



## Understanding A Multigenerational Workforce

### **5 generations currently in the workplace:**

- Silent Generation (Born between 1928 and 1945) - Raised by the greatest generation most affected by the depression in the 1920s. Known for being builders.
- Baby Boomers (1946-1964) - Working on maintaining what their parents had to rebuild.
- Generation X (1965-1980) - First generation wanting autonomy from their employers.
- Generation Y/Millennials (1981-1996) - Motivated by creative work, sharing their gifts and making an impact on others and their communities.
- Generation Z (1997-2012) - Grew up with access to advanced technology such as cell phones, internet and social media. Highly aware of social, economic and environmental issues worldwide.

### **Percentage of each generation in the workforce currently:**

- Silent Generation 3-5%
- Baby Boomers 25%
- Generation X 33%
- Generation Y 35%
- Generation Z 5%

### **Characteristics of each generation:**

- Silent Generation
  - Could be somebody in your practice 70 years old - they are builders and follow the rules.
- Baby Boomers
  - Optimistic, competitive, workaholics, team oriented. Motivated by loyalty, teamwork and duty. Shaped by the Vietnam War, Civil Rights, Watergate. Stayed with employers long term for retirement/pension. Communication is whatever is most efficient because they feel that texting is impersonal. World view is that achievement comes after paying one's dues. Very collaborative.
  - ***Interesting about boomers: Spend more money on everything than any other generation. Generation with more silver amalgams in their mouth. Understand the value of their teeth due to their parents' dental health. Serve this generation in your practice as they will be your big cases/FMR.***
- Generation X
  - Tends to be more flexible, informal, skeptical, independent. Motivated by diversity, work life balance, and personal professional interests rather than the

company's interests. Shaped by AIDS epidemic, Berlin Wall and dot com boom. Communication style is whatever is most efficient, much more proficient with texting than the boomers. Quick to move on if their employer fails to meet their needs. Resistant to change at work if it affects their personal lives.

- Generation Y
  - Known for responsibility, the quality of their manager and unique work experiences. Seeks challenges growth and development, a fun work life balance. Communication style is instant messaging, text and email. Worldview is seeking challenge, growth and development. Seek a fun work life and work-life balance. Prefer immediate feedback. Shaped by 9/11, Columbine and the internet.
- Generation Z
  - They are global, entrepreneurial, progressive, less focused. 40% want to interact with their boss daily. Expect employers to provide formal training. Motivated by diversity, personalization, individuality and creativity. Expect employers to provide formal training. Focused on life after 9/11, the Great Recession and access to technology at a very young age. Motivated by diversity, personalization, individuality and creativity. Communication style is instant messaging, texts, social media. They self identify as digital device addicts. Value their independence and individuality and prefer to work with millennial managers. Employers should offer opportunities to work on multiple projects at the same time to provide work life balance and allow them to be self-directed and independent.

Identify each generation in your team and make sure that each generation is getting what they need for their career and how to treat one another. Likewise, identify where your patients are and how to interact with them and their approach to dental care.

### Team Exercise

- How does this affect the patient's perception being aware of these differences?
- How does that correlate and how do we interact with the patients?
- How does this affect the team's perception with each other and with the patients?