Minded/Believe in your own individual truth
- Uniqueness and ethical consumption
- Preferred Communication is instant messaging.

# TEXAS APS BREAKDOWN

| Age Range | Total | % of Total | Cum Total | Cum % | Generation |
|-----------|-------|------------|-----------|-------|------------|
| < 25 | 18 | 3.4% | 18 | 3.4% | 1996 to present or Generation Z |
| 25-29 | 102 | 19.0% | 120 | 22.4% | 1981-1995 or Generation Y/Millennials |
| 30-39 | 181 | 33.8% | 301 | 56.2% | |
| 40-49 | 121 | 22.6% | 422 | 78.8% | 1961-1980 or Generation X |
| 50-59 | 84 | 15.8% | 506 | 94.6% | |
| 60-69 | 27 | 5.0% | 533 | 99.6% | 1945 to 1960 or Baby Boomers |
| ➢ 70 | 2 | 0.4% | 535 | 100.0% | |

# PERFORMANCE BREAKDOWN

| Name | AGE | GAP | Assignments | INV+30 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Supervisor | 27 | | N/A | N/A |
| Worker | 52 | +25 | 6 | 0 |
| Worker | 44 | +17 | 32 | 12 |
| Worker | 35 | +8 | 59 | 35 |
| Worker | 49 | +22 | 52 | 32 |

| Name | AGE | GAP | Assignments | INV+30 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Supervisor | 38 | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Worker | 27 | -11 | 22 | 10 |
| Worker | 44 | +6 | 32 | 17 |
| Worker | 38 | 0 | 6 | 0 |
| Worker | 46 | +8 | 43 | 24 |
| Worker | 42 | +4 | 6 | 0 |

| Name | AGE | GAP | Assignments | INV+30 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Supervisor | 36 | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Worker | 30 | -6 | 38 | 5 |
| Worker | 36 | 0 | 48 | 18 |
| Worker | 39 | +3 | 34 | 15 |
| Worker | 42 | +5 | 39 | 6 |
| Worker | 34 | -2 | 9 | 0 |
| Worker | 37 | +1 | 43 | 14 |

| Name | AGE | GAP | Assignments | INV+30 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Supervisor | 36 | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Worker | 47 | +11 | 58 | 36 |
| Worker | 30 | -6 | 83 | 49 |
| Worker | 58 | +22 | 62 | 39 |
| Worker | 29 | -7 | 74 | 41 |

# DISCUSSION

- One observation observed when looking at the data from four units is units that are closer in age seem to have a lower number of cases that have been pending investigations over 30 days.

- Further research including more units across the state would be beneficial in order to determine if generational differences effect unit productivity.

- Why do you think units that have multiple generations might have issues with productivity? Does the age of the Supervisor/Manager vs the age of the worker play a part in the issues? How can supervisors/managers address the issue?

# NEGATIVE STEREOTYPES

- Baby Boomers are behind when it comes to new technology.
- Baby Boomers are "set in their ways" and don't want to learn new things.
- Generation X only cares about greed and money.
- Generation X is short on loyalty and wary of commitment.
- Millennials are always seeking approval/wants too much praise.
- Millennials are never in the office. How can they get any work done if they are not here?
- Generation Z spends too much time on their phones and not enough time working
- Generation Z cares more about their online presence than real world

# BE AWARE

- As managers, being aware of your own personal bias towards different generations is important.

- Attempt to figure out a way to turn that negative stereotype into something positive for the group.

  - While Baby Boomers are "set in their ways" maybe they can help us to make sure that we are following policy when trying to come up with a plan for a complicated case or that important steps are taken in those cases to ensure mission and policy based casework.

  - While Generation X is considered to be "short on loyalty" maybe that can be turned around in finding new resources to help us more effectively serve our clients.

# TIPS, TRICKS, AND HACKS

- DON'T ALWAYS ASSUME THE STEREOTYPE FITS! Make sure you get to know your employees and what their needs are INDIVIDUALLY. Not everyone fits into the mold of a label.

- Allow your workers to tailor how they do the job within the limits of policies and how they are comfortable with it. I believe it is not important on how we all arrive at home plate but making sure that we all arrive there!

- Provide the tools, training, and equipment they need to do the job effectively.
  - Look at possible training options if needed/desired for computer programs to help with productivity (One Note)
  - Provide employees with one on one coaching if needed/desired on specific technology

# TIPS, TRICKS, AND HACKS

- Make sure to bring everyone together to collaborate ideas. Utilize each others skill sets and expertise to more effectively do the job.

- Seek a working balance between building on tradition and supporting flexibility.

- Understanding generational differences DOES NOT substitute getting to know your employees on an individual level. It is important to know what motivates them to do the job that we do and what their personal values are.

In Texas, our DFPS created a YouTube video called "Proud to Protect" where they interviewed workers from different departments such as CPS, APS, licensing, statewide intake, etc and they discussed why they do the job that they do. I took the theme of the video and had my workers come up with their own "WHY." We now have a "WHY" wall in our common space.

Some of the things on our wall are "Commitment" "Our Clients" "APS Team" "Helping Others" and "Protecting the Vulnerable". Afterwards, I realized that we had three generations represented.

# IN CONCLUSION

- Being aware of generational differences assists managers to effectively tailor their supervisory style to what each generation needs in order to be successful.

- While there are positive and negative stereotypes for each generation, instead of focusing on the stereotype, try to find a way to effectively use the stereotype for the greater good.

- Remember that not everyone fits into the label of their particular generation. It is just as important for managers to get to know their employees on an individual level in order to make sure supervisory style is tailored to the employee's needs.

# REFERENCES

- DFPS, T. (2017, September 20). Retrieved July 31, 2019, from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M3h8P6nkOhE&t=11s

- Dittmann, M. (2005, June). Generational differences at Work: A psychologist studies ways to help traditionalists, baby boomers, gen Xers and millennials work better together, despite their generational differences. Retrieved February 25, 2019, from https://www.apa.org/monitor/jun05/generational

- Francis, T., & Hoefel, F. (2018, November). 'True Gen': Generation Z and its implications for companies. Retrieved June 1, 2019, from https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/consumer-packaged-goods/our-insights/true-gen-generation-z-and-its-implications-for-companies

- Friesner, T. (n.d.). The Six Living Generations In America. Retrieved February 25, 2019, from https://www.marketingteacher.com/the-six-living-generations-in-america/

- Robinson-Celeste, J. (2017, December 07). How to Manage a Multigenerational Workforce and Not Go Totally Insane. Retrieved February 25, 2019, from https://www.huffingtonpost.com/janice-celeste/how-to-manage-4-generatio_b_8125158.html

- Shah, R. (2015, April 21). Working With Five Generations In The Workplace. Retrieved February 25, 2019, from https://www.forbes.com/sites/rawnshah/2011/04/20/working-with-five-generations-in-the-workplace/#3aeba1533e7a