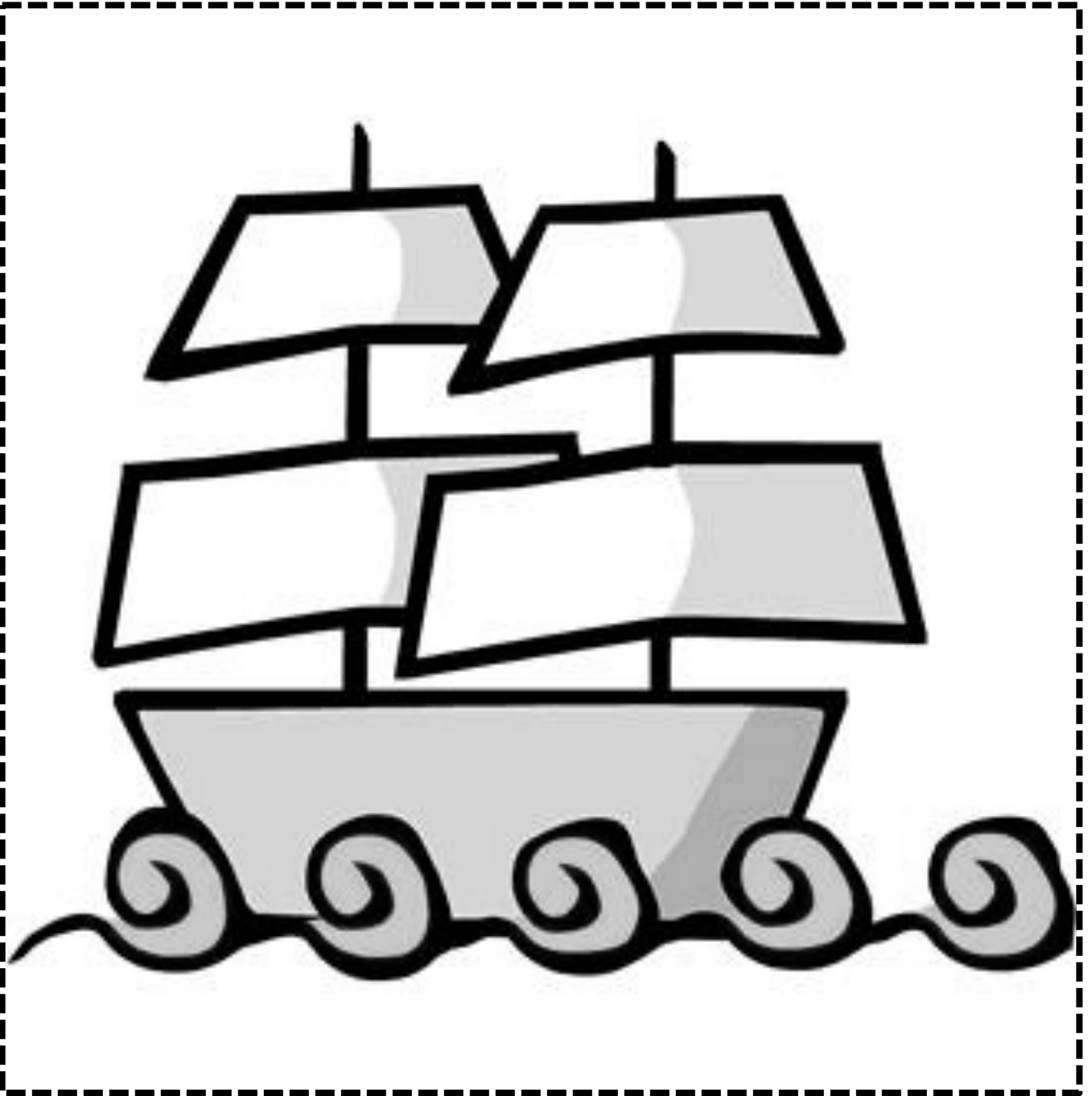


Being the Captain of Your Ship

(and not the victim of your circumstances)



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What kind of leader are you?

(Keep in mind that leadership qualities can change depending on your role and your board members' differences. Also, you might use a combination of several styles depending on your board's personality, the type of role you have, and the issues you face. This quiz only suggests how you might respond to important decisions that you might face on a regular basis.)

1. You have two days to make a big decision. You:

- A. Decide without input from peers, subordinates or board members.
- B. Depend on a few of your veteran board members to make the decision, knowing they will make the right one.
- C. Quickly convene a meeting with your board members and make your decision based on the prevailing attitude you hear.
- D. Prefer to leave the decision to someone else, then take credit if it's a good one.

2. What do board members want most from their jobs?

- A. Feeling valued
- B. Less stress
- C. Being part of a team
- D. Shared vision and values

3. Someone on your board misses a deadline. You:

- A. Take responsibility, then immediately finish the project yourself.
- B. Appoint one or two people on the board to get the project finished by a new deadline they set themselves.
- C. Find out why the board member missed the deadline and ask for suggestions about what the next step should be, then set a new deadline.
- D. Chastise the board member, tell the group at large to fix the problem.

4. When you have an idea you believe is good for the chapter, you:

- A. Float it immediately to veteran board members who can make it happen.
- B. Ask highly trusted members of your board to research and test the idea and get back to you with their thoughts.
- C. Present your idea at a board meeting and seek opinions before deciding what to do next.
- D. It's not your job to have ideas.

5. When a trusted board member is absent for several important meetings and is evasive with you about the reason, you:

- A. Tell the board member privately that you expect attendance and insist that the absence not occur again.
- B. Ask someone close to the board member to find out what is going on.
- C. Seek out the advice of several trusted board members.
- D. Confront the board member in a public setting and ask why he or she keeps missing meetings.

6. Budget concerns mean there will be cuts to popular events at your chapter conference. You:

- A. Discuss the issue with no one, but write and distribute an email instructing board members with questions to talk with you.
- B. Tell your veteran board members there will be cuts, and let them inform other board members the way they see fit.
- C. Convene a meeting of board members, break the news and allow questions. Then ask them for ideas on how to tell everyone else and what your chapter can offer instead.
- D. You know that the conference will go on anyway, so it doesn't matter if some things have to go.

Key:

If you answered mostly A:

A is for autocratic leadership.

Although you get the job done efficiently, you tend to be a bit inflexible and this could build resentment among board members, giving you results that will prevent your organization's growth (lack of development and high turnover).

Light-bulb moment: Develop some of your trusted subordinates by teaching them what you do so well, and you won't have to work such long hours. You might even enjoy work more!

If you answered mostly B:

B is for benign, or laissez- faire leadership. Your style works best when people are old hands at their jobs, and your board members appreciate you for putting your trust in them. However, be sure to designate specifically who is responsible for which projects or they may not get done.

Light-bulb moment: Set firm deadlines and check along the way to make sure you get what you expect. Also, schedule dates for reports to come directly to you in the form (written or oral) that makes sense for you and the board.

If you answered mostly C:

C is for collaborative leadership. It's a nice way to make board members feel useful and a good development tool. It also cuts down on cutthroat competition if everyone has an equal say.

Light-bulb moment: If you are a leader who thrives on quick decisions, or if your organization requires them, find a way to compromise between you-think and group-think.

If you answered mostly D:

Your board members probably do not trust you. Do you trust yourself?

Light-bulb moment: One of the first things you can do is to lay a strong foundation by treating others the way you wish to be treated. If you want the responsibility of leading, develop your interpersonal skills in leadership training and research.

10 Leadership Styles by Dan McCarthy

Do you always lead with a style that's most comfortable for you, or can you adapt your natural style to meet the need of a given situation?

Here are two ways to classify [leadership styles](#), and 10 different styles:

The **Situational Leadership** model uses a 4 box grid based on the amount of direction and support an employee needs. The four styles are:

Directing Leaders define the roles and tasks of the 'follower', and supervise them closely. Decisions are made by the leader and announced, so communication is largely one-way.

Coaching Leaders still define roles and tasks, but seeks ideas and suggestions from the follower. Decisions remain the leader's prerogative, but communication is much more two-way.

Supporting Leaders pass day-to-day decisions, such as task allocation and processes, to the follower. The leader facilitates and takes part in decisions, but control is with the follower.

Delegating Leaders are still involved in decisions and problem-solving, but control is with the follower. The follower decides when and how the leader will be involved.

Another approach categorizes styles according to **emotional intelligence** competencies, some of which work better than others in specific situations. These styles are:

Coercive: This “Do what I say” style demands immediate compliance. It is especially useful in turnaround situations, in a crisis, and with problem employees. However, using this style inhibits your organization's flexibility and can dampen employee motivation.

Authoritative: This style mobilizes people toward a vision. Specifically, it provides an overarching goal, but gives others the freedom to choose their own way of reaching it. This approach is most effective when a business is at sea and needs direction, or during an economic or business downturn. This style is less successful when the leader is working with a team of experts who may have more experience—and may disagree with his approach.

Affiliative: This “people-first” style engenders the creation of emotional bonds and team harmony. It is best used when team coherence is important or in times of low employee morale. But this approach’s focus on praise may permit poor performance among employees to continue unchecked, and employees may lack a sense of overall direction. The downside of this style, however, is that it may result in indecision, and some people may be left feeling confused and leaderless.

Democratic: This style builds consensus through participation. It is most appropriate when organizational flexibility and a sense of individual responsibility is needed. The downside of this style, however, is that it may result in indecision, and some people may be left feeling confused and leaderless.

Pacesetting: This style expects excellence and self-direction. It works best for highly skilled and motivated people who work well on their own. Other people, however, may feel overwhelmed by a pacesetting leader’s demands for excellence. Their self-esteem, trust, and, ultimately, their morale may drop under the regime of this type of leader.

Coaching: This style focuses on personal development. Coaching leaders help people identify their strengths and weaknesses, and tie them to their career aspirations. While this style is highly successful with people who want to change or improve professionally, it is largely unsuccessful with those who are resistant to learning or changing their ways.

While some styles may be more comfortable for you to adopt than others, the more you stretch yourself to learn a range of styles, the more effective you will be as a leader.

Find Your Leadership Style

The best leaders recognize their natural tendencies and use that knowledge to respond appropriately in different situations.

by Darylen Cote

The music teacher let you know last spring that the band needs new uniforms, new instruments, and new music, among many other things. With budget cuts, the school can't manage any further expenditures. You present the case to the members of your parent group, and they decide to do a major fundraiser to supplement the music education program this year. How would you go about implementing this project?

Would you pick the type of fundraiser to undertake, set the goal for the amount of money to raise, appoint a subcommittee, chair it yourself, create a detailed list of tasks to be done, include a time line for who will do what and when, and then see that everything gets done on schedule? If so, you are a task-oriented leader.

If you would ask for volunteers, tell them to choose exactly what type of fundraiser to do and project how much they think they can raise, then ask for a report back only if they need help or when the project is done, you are a people-oriented leader.

The blend of the way you relate to the people in your group and how you accomplish the tasks indicates your leadership orientation. Some people call it "style," but orientations are more ingrained. Occasionally you may choose to behave differently. But when push comes to shove, we all tend to have a way of leading we are inclined toward. That is our leadership orientation.

Research into how leaders behave conducted at several universities, including the University of Michigan, the University of Iowa, and Ohio University, has long pointed to two basic orientations: people-centered and task-centered. People-centered leaders say things such as "Feel free to do it however you think is best" and "Use your judgment." Most of the time, people-centered leaders let group members set a pace that is comfortable for them, rather than following the leaders' time line.

If you're a people-centered leader, you probably try out your ideas with the group and ask for ideas frequently. Your willingness to make changes agreed upon by the group is evident. You want everyone to be happy about doing this job. It doesn't much matter how it gets done or even when; every voice must be heard.

For an annual event like teacher appreciation week, a people-oriented leader might ask for volunteers to form a subcommittee. She would let the committee know when the event is usually held but also state that if that didn't seem convenient, it wouldn't hurt to adjust the time frame. Little information would be offered about what had been done for past teacher appreciation events, and the leader would encourage the group to do whatever felt right.

The only caution for the group might be to stay within the allotted budget but to feel free to divide the money as the members saw fit. If anyone asked a question, the leader might say "I'll leave you to figure that out with your group."

The Task at Hand

Task-centered leaders tend to say things such as "Try harder! Everyone needs to pitch in more to get this job done." Or "I want this job done the right way." Task-oriented leaders often create guidelines (more like rules!) for getting each job done. Rarely would these leaders consult the group members before acting. Instead, a task-oriented leader would let members know what she had decided and would further inform them exactly how the job was to be accomplished, right down to the timetable.

If you're a task-oriented leader, you probably have a very low tolerance for uncertainty or postponement. Endless processing of group opinions and feelings is definitely not your thing. Let's get this job done!

The task-oriented leader has a very different approach to planning a teacher appreciation event. She would likely appoint a committee, but the members primarily would be asked to perform gopher jobs. Little or no actual planning would be required. In fact the true task-oriented leader would probably preplan the entire project, carefully outlining the time line and specific tasks on a calendar. She might allow the committee to have some decisionmaking power in the gift selection for teachers but would have catalogs with items marked from which the group could choose. She would let the group know that final approval by the leader would be required before any purchase was made.

Of course, both advantages and disadvantages result from each orientation. Picture these two orientations at opposite ends of a continuum. Leaders who operate habitually at the people-centered extreme may keep people happy at the expense of getting the job done. The group may have a great time, but progress on projects may crawl instead of zooming. On the other hand, the satisfaction with the job and the group that comes from having plenty of input and feeling a sense of belonging can also motivate people to work harder toward group goals, becoming an important advantage.

Leaders whose pattern falls near the task-centered end of this continuum may get the job done very well, but they risk alienating the very people they depend on, perhaps compromising the ability to function effectively in the future. People who are disenchanting with the leader of a group tend to pull back, sometimes not feeling good about accomplishing goals they had little or no say in setting. The task-centered leader's job or project is accomplished as efficiently as the limits of her imagination because she removes the surprises that others might impose.

Is an orientation a destiny? Of course not. The advantage of thinking about and recognizing an orientation lies in a person's ability to modify the way she acts and reacts according to the circumstances. There are situations that demand a more task-oriented, authoritarian approach. Who would you want to follow in an emergency, for example? It probably wouldn't be the person who wants to convene a task force or do a survey before directing people to the exits!

Finding Balance

In the real world, no continuum exists. One type of behavior doesn't cancel out the possibility of the other. Concern for the people doesn't exclude concern for the task. In fact, as in so many other areas of life, balance between the two orientations produces the best results. The more you can focus on both areas together, the more effective you will be as a leader.

Leaders who have come the closest to achieving that ideal, sometimes called shared leadership, seem to have the highest levels of both morale and productivity within their groups. Practitioners of shared leadership might say things such as "The purpose of our annual teacher appreciation week is to highlight the above-and-beyond work of our teachers and provide recognition and appreciation to the whole staff." This leader works on articulating the common vision for the group and reminds people about the overall goals.

If you are this kind of leader, you are concerned with keeping people on track by facilitating their work, not monitoring every detail. You ask for periodic check-ins regarding progress on the teacher appreciation event, or monthly reports at regular meetings. You ensure that members have the tools they need to get a job done.

As a well-balanced leader, you might provide the catalogs of teacher appreciation gifts but leave the final selection to the committee. Or you might ask for three recommendations to take back to the larger group for a vote. You foster trust and respect among group members, giving credit where it is due and helping keep the group focused. Sometimes you actively lead, and at other times you follow, depending on the situation.

People who cultivate their awareness of their inclinations toward one orientation or the other become more skilled at adjusting their behavior to suit both the situation and the needs of the group members. You can avoid the pitfall of assuming that you should always behave in a particular way because it is comfortable. Doing what comes naturally needs to yield to more conscious decision making to lead most effectively.

People and Task: The Best of Both

The best leaders maintain balance between people and task skills. Here are a few ways to use and improve your skills. Follow these guidelines and you'll keep things running smoothly.

Focus on the mission. To keep on track, remind people why they are there. What is the point of the project or activity, and how does it relate to the PTO goals the group wants to accomplish?

Know your group. Seek out the special expertise, talents, and skills among members, and cultivate their contributions.

Delegate, don't hover. Remember, it's the product you really should be concerned about, not every detail of how the group gets there. That doesn't mean relinquishing responsibility. Establishing benchmarks and a time line and asking for periodic updates creates accountability without nagging or undermining the smaller group's ownership of a project.

Make sure you understand what people want or need. As author Stephen Covey put it in *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, "Seek first to understand, and then to be understood." People are more likely to respond favorably to your request or direction if they know you have really listened to their concerns and understand what they mean.

Work on your group management skills. Managing the interaction among people with diverse backgrounds and interests can be quite challenging. You may need to brush up or develop your group and meeting management skills, including active listening and facilitation.

Expect and manage conflict. Conflict, inevitable in groups, presents us with the opportunity to grow and coalesce around common goals. It also may cause the group to fracture. Not everyone can be happy all the time, yet everyone can be heard when there is disagreement.

Source: <http://www.ptotoday.com/pto-today-articles/article/401-find-your-leadership-style>

10 Commitments of Leadership

“Leadership is the art of mobilizing others to want to struggle for shared aspirations.”

Practices of Exemplary Leaders

Kouzes & Posner

Challenging the Process:

1. Search out challenging opportunities to change, grow, innovate, and improve.
2. Experiments, take risks, and learn from the accompanying mistakes.

Inspiring a Shared Vision:

3. Envision an uplifting and ennobling future.
4. Enlist others in a common vision by appealing to their values, interests, hopes, and dreams.

Enabling Others to Act:

5. Foster collaboration by promoting cooperative goals and building trust.
6. Strengthen people by giving power away, providing choice, developing competence, assigning critical tasks, and offering visible support.

Modeling the Way:

7. Set the example by behaving in ways that are consistent with shared values.
8. Achieve small wins that promote consistent progress and build commitment.

Encouraging the Heart:

9. Recognize individual contributions to the success of every project.
10. Celebrate team accomplishments regularly.

How To Improve Your Leadership Style in Each of These Areas

Challenging the Process

Leaders are pioneers – people who search out opportunities and step into the unknown. They are willing to take risks. They innovate and experiment. They treat mistakes as learning opportunities. Leaders also stay prepared – physically, mentally, and emotionally – to meet whatever challenges may confront them.

Strategies of People who Challenge the Process

- Searching out challenging opportunities to change, grow, innovate, and improve.
- Experimenting, taking risks, and learning from the accompanying mistakes.

Suggestions for Improving in Challenging the Process

- Hold a meeting with members and ask them what really annoys them about the organization. Commit to changing three of the most frequently mentioned items that are hindering success.
- Reward risk takers. Praise them. Give them prizes. Give them the opportunity to talk about their experiences and share the lessons they've learned. It's money in the bank.

Inspiring a Shared Vision

Leaders spend considerable effort gazing across the horizon of time – imagining what kind of future they would like to create. Through enthusiasm and skillful communication, leaders enlist the emotions of others to share the vision. They show others how mutual interests can be met through commitment to a common purpose.

Strategies of People who inspire a Shared Vision

- Envisioning an uplifting and ennobling future.
- Enlisting others in a common vision by appealing to their values, interests, hopes and dreams.

Suggestions for Improving in Inspiring a Shared Vision

- Turn what you imagine about the future into a five- to ten-minute “vision speech” for your organization. Keep the written speech in your daily planner. Review it daily, revising and refining, as you feel moved to do so.
- Envision yourself ten years from now. Write an article about how you’ve made a difference in the last decade – how you’ve contributed to your job, your organization, your family, and your community.

Enabling Others to Act

Leaders gain the support and assistance of all those who must make the project work or who must live with the results. They stress cooperative goals and build relationships of mutual trust. Leaders make others feel important, strong, and influential.

Strategies of People who Enable Others to Act

- Fostering collaboration by promoting cooperative goals and building trust.
- Strengthens people by giving power away, providing choice, developing competence, assigning critical tasks, and offering visible support.

Suggestions for Improving in Enabling Others to Act

- Find ways to increase interactions among people who need to work more effectively together. Teamwork and trust can only be built when people interact informally as well as formally.
- For the next two weeks, commit to replacing the word “I” with “we.” As a leader you can do the job alone; extraordinary things are accomplished as a result of group efforts, not individual efforts. “We” is an inclusive word that signals a commitment to teamwork and sharing. Use it liberally.

Modeling the Way

Leaders are clear about their business values and beliefs. They keep projects on course by behaving in a way that is consistent with these values – by modeling how they expect others to behave. Leaders also make it easier for others to achieve goals by focusing on key priorities and breaking down big projects into achievable steps.

Strategies of People who Model the Way

- Setting the example by behaving in ways that are consistent with shared values.
- Achieving small “wins” that promote consistent progress and build commitment.

Suggestions for Improving in Modeling the Way

- Clarify your personal credo – the values or principles that you believe should guide your part of the organization. Make sure that you communicate your credo orally and in writing to your key constituents. Post it prominently for everyone to see.

- Keep track of how you spend your time. Check to see whether your actions are consistent with your team's values. If you find inconsistency figure out what you need to do to align your actions with the values.
- Set goals that are achievable. Tell people what the key milestones are so that they can easily see their progress

Encouraging the Heart

Leaders must give encouragement and recognition if people who are to persist, especially when the climb is steep and arduous. To continue to pursue the vision, people need heart.

Strategies of People who Encourage the Heart

- Recognizing individual contributions to the success of every project.
- Celebrating team accomplishments regularly

Suggestions for Improving Encouraging the Heart

- Tell a public story about a person in your organization who went above and beyond the call of duty.
- Say "thank you" when you appreciate something that someone has done.

Source: Navy League Cadet Workbook

L E A D E R S H I P S T Y L E S U M M A R Y		
STYLE	Advantages	Disadvantages
Boss	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More control over group• Easy to control a larger group• Saves time• Orders travel quickly	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No leadership development• No input from followers• Commanding rather than leading• No exchange of ideas
Educator	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leader sets an example for group to follow• Leader guides and assists by answering questions• Follower skills are improved	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requires more time• Only works with smaller groups• May involve plenty of new information for group to learn
Persuader	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop trust with followers• Easy to motivate• 2 way communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requires much time• Risk being too “friendly”• Only works with smaller groups

10 PRINCIPLES OF LEADERSHIP

- 1 Always set a good example
- 2 Know your cadets and look after their welfare
- 3 Develop the leadership potential of your cadets
- 4 Make sound and timely decisions
- 5 Train your cadets to work as a team
- 6 Explain your ideas and thoughts clearly
- 7 Keep cadets informed of all activities and any changes
- 8 Lend a hand
- 9 Know your strengths and weaknesses
- 10 Treat others as you would like to be treated

LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS

Sense of Responsibility

Confidence

Loyalty

Decisiveness

Determination

Honesty

Courage

Patience

Enthusiasm

Dependability

LEADERSHIP RESOURCES

The Accidental Leader: What to Do When You're Suddenly in Charge (Harvey Robbins and Michael Finley)

Paperback: 208 pages

Publisher: Jossey-Bass; 1 edition (October 27, 2003)

"It could happen today. You are called into the office, and the boss tells you that due to unforeseen circumstances, starting today you will be in charge of a team, a project, an office, a committee, or a business unit. Without any warning (or preparation on your part) you've become an accidental leader. If you have been thrust into a position of sudden responsibility, you need *The Accidental Leader*." This book is a first aid kit that gives you the information and inspiration you need to:

- Know what you bring to the challenge— your pluses and minuses
- Define success and achieve it
- Get other people on your side
- Overcome your natural shortcomings
- Get organized— right now
- See through the apparent system to the culture within
- Direct people and get them to act

Buddha 9 To 5: The Eightfold Path to Enlightening Your Workplace and Improving Your Bottom Line (Nancy Spears)

Hardcover: 192 pages

Publisher: Adams Media (March 1, 2007)

Based on the Buddhist practice of the Eightfold Path, *Buddha: 9 to 5* provides you with a hands-on set of tools to re-awaken yourself, your employees, and your organization. Using the Buddhist concepts of Intention, Mindfulness, and Right Action, you'll reap prosperity in stronger connections with your leaders and your members.

The core message of the book is each of us already is the Buddha. All we have to do is to tap into and engage our own natural wisdom, compassion, and intelligence. When we do that, working and leading like a Buddha is intuitive. We can access these virtues anytime and all the time. Buddha's eight key principles are:

- Right View:** Vision (communicating and listening with clear, unobstructed insight)
- Right Intention:** Mission (developing a mission and having full awareness of it in every action)
- Right Speech** (speaking with honesty, clarity, and directness)
- Right Action:** Accountability (holding yourself and others accountable)
- Right Livelihood** (loving what you do; being dedicated and committed)
- Right Effort** (combining intellect and intuition, and using meditation)
- Right Mindfulness** (staying focused and confronting challenges)
- Right Concentration** (thinking in the present moment, but with an eye on the long-term)

The Encore Effect: How to Achieve Remarkable Performance in Anything You Do (Mark Sanborn)

Hardcover: 144 pages

Publisher: Crown Business; 1 edition (September 2, 2008)

Bestselling author and acclaimed speaker Mark Sanborn shows us how to make every performance count. Every day, we are called to perform— at work, at home, in our communities. But is it possible to make every performance outstanding, the kind that leaves people applauding for an encore? Mark Sanborn says that anyone can achieve remarkable performance time after time—no matter what their personality, strengths, or weaknesses. In *The Encore Effect* Sanborn demonstrates, through his own experiences as well as those of the people he's worked with in his career, how you can cultivate the traits

shared by remarkable performers and achieve extraordinary results in all aspects of your life. The secrets lie in five steps:

Passion: The fuel for remarkable performance

Prepare: How remarkable performance begins

Practice: It won't make you perfect, but it will make you better

Perform: How to engage your audience

Polish: Making your performance shine whether your "stage" is an office, a sales floor, the boardroom, or your own home.

Essential Managers: Learning To Lead (Robert Heller)

Paperback: 72 pages

Publisher: DK ADULT; 1 edition (November 29, 1999)

This little book aims to prove that not only are great workplace leaders made, not born--they can be made in 72 visually snazzy pages or less! In a quick-reference thumbnail format, it shows you how to learn from others and develop the personal strengths that will make you into a good leader, form and lead effective teams, exercise authority and delegate tasks, communicate clearly and set clear goals, and, finally, to inspire excellence in others through motivation, establishing a shared vision, managing "openly," boosting achievement, and being adventurous. This is a thumbnail guide to the basics.

Practical techniques show you how to use your initiative, handle problems, encourage others, and inspire excellence. Learn all you need to know about leadership and understand the core skills and personal attributes needed to be an effective, responsible, and empowering manager. *Learning to Lead* not only shows you how to gain your board's trust and commitment, but also provides practical techniques for you to use when hiring employees (selecting board members), delegating authority, running meetings, and resolving conflict.

The Lombardi Rules: 26 Lessons from Vicni Lombardi--The World's Greatest Coach (Vince Lombardi, Jr.)

- **Paperback:** 64 pages

- **Publisher:** McGraw-Hill; 1 edition (November 26, 2002)

The greatest sports coach of his time, perhaps of all time, Lombardi was also a thoughtful man with uncommon passion, a motivator with uncompromising values, and a leader with unprecedented wisdom and authority. More than three decades since Lombardi's untimely passing, his words continue to resonate. In "The Lombardi Rules", Vince Lombardi Junior examines many of his father's most celebrated quotes to reveal the bedrock principles behind his legendary success. This concise yet comprehensive book is packed with proven insights and techniques that are especially valuable in today's hard-fought business arena, including:

- Ask yourself tough questions
- Play to your strengths
- Work harder than anybody
- Be prepared to sacrifice
- Be mentally tough
- Know your stuff
- Demand autonomy
- Act, don't react
- Keep it simple
- Focus on fundamentals
- Chase perfection
- Run to win

Vince Lombardi's uncanny ability to motivate others, along with his insatiable drive for victory, made him the standard against which leaders in very field are measured.

Orbiting the Giant Hairball: A Corporate Fool's Guide to Surviving with Grace (Gordon MacKenzie)

Hardcover: 224 pages

Publisher: Viking Adult; 1 edition (April 1, 1998)

Creativity is crucial to success. But too often, even the most innovative organization quickly becomes a "giant hairball"--a tangled, impenetrable mass of rules, traditions, and systems, all based on what worked in the past--that exercises an inexorable pull into mediocrity. Gordon McKenzie worked at Hallmark Cards for thirty years, many of which he spent inspiring his colleagues to slip the bonds of Corporate Normalcy and rise to orbit--to a mode of dreaming, daring and doing above and beyond the rubber-stamp confines of the administrative mind-set.

Distilled advice from *Orbiting the Giant Hairball*

1. Throughout our entire education and work careers, authority figures have worked to suppress our uniqueness and creativity. No authority figure will ever bless your own particular genius. Give up waiting for that to happen. Reject the status quo, embrace your creativity, be your own authority figure.
2. Orbiting is operating beyond the bounds of the corporate perception of reality. The corporate mind set is to protect and repeat past successes. Your personal energy is the thrust of the rocket that will put you into orbit. Too little and you fall back into the hair ball, too much and you escape orbit (presumably being fired or quitting)
3. Allow yourself to play and to fly off on tangents. Every tangent won't pay off, but tangents are the only place where the creativity and innovation happen.
4. Don't abandon your unique views, perspectives, goals and aspirations to adopt those of the corporation. They are the only unique value you can offer the company. Instead, find the places where there is overlap between your desires and the corporations and focus exclusively and relentlessly on those overlaps. Ignore the views, perspectives, goals and aspirations of the corporation that are not also your own because you cannot add any unique value there.
5. Reject the busy man syndrome that measures importance and takes pride in how busy you can keep yourself. Reject seeking the stamp of approval you think you'll achieve from your bosses and peers by being heroically overworked. Instead employ your skills to master your job and get it done faster and easier. Faster and smarter, not longer and harder.
6. Creative breakthroughs take time and a long leash. Creativity cannot be measured, mandated, commanded or controlled. Take the long leash and, when you are in the position to, give the long leash.
7. Have the courage to challenge boundaries and at the same time (and deeply intertwined with) have the courage to admit to idiocy, impasse and the need for help.
8. Success is achieved through the non-rational art of groping about uncertainly. The corporate hairball will do a good job of following along behind the successes you grope into and make them rote and repeatable. Without the continual groping ahead, there is only stagnation and death.
9. Ignore your job description.
10. Find the place between complete freedom and complete security that is optimal for you. Do this deliberately, continuously, and mindfully.
11. Escape the "no" side of your brain through "trans-rational" intuitive thinking. This is invoked by Art, Play, Imagination, Magic and Myth and by taking time to shut-up the "here is why it won't work" part of your (and your colleagues) brain.
12. Never ever tease anyone about anything. It is never affectionate.
13. Don't play a part. Be yourself...raw and human. Don't mask your humanity in an attempt to get the A+ evaluation from your boss. The price, your humanity, is too steep.
14. This one was already practical: "Anytime a bureaucrat or a custodian of the status quo stands between you and something you need or want, your challenge is to show the bureaucrat a means to meet your need that is harmonious with the system."
15. The corporation officially praises innovation while subverting all attempts at implementing anything novel. There is no end to the people saying 'no'. You can't add any value by being another one of the infinite naysayers. Listen non-judgmentally and be the person that says 'yes'.
16. The corporation is an organism, and like all living organisms, the only escape from death is propagation. Groping + luck + hard work = success. But no amount of preservation can prevent the eventual atrophy and death of that initial success. The only path to perpetual life is propagation.

Propagating happens through more groping and putting the needs of the offspring ahead of the needs of the parents.

17. Don't organize into functionally silos, pyramids of divisions and departments. Organize into holistic groups where all the functions needed are present.

18. In order to create anything new, you must escape from the hairball of the corporation's history and habitual culture. Creation is genesis and comes before history.

19. If you are in a leadership position, allow those you lead to lead when they want to. They won't always want to, and doing so does not relinquish your power... it enhances it, and to everyone's benefit.

20. Reject society's paint by numbers plan for your life, paint the brightest, boldest, fiercest painting you can dream up.

The Soul of Leadership: Unlocking Your Potential for Greatness (Deepak Chopra)

Hardcover: 224 pages

Publisher: Harmony; 1 edition (December 28, 2010)

Mindfulness, meditation, and awareness of the power of emotions is helpful in every area of life. Chopra offers a succinct guide that employs his principles and specifically addresses managers. With a focus on spirituality/consciousness, Chopra analyzes problems faced in the workplace and offers guidance for reversing negative attitudes and fostering a harmonious office environment. The examples he gives are realistic, his analogies are often compelling, and the exercises he outlines are clear and helpful. Chopra has coined a acronym-L.E.A.D.E.R.S.-for his leadership system

- L - Look and Listen
- E - Emotional bonding
- A - Awareness
- D - Doing
- E - Empowerment
- R - Responsibility
- S - Synchronicity
-
- "The criteria for inspired leadership doesn't need to be shadowed in mystery. In fact, the formula is simple: great leaders are those who can respond to their own needs and the needs of others from the higher levels of spirit with vision, creativity, and a sense of unity with the people they lead."

After identifying your own soul profile and the core values you want to develop, you can use these seven skills to allow your potential for greatness to emerge. Only from the level of the soul, Chopra contends, are great leaders created. Once that connection is made, you have unlimited access to the most vital qualities a leader can possess: creativity, intelligence, organizing power, and love.

Suddenly in Charge: Managing Up, Managing Down, Succeeding All Around (Roberta Chinsky Matuson)

Paperback: 256 pages

Publisher: Nicholas Brealey Publishing (February 16, 2011)

The part of this book that best applies to organization leaders is Part Two – Managing Down. Here's the chapter breakdown:

Chapter One – Welcome to Management: Now What the Heck Do I Do?

Chapter Two – From Me to We: It's Really Not about You!

Chapter Three – Acquiring Talent

Chapter Four – You Want Me to Do What?: The Art of Influencing Your Employees to Get What You Need

Chapter Five – Generation Integration: Leveraging Workplace Differences into Opportunities

Chapter Six – Dealing with Difficult Employees: Strategies to Keep You Sane during Insane

Times

Chapter Seven – Should You Care Whether Your Employees Love You?: Creating a Respectful Workplace

Chapter Eight – Performance Management: Do I Really Have to Do This?

Chapter Nine – You're Fired!: Timeless Tips for Tactful Terminations

Tribes: We Need You to Lead Us (Seth Godin)

Hardcover: 160 pages

Publisher: Portfolio Hardcover; 1 edition (October 16, 2008)

Short on pages but long on repetition, this book argues that lasting and substantive change can be best effected by a tribe: a group of people connected to each other, to a leader and to an idea. Smart innovators find or assemble a movement of similarly minded individuals and get the tribe excited by a new product, service or message, often via the Internet (consider, for example, the popularity of Facebook or Twitter). Tribes, Godin says, can be within or outside a corporation, and almost everyone can be a leader; most are kept from realizing their potential by fear of criticism and fear of being wrong. The book's helpful nuggets are buried beneath esoteric case studies and multiple reiterations: we can be leaders if we want, tribes are the way of the future and change is good. Change isn't made by asking permission, Godin says. Change is made by asking forgiveness, later.

Tribes is an inspirational book, not a "how-to-lead" book. *Tribes* is a "pep talk" to help find that leader within each of us. And perhaps your area of leadership doesn't even involve your work. Perhaps your inner-leader is what motivates you to be a boy scout leader, or a Sunday school teacher. Maybe there is a cause you feel so strongly about that you feel compelled to step into a leadership role. The truth is, no one is powerless. We all have a voice. *Tribes* reminds us that there is a leader living inside each of us. It is up to us to live up to the calling of leadership and to realize that we can lead the change we would like to see in our own corner of the world.

The Truth About Getting the Best From People (Martha I. Finney)

Paperback: 208 pages

Publisher: FT Press; 1 edition (March 1, 2008)

Build a culture of engagement, one person, one interaction at a time. You can build and lead teams full of self-motivated, innovative contributors: people who love their jobs, believe in their mission, and perform with focus, enthusiasm, and creativity! This book reveals 49 proven leadership principles for getting the best from every employee, every team, every organization. The author shows how to build a workforce that's positive, committed, and passionate; how to really motivate people, even on a tight budget; and how to lead with authenticity, clarity, consistency, and inspiration.

You Don't Need a Title to Be a Leader: How Anyone, Anywhere, Can Make a Positive Difference

(Mark Sanborn)

Hardcover: 128 pages

Publisher: Crown Business; 1 edition (September 19, 2006)

In *You Don't Need a Title to be a Leader*, Mark Sanborn, the author of the national bestseller *The Fred Factor*, shows how each of us can be a leader in our daily lives and make a positive difference, whatever our title or position.

Through the stories and anecdotes of a number of unsung heroes, he reveals the keys each one of us can use to improve our organizations and enhance our careers.

Genuine leadership is not conferred by a title, or limited to the executive suite. Rather, it is shown through our everyday actions, and the way we influence the lives of those around us.

You Don't Need a Title to be a Leader focuses on the six skills all leaders use to create results:

- The Power of Self-Mastery
- The Power of Focus
- The Power with People
- The Power of Persuasive Communication
- The Power of Execution
- The Power of Giving

There is also a focus on how leaders increase ROI: Relationships, