

KNOWLEDGE BEANS

A HUMAN RESOURCE NEWSLETTER

IN THIS MONTH

OD CONNOISSEURS' ORATE



Rimmi Joneja talks about how generation gap in workplace should be a concern for the top management.

OD ENTHUSIAST'S ORATE



Brinelle Lobo gives us pointers on winning the generation gap.

OD FOLLOWER'S ORATE



Vishal Vasnik emphasizes on the factors that bring about generational differences and how to overcome them.



ABOUT ATYAASAA

Atyaasaa Consulting Private Limited is a leading Human Resource Training & Consulting Organization partnering with some of the best brands in the country and overseas. Atyaasaa has been a catalyst and a contributor in their quest for people development and business excellence. The core differentiator of Atyaasaa process is continual innovation, unique customization and use of state of the art technology tools. These are implemented through ethical and experienced operations and human resource facilitators having contribution as their core value.



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OD CONNOISSEURS' ORATE

Prof. Rimmi Joneja

GENERATION GAP IN WORKPLACE - TOP MANAGEMENT'S AGENDA

In recent years, diversity and inclusion have been steadily gaining traction in corporate India. Much of this is centered around gender diversity, generation gap, and differently abled workforce. Challenge is to accept all categories of workforce, performance and quality of work being the sole criteria and their respective deliverables. Organizations are beginning to realize the business imperative of a mixed talent group and they are thus focussing on creating an equitable work environment.

Prof. Rimmi Joneja is Associate Dean - Human Resources with Prin. L.N. Welingkar Institute of Management Development and Research, Mumbai. She has thirty three years of work experience in various industries: education and corporate. She was also associated with UNICEF education for three years on one of their education projects. She is also a soft skills corporate trainer for senior and middle level managers.



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THE EDITOR'S MESSAGE

The theme for this month highlights an important existing concern for all organizations on how to deal with a diverse workforce of all ages - generation gap. It provides us with indicators on how to bridge this gap and work in synergy towards a common organizational goal. It also stresses that this is not merely an employee's concern but should be a priority for the senior management as well.

Achieving success in today's rat race has become a herculean task. Success commands a lot of determination, insight, decision making and patience. The topic for next month is "Your route to success". If you share a passion for the topic, have a flair for writing and would like to share your, send us a 300 word article with your brief profile along with your photograph in jpeg format by or before May 10th, 2015 on the email id atyaasaaeditor@atyaasaa.com

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GENERATION GAP IN WORKPLACE - TOP MANAGEMENT'S AGENDA - Prof. Rimmi Joneja

Due importance needs to be given to effective management of a multigenerational workforce. The challenge lies in providing an engaging environment. India has gone through more changes in the past twenty years than most countries who would witness the same over a century.

Already a large workforce in India is young and grossly inexperienced. This surely is bound to lead to unavoidable conflict and embarrassing situations within organizations.

On one hand there are definitive challenges in terms of the attitudes and behaviours of this workforce while on the other hand to keep it engaged. Organizations that foresee such likely changes beforehand and accordingly build essential and robust people practices, forge ahead towards high performance despite challenges of cross-generation management and gender diversity.



In order to be significant and impactful, the initiatives to be taken for the multigenerational workforce must be part of the top management's agenda.

It must be addressed not only by HR teams or diversity groups but also by business heads. I would like to point out the fact that in most companies in India, the awareness of the challenges of a multigenerational workforce is still at a very nebulous stage.

Organizations must awaken to this issue fast and take the necessary steps and avoid losing their best talent and their competitive edge. Bold initiatives such as reverse mentoring have been

implemented in pockets to partially mitigate the impending risk of undesirable attrition. ■

OD ENTHUSIAST'S ORATE

Brinelle Lobo

You are tech savvy, opinionated, connected on social media and highly creative. You belong to the Gen Y also known as Millennials. Your boss on the other hand struggles with excel, finds Facebook a waste of time, is highly proficient and process oriented. He is part of the Baby Boomers. This is where rests the generation gap.

WINNING OVER THE GENERATION GAP

Brinelle Lobo is an HR professional with over five years of work experience in HR business partnering, change management and talent management. She has accomplished her MBA from Goa Institute of Management. She is passionate about organizational development, people, travel and culture.



