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Ohio Safety Congress & Expo



**#524 From iPod to iWork:
Understanding Nexters in the
workplace**

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Wednesday, March 30, 2011
1 to 2 p.m.



From iPod to IWork

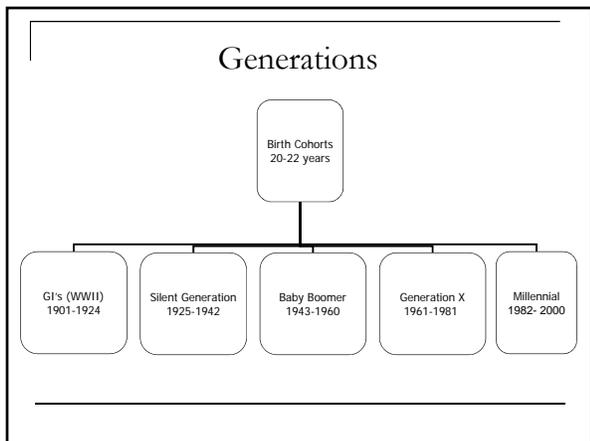
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The Ohio State University

The Time You Were Born Affects:

- VALUES (early years mold your values)
- ATTITUDES (values shape your attitude)
- CHOICES (attitude determine your choices)

The Generational Cycle

- Represent people “moving through time” with a distinct image of themselves
- Each generation has a set of common beliefs and behaviors
- Each generation has a common location in history



The Nexters

- Also known as:
 - Millennial
 - Generation Y
 - Generation Net
 - Internet Generation
 - Digital Generation
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hzCBtsvtD8I&feature=related>

Who are the Nexters?

- Children of late boomers and early GenXers
- Presently 80 million (largest generation)
- “Babies on Board” of the early Reagan years
- “Have You Hugged Your Child Today?” sixth graders of the early Clinton years
- 3 most popular names
 - Michael - Jason - Christopher
 - Jennifer – Jessica - Ashley
- Teens of Columbine
- Witness Oklahoma City Bombing
- 9/11
- 16% live in poverty, not access to technology

Growing Up “Messages”

- Be smart – you are special (Nickelodeon, Baby Gap, Sports Illustrated for Kids)
- Leave no one behind (taught to be inclusive and tolerant of other religions and sexual orientations)
- Connect 24/7 (learned to be interdependent-on family, friends, and teachers)
- Achieve now! (right college, right preschool)
- Serve your community – think of the greater good

Nexters are:

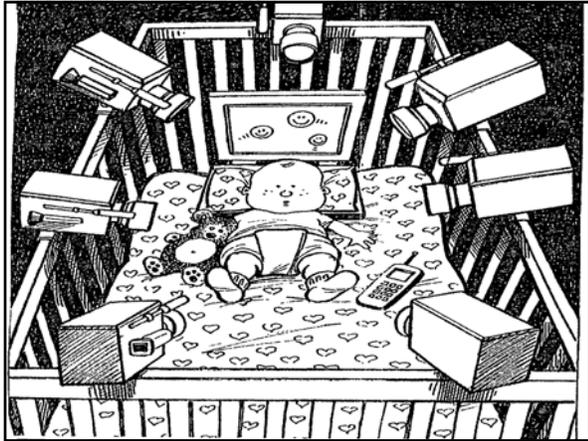
- SPECIAL
- SHELTERED
- CONFIDENT
- TEAM-ORIENTED
- ACHIEVING
- PRESSURED
- CONVENTIONAL

Nexters are Special

- Generation of “wanted” children
- Central to their parents’ sense of purpose
- Many Boomer parents delayed having children until financially secure

Nexters are Sheltered

- Baby on Board signs were created for this generation
- Their well being has dominated legislation (child restraints, home products, movie/video ratings, campus security)
- Boomer parents tend to be over-protective



Nexters are Confident

- Raised by parents believing in the importance of self-esteem
- Optimistic yet practical
- Hopeful of the future
- Enjoy strong connections with their parents

Nexters are Team-Oriented

- They are used to being organized in teams
- They have spent much of their time working and learning in groups
- They have established tight peer bonds
- They are inclusive

Nexters are Achieving

- They are very much into setting and meeting goals
- They have the benefit of best-educated parents
- They are the smartest ever with rising proficiency in math, science and standardized tests
- They are subject to mandatory testing

Nexters are Pressured

- They are pushed to study hard
- They are pushed to succeed ~ enrolled in activities
- They are pushed to attend college
- They are pushed to choose careers that “pay off” nicely



Nexters are Conventional

- They identify with their parents' values
- They feel close to their parents
- They are "rule followers" (if we give them clear rules they can understand)
- They accept authority
- "Whatever" – passive approach to differ

Millennial Parent Characteristics

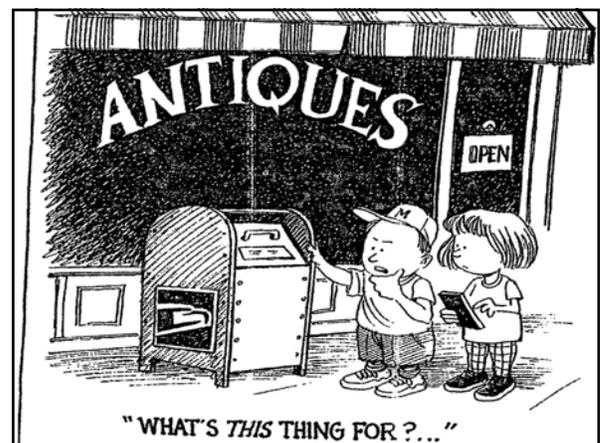
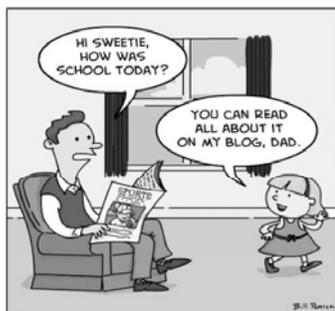
- Idealist
- Passionate
- Protective
- Involved
- Concerned
- Intelligent
- Demanding
- Prioritize education
- Knowledgeable about college experience
- Sense of entitlement
 - high cost of attendance
 - regard for student as children, not adults
- Basic concerns are priority
- Expect to be involved from admission to graduation

Parental Affect

- Reflect parent's values
- Trust their parents
- Decisions are made for them
- Aim to please authority figures
- Celebrated

Additional Characteristics

- Technology savvy (google, facebook)
- Multitasking is a way of life
- Trial and error is the key learning strategy (Nintendo logic)
- They are used to bits and bytes, flash and color
- They are racially and ethnically diverse
- They want their parents involved (really involved)
- There is zero tolerance for delays - impatient

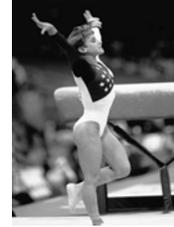


Seminal Events

- Parent Advocacy
- Focus on children and family
- Scheduled, Structured Lives
- Multiculturalism
- Globalism
- Terrorism
- Patriotism
- Heroism

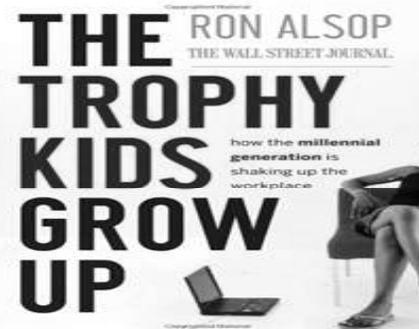
The Nexters

- Heroes:
 - Michael Jordan
 - Princess Diana
 - Mark McGwire, Sammy Sosa
 - Mother Teresa
 - Bill Gates
 - Kerri Strugg
 - Mia Hamm
 - Christopher Reeves



The Nexters

- Visible members:
 - Kerri Strug
 - Macauley Culkin
 - Chelsea Clinton
 - Miley Cyrus
 - Justin Bieber



Making the Cross-Generational Workplace Work

- Values can collide when members of different generations work and learn together.
- Having a better understanding of others can make the working and learning environment more productive.

What Do They Value?

- **Silent Generation: Great Depression and World War II shaped how they view the world.**
 - Privacy: Silent generation.
 - Hard Work: Right thing to do.
 - Trust: A word is his/her bond.
 - Formality: Communication, dress, and organizational structures.
 - Respect authority and institutional leadership.
 - Social Order
 - Things ~ Depression days

What Do they Value?

- **Baby Boomers: Children of World War II veterans. They had the good life. The "Me" decade arrived.**
- Change: Boomers thrive for possibilities
- Hard Work: Boomers started the "workaholic" trend. Necessary for moving to the next level of success
- Success: Competition needed to climb the ladder of success.
- Teamwork: New approach to business.
- Anti Rules and Regulations: Will challenge the system.
- Inclusion: Value equality
- Will fight for a cause

What Do They Value?

- **Generation X: children of divorce and nontraditional family units. Latchkey kids raised on electronic media. Economically conservative**
- Entrepreneurial Spirit
- Loyalty: To an Xer, this may mean two-weeks notice.
- Independence and Creativity: Xers have clear goals
- Information: Value access to it.
- Feedback: Use it to adapt
- Quality of Work-life: Work hard so that they can have more time to balance work-life responsibilities

The Sounds of Generations...

- "They have no work ethic."
- "He's been out of training and in the field for six months and he wants a promotion – a promotion!"
- "He asks me, "Do you have an e-mail address?" I felt like telling him, "since you were in diapers, buddy!"
- "I have a new rule. I will not attend meetings that start after 5 p.m. I have a life."
- "A hiring bonus! Wet behind the ears and he wants a hiring bonus! At his age, I was just grateful I had a job."
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y_jB1Q0K5B1&feature=related (2:30)

The Nexters: What do They Expect from the Workforce?

- to work with positive people
- to be challenged
- to be treated respectfully
- to learn new knowledge and skills
- to work in friendly environments
- to have flexible schedules
- to be paid well
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cDQTWz6eagA&feature=related> (1:09)

Millennials Work Ethic

- Confident - Raised by parents believing in the importance of self-esteem, they consider themselves ready to overcome challenges and leap tall buildings. - can-do attitude –
- Hopeful. They're described as optimistic yet practical. They expect a workplace that is challenging, collaborative, creative, fun, and financially rewarding.
- Goal- and achievement-oriented. i.e. Skater Sara Hughes
- Civic-minded. They were taught to think in terms of the greater good. They have a high rate of volunteerism.
- Inclusive - They are used to being organized in teams-and to making certain no one is left behind.

The Nexters on the Job

- Strengths:
 - Collective action
 - Optimism
 - Tenacity
 - Heroic Spirit
 - Multitasking capabilities
 - Technological savvy
- Areas of Growth:
 - Need for supervision and structure
 - Inexperience, particularly with handling difficult people issues
 - Oral communication skills
 - Impatience

Managing Nexters

- Be the leader: This generation has grown up with structure and supervision, with parents who were role models.
- Challenge them: Millennials want learning opportunities. They want to be assigned to projects they can learn from. They can multitask.
- Assign them to teams: They can work collaboratively towards a common goal.
- Create social opportunities: They like being friends with coworkers.
- Have fun: A little humor, a bit of silliness, will make your work environment more attractive.
- Respect them: Treat their ideas respectfully, even though they haven't been around a long time.

Managing Nexters

- Spend time orienting: what's good about work environment, what's not; your expectations and long-term goals.
- Learn about their personal goals: develop a strategy to accomplish these goals with job performance.
- Reward them – Consider evaluating them as a group for reaching a goal.
- Establish mentor programs. Consider matching young workers with your most seasoned people with whom they say they resonate.
- Set up a reverse mentoring program. Even though the younger cohort had just joined the firm, they tended to understand new technologies better
- Be flexible: A rigid schedule is a sure-fire way to lose your Millennial employees.

Supportive Behaviors & Communication Tips

- Use action words when challenging them.
- They will resent it if you talk down to them.
- They prefer email communication.
- Seek their feedback constantly and provide them with regular feedback.
- Use humor and create a fun learning environment. Don't take yourself too seriously.
- Encourage them to take risks and explore new ways of learning.

Messages that Motivate

- “You’ll be working with other bright, creative people.”
- “Your boss is in his (or her) sixties.”
- “You and your coworkers can help turn this company around.”
- “You can be a hero here.”
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bCWsubC8qCU&feature=related>
(2:25)

A 60-something year old recently reflected: ‘We wanted what they want. We just felt we couldn’t ask.’ Herein lies the truth: what young workers want isn’t so different from what everyone else wants. However, young workers are asking for it.”

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