Managing a Multi-Generational Workforce

Presented by:
Lynn Perry Wooten, PhD
Clinical Associate Professor of Strategy, Management & Organizations
Ross School of Business, University of Michigan

Michigan Department of Transportation
Agenda

• Introduction
  – Conceptualizing Diversity & Inclusion
  – Why Diversity & Inclusion Matters

• Managing a Multi-Generational Diversity
  – Assessing & Affirming Generations
  – Building Bridges to Support Diversity Management & Inclusion
  – Cultivating Leadership Capabilities
  – Discussion, Dialogue & Action
INTRODUCTION: CONCEPTUALIZING DIVERSITY & INCLUSION
Conceptualizing Diversity and Inclusion

• Diversity is the extent to which an organization has people from diverse backgrounds working together to achieve organizational goals

• Inclusive organizations not only have diverse people engaged, more importantly, these organizations:
  – Are Learning centered
  – Value perspectives and contributions of all people
  – Strive to incorporate the needs and viewpoints of diverse members to achieve goals

Diversity is the mix. Inclusion is making the mix work
-Hewitt & Associates
WHY DIVERSITY & INCLUSION MATTERS???
## Michigan Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quick Facts</th>
<th>Michigan</th>
<th>United States</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Populations Percentage Change</td>
<td>-0.6%</td>
<td>+9.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persons Under the Age of 18</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persons Over the Age of 65</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Graduates</td>
<td>88.0%</td>
<td>85.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Household Income</td>
<td>$48,432</td>
<td>$51,914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language other than English spoken at home</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>20.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Michigan’s Shrinking Population

Detroit’s population drops drastically
The city’s population has been shrinking since the 1950s, from nearly 2 million people to less than half that number in 2005.

Population change is the rate of change in population between decennial census years. While every census region grew considerably during the twentieth century, the South and West experienced the largest increases in population.

Where Michiganders are moving
The state has lost nearly a half-million people to other states over the last eight years, with the rate of departures growing with every confusing drop in Michigan’s economy. From a net loss of 25,000 in 2001, Michigan’s flight pattern rose to 105,000 in 2008. And for a state hoping to nurture a more knowledge-based economy, consider that 30 percent of the adults who leave have a college education — well above the 25 percent of the adults who remain.

Key
- States that sent more people to Michigan than moved from Michigan
- States where 1 to 1,000 people moved there from Michigan
- States where 1,001 to 5,000 people moved there from Michigan
- States where more than 5,000 people moved there from Michigan
- No data available
Workforce Challenges in the Transportation Construction Industry
(Anderson, Cronin, Martin, Swetharanyan & Weingart, 2007)

- The workforce is aging and retiring at a faster rate than young people are entering the industry.
- Natural disasters have affected supply and demand.
- The industry needs to better educate young people regarding opportunities.
MANAGING A MULTI-GENERATIONAL DIVERSITY
## Generational Bingo

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attended Woodstock or a 1960’s Protest Rally</th>
<th>Listened to Baseball on the Radio with their parents</th>
<th>Uses Facebook, Twitter, an I-Pod, GPS, and Wii</th>
<th>Always remembers life with the internet</th>
<th>Collected S&amp;H Green Stamps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Owned a Sony Walkman as a young adult</td>
<td>Learned how to type on a typewriter</td>
<td>Did not have cable television or a microwave as a child or teen</td>
<td>Is between the age of 50-65</td>
<td>Can make bread from scratch and use a sewing machine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danced to Michael Jackson at his or her Prom</td>
<td>Watched Barney as a Child</td>
<td>Is over the age of 65 or remembers the Korean War</td>
<td>Grew up watching Mod Squad</td>
<td>Is between the ages 35-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has watched the Ed Sullivan Show</td>
<td>Is under the age of 30</td>
<td>Remembers when Sesame Street was created</td>
<td>Owned an 8-Track Player</td>
<td>Has sent a telegram or used a party line telephone</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Generational Diversity

- *Generational diversity* is rarely discussed in the workplace.

- It is the “elephant in the room”; people know it is there, but unless asked, pretend they do not see it.
Generational Diversity – Why it Matters?

• We have four different generations at work. Thus, in any large organization, you are bound to find divisions, units, or work teams where at least four distinct generations are working side by side.

• People are the heart of what you do. In other words, people are an organization’s most important asset.

• Generational diversity issues influence interactions in the workplace and inclusiveness.

• Different values, experiences, work styles, and attitude of each generation can result in unproductive teams because of conflict, frustration, and misunderstanding.
Who are the Generations?

• The Traditionalists, Veterans or the Silent Generation (1928-1945)

• The Baby Boomers (1946-1964)

• Generation X (1965-1980)

• Generation Y (1981-1999)

• Generation Z (Born after 1999)
Yet, Inter-Generational Challenges

• Each generation has a unique identity that impacts its work styles and behaviors. As a result:
  – Groups become prejudiced against the other values, norms and perceived threats.
  – There is stereotyping in the workplace.
  – There are conflicting goals.
  – There is competition over resources and power.
The ABCs of Building World Class Inter-Generational Inclusive Organizations

Assessing & Affirming Differences

Building Bridges to Support Generational Diversity & Inclusion

Cultivating Leadership Capabilities
The Importance of Assessing & Affirming Generational Differences at Work

• Generations are people moving through time.

• Each generation possesses a distinctive style of self-worth.

• Each generation brings its own set of values, beliefs, life experiences and attitudes to the workplace.
Factors that define a “Generation’s Personality”

A generation’s identity is a state of mind shaped by ...

- Family life
- Gender roles
- Important institutions
- Politics
- Religion
- Culture
- Lifestyle
- Views on the future

“We are most influenced by our learning years.”
Affirming Generations: Life Maps a Personal Perspective

• Construct a life map that highlights key generational events and icons in your life, such as political events, wars, celebrations, heroes, television shows.

• How do these events and icons shape your work behavior?
THE GENERATIONAL PERSPECTIVE
Generational Values

- **VETS** (1925 - 1942)
- **BABY BOOMERS** (1943 - 1961)
- **GEN XERS** (1961 - 1981)
- **MILLENIALS (GEN-Y)** (1982 to Present)
The Traditionalist, Veterans or the Silent Generation (Born between 1928-1945)

- **Seminal Events**
  - World Wars
  - The Great Depression
  - Stock Market Crash
  - Technology
    - Television
    - Automobile
  - The New Deal
  - Lindbergh First Flight

- **Heroes**
  - Franklin & Eleanor Roosevelt
  - Babe Ruth
  - Betty Crocker
  - George S. Patton

- **Cultural Memorabilia**
  - Saving Money
  - Superman
  - Mickey Mouse
  - Tarzan
  - Blondie
The Traditionalists, Veterans or the Silent Generation Work Values

- Their work ethic has formed today’s professions
- Comfortable with hierarchy in organizations
- Believes in lifetime employment and loyalty for years of service; averages 2 jobs per career.
- Financially Responsible
- Resistant to Change
- Satisfaction comes from a job well done
Baby Boomers (Born Between 1946-1964)

- **Seminal Events**
  - Civil Rights Movement
  - Vietnam War
  - Woodstock
  - Martin Luther King and John F. Kennedy
  - Birth Control Pills
  - Man on the Moon
  - NOW was Founded
  - Peace Corps
  - Cuban Missile Crisis

- **Heroes:**
  - Gandhi, MLK, The Kennedy Family, John Glenn

- **Cultural Memorabilia**
  - The Peace Sign
  - Fallout Shelters
  - Poodle Skirts
  - The Ed Sullivan Show
  - Mod Squad
  - TV Dinners

- **Known As**
  - Hippies
  - Yuppies
  - The Me Generation
The Baby Boomers at Work

• Baby Boomers – “I am the Star of the Show and Let’s Make the World a Better Place.

• Driven, competitive, dedicated and equate work with self-worth.

• Define themselves through their job and achieve identity by the work they perform.

• Pay your dues before advancing in a career.

• Separation between work and family.

• Invented the 60-hour work week.

• Average 6 jobs per career.

• Do not plan to retire.
Generation X (1965-1980)

• Seminal Events
  – Watergate Scandal
  – Personal Computers
  – Operation Desert Storm
  – Ronald Regan
  – Stock Market Plummets
  – Energy Crisis
  – American Held Hostage by Iranians
  – Challenger Disaster
  – AIDS

• Heroes
  – None

• Cultural Memorabilia
  – Cabbage Patch Dolls
  – The Brady Bunch
  – Pet Rocks
  – Dynasty
  – ET
Generation X at Work

- “I Survived the 1970s”
- Independent; Self-Managers; Resourceful
- Comfortable with Technology
- Rules and the political system do not work
- Work-life balance is important
- Portable Careers; Average 12 jobs per career
- Hate meetings and to be micro-managed
- Entrepreneurs
Generation Y  (Born After 1980)

• **Seminal Events**
  - September 11\textsuperscript{th}
  - Columbine
  - Technology
    - Cell Phones
    - I-pods
    - The Internet
    - Laptops
  - The Family Values Movement; A wanted generation
  - The overscheduled, tutored and coached childhood

• **Heroes**
  - Ricky Martin
  - Venus & Serena Williams
  - Courtney Love
  - Kurt Cobain
  - Reality TV stars

• **Cultural Memorabilia**
  - Barney
  - Beanie Babies
  - Video Games
  - Microwave Popcorn
  - Pin Numbers

• **Demographics**
  - 14 million are children of immigrants
  - The least Caucasian of all generations
Generation Y at Work

• Doted on by their baby-boomer parents.
• Technologically proficient
• Believe achievement and success should be a group effort.
• Corporate Citizenship and community involvement are important
• Awards for everything
• Finding Happiness
Sharing Stories of Managing Multi-Generations

what's your story?
The ABCs of Building a World Class Staff

Assessing & Affirming Differences

Building & Maintaining Bridges to Support Generational Diversity

Cultivating Team Culture & Capabilities
What is Your Bridge Building Work?

- Recruitment
- Retirements
- Retention
- Demographic Shifts
- Coaching, Training & Development
- Salary, Benefits & Compensation
- Job Skills
- Effective Team Work
- Job Flexibility
- Supervisory Skills
- Others?
What are Best Practices for Bridge Building Work?

- Strategizing
- Partnerships
- Apprenticeships
- Thinking Outside the Box
- Inter-Generational Teams
- Building Relationships & Making High Quality Connections
- Cooperative Efforts
- Effective Communication & Listening
Best Practices Analysis for the Transportation Construction Workforce

- Sharpening the recruitment message
- Emphasizing benefits and compensation
- Alternative forms of motivating the workforce
- Outreach programs
- Realistic job previews
- Teamwork
- Defined career paths
- Summer apprenticeships
- Multi-lingual workplaces
The ABCs of Building a World Class Staff

Assessing & Affirming Differences

Building Bridges to Support Generational Diversity & Inclusion

Cultivating Leadership Capabilities
An Inter-Generational Learning Culture

- Inclusive inter-generational organizations are learning organizations where different generations work together:
  - To continually learn
  - To develop and enact collective goals
  - To expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire
  - To nurture and embrace innovation
## Learning Culture Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Culture Attribute</th>
<th>Ranking on a Scale of 1-10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Organization is Psychologically Safe for Different Generations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciation of Different Generational Skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness of New Ideas from Different Generations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Organization Problem-Solves Together</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Organization Learns from its Mistakes &amp; Successes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is Process for Sharing &amp; Combining Knowledge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge Moves Laterally and Vertically</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaders Listen to Different Generations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaders Encourage Dialogue and Debate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Members are Encouraged to Develop &amp; Learn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL POINTS (Maximum Score = 100 points)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Are You a Diminisher or Multiplier?
Diminishers as Leaders

**The Empire Builder:** Hoards resources and talent

**The Tyrant:** Suppresses people thinking and capabilities by creating an intense environment

**The Know it All:** Shows off knowledge to control behavior

**The Decision Maker:** Makes centralized, abrupt decisions that confuses the organization

**The Micro-Manager:** Drives results through personal involvement and managing the details
Multipliers as Leaders

**The Talent Magnet:** Attracts talented people and utilizes their contributions

**The Liberator:** Creates an intense work environment that requires excellence in thinking and work

**The Challenger:** Defines opportunities that require people to stretch

**The Debate Maker:** Drives sound decisions through rigorous debates

**The Investor:** Empowers other people for results and invests in their success
The Supporting Systems

- Strategic Recruitment
- The Top Management Team
- Diversity Management & Inclusion Practices
- Training, Coaching & Development
- High Quality Connections
- Rewards, Compensation & Benefits
DISCUSSION & ACTION
Consider Margaret Mead’s observation about the intergenerational nature of societal learning. The best learning, she argued, was always inter-generational, with the young people alongside the elders and together with the middle generation adults. Bringing people together in these kinds of natural ways, across the whole system brings out the best in human behavior.
People are not your most important asset. The right people are. Good to great depends on having the right people on the bus at the right time. - Jim Collins