As more Millennials join the work force and Baby Boomers continue to extend their work contracts, teams tend to have a mix of professionals consisting of these generations. It is of no surprise then, that generational struggles arise in the workplace.

Baby Boomers relish long work hours and believe in working their way up the ladder, for them authority, hierarchy, micro-managing are important. They value stability and security. Many of them may not be comfortable with technology. They prefer face-to-face meetings and are loyal to companies they work for, most of them retiring straight from their first job. In contrast, Gen Y tends to be more open minded, highly creative with a desire to be in

the spot light. They seek proper feedback, work-life balance, are tech savvy and prefer flat organization structures with flexi work hours. They are loyal but do not have blind loyalty towards organizations they work for. The generation between Baby Boomers and Gen Y is Gen X. They value freedom and autonomy, thrive on change, diversity, challenge and responsibility.

Having people from these three generations in the same team might be a challenge. Their diverse world outlooks and life approaches often leads to workplace conflicts as one generation's strength is perceived as a weakness by the other. Having worked with an organization where most of my colleagues were twice my age, I have witnessed differences in our approach to work, speed, technology, ideas and values. I was being asked to follow set protocols until we realized the need to respect each other for our unique talents.

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WINNING OVER THE GENERATION GAP - Brinelle Lobo



It is critical that HR and line managers notice these generational issues and work towards celebrating the strengths of each generation.

- Understanding diverse working styles across generation helps put in place a strategy to achieve favourable outcomes. Baby Boomers are happy leading projects, Gen X is satisfied if given the freedom to execute tasks their way, while Gen Y gets engaged by sharing creative ideas with a highly receptive team.
- It is important that older employees continue to feel valued and not pushed aside. Credit should be given to Baby Boomers for their experience, capability, expertise and guidance.
- Advice to the Baby Boomer: Your experience is irreplaceable and pulls a lot of weight but dealing with younger generations require a different mindset. More indulgence with the younger crowd helps harness their creativity and energy.
- Advice to Gen Y: Be patient, although it might seem a tedious route from ideation to implementation, it is always a good idea to run it through an experienced person. It is possible that he has already faced a similar problem so he knows the pitfalls as well.
- Brainstorming with cross generations having diverse viewpoints forms a holistic view point and gives business a strategic advantage.
- Emphasize on the common goal, it draws people together, focusses on the task at hand and helps eliminate differences while delivering results. **E**

OD FOLLOWER'S ORATE

Vishal Vasnik

DOES GENERATION GAP INCREASE WORKPLACE DISHARMONY

A generation is an identifiable group that shares birth, age, location, and significant life events at critical developmental stages. Baby Boomers (1955 - 1965) are workaholics who rarely job hop. Gen X (1966 - 1985) expect to be appreciated and rewarded. Whenever they have problems at work they prefer to talk directly to their superiors. The Gen Y (1986 onwards) constitutes 40% of the current workforce who are below thirty years of age.

The behaviours, attitudes and work values of these three generation of employees are influenced by their respective historical, economic, social, and cultural environment and associated experiences. Work tension and conflict are inevitable if the baby boomer, generation X and generation Y employees not only fail to understand and accept the unique and different characteristics of each group but also fail to embrace their similarities. The resultant blame is inevitable when they fail to achieve their expectation, aspiration and personal goals, leading to disastrous ramifications and perception gap causing misunderstanding between employees.

Although every generation of employee is unique, valuable and special, in reality, each tend to view the other differently based on their own life experiences and expectations. Senior management must ensure that individuals from different generations perceive each other more positively to avoid inter generational disharmony. It is not good enough to know what divides them but to work on their misperceptions of each other so that they together can make a big difference in their organization and industry.

Vishal Vasnik, is a civil engineer with supervisory skill in civil construction project management. He is currently working as a senior manager at a leading infrastructure conglomerate and has contributed in diverse project segments like residential, commercial, industrial and infrastructure projects.



The sooner employees from all existing generational groups learn to respect and accept one another, as done in large families in India, the easier it would be for them to welcome generation Z employees to the new workforce post year 2020. **E**



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BEAN STATEMENT

Generation gap exists only when strengths do not operate in synergies.