

The Five Generations and Generational Differences

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Generational Times

- 90% don't remember the ending of World War II (in fact, 81% of Americans were born after 1945)
- 83% cannot recollect the 1954 Supreme Court ruling that began to outlaw racial segregation
- 73% cannot recall the assassination of President Kennedy
- 51% cannot remember the 1974 Arab oil embargo against the US
- 49% are too young to recollect the nation's Bicentennial (in fact, slightly less than one-third of Americans were born since that anniversary)
- Anyone under 15 (10th grade) knows nothing about 9/11, except what we tell them

How do we Define a Generation?

A generation is a segment of a geographically linked population that experienced similar social and cultural events at roughly the same time in their maturation. Each generation carries it's own set of beliefs, values, preferences, weaknesses, biases and priorities.

The 5 Generations

- Matures – Born before 1946 = 69 or older
- Baby Boomers – 1946-1964 = 51-69
- Generation X – 1965-1980 = 35-50
- Millennials – 1981-1994 = 21-34
- Generation Z – Born after 1994 – 19 and under

Cuspers

- Those born within five years of the beginning or ending of any of the four generations. Cuspers often have characteristics of both generations surrounding their birth.

Matures

- Born pre-1946
- Formative Events:
 - The Great Depression
 - Pearl Harbor
 - World War II

MATURES – BORN BEFORE 1946

- Grew up with Mickey Mouse, Wheaties, Jukeboxes, “The Shadow,” Flash Gordon, Charlie McCarthy, Blondie and Dagwood, Babe Ruth, Golden Age of Radio, Tarzan, The Lone Ranger, Joe DiMaggio, WWII, and the Great Depression.
- Tend to:
 - Respect Authority, even sometimes when it frustrates them
 - Place duty before pleasure
 - Believe patience is its own reward; are willing to wait for delayed gratification.
 - Value honor and integrity
 - Avoid challenging the system
 - Maintain dedication to a job once they take it
 - Better to fit in, rather than stand out
 - Save and use everything
 - Do things for the good of the whole group

Baby Boomers

- Born 1946-1964
- Formative Events:
 - Cold War
 - Civil Rights Movement
 - Vietnam
 - First Moon Landing
 - Kennedy Assassination
 - Rosa Parks
 - Kent State
 - Robert F. Kennedy Assassination
 - Martin Luther King Jr. Assassination

BABY BOOMERS – BORN 1946-1964

- Grew up with Captain Kangaroo, Fallout Shelters, “Laugh-in,” Peace Sign, romper Room, Slinkys, Hula Hoops, Bell Bottoms, Ed Sullivan, TV Dinners, “Mod Squad,” Tie Dye
- Tend to:
 - Live to work- arrive early / stay late
 - Maintain a general sense of optimism
 - Enjoy unprecedented influence on government policy and consumer products because of their numbers
 - Be willing to go into debt, betting on future income
 - Be team- and process- oriented, sometimes to detriment of results
 - Strive for convenience and personal gratification
 - Preserve their youth and be nostalgic about it
 - judgmental

Generation X

- Born 1965 -1978
- Formative Events:
 - Watergate
 - PC Boom
 - Women’s Liberation Movement
 - Latchkey Kids
 - Fall of the Berlin Wall
 - Mass Suicide in Jones Town
 - O. J. Simpson Trial
 - Challenger Accident

GENERATION X –BORN 1965-1980

- Grew up with Brady Bunch, Izod, Cabbage Patch Kids, Pet Rocks, “Jaws,” “The Simpsons,” Microwaves, MTV, Platforms “E.T. The Extra Terrestrial,” “Sesame Street,” VCRs
- Tend to:
 - Work to live; not live to work
 - Believe in clear, consistent expectations
 - View jobs within context of a contract
 - Prefer project format with time expectations
 - Remain with a job longer if employer presents opportunities to grow
 - Prefer project based format with time expectations
 - Desire versatility
 - Fiercely independent and self reliant
 - More loyal to an individual than to an organization
 - Not big Joiners

- Value freedom and responsibility
- Display a casual disdain for authority and structure
- Dislike being micro-managed and embrace a hands off approach
- Eager to learn new skills but want to accomplish things on their terms

Millenniums (Generation Y)

- Born 1979-1995
- Formative Events:
 - Internet
 - September 11th Attack

MILLENNIALS – BORN 1981-1994

- Grew up with Barney, Pogs, X Games, Cell Phones and Pagers, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, Virtual Pets, Jerry Springer, Pokemon, Britney Spears, Beanie Babies, Spice Girls, internet, Mark McGwire/Sammy Sosa, Bill Gates, Boy Bands
- Tend to:
 - Live in the moment
 - Rely on immediacy of technology
 - Demand clear and consistent expectations to ensure productivity
 - Demonstrate respect only after they are treated with respect
 - Question everything, that's how they grew up
 - Be more diverse demographically than other generations
 - Don't feel a need to pay their dues
 - Believe they are talented and not afraid to say it
 - Good savers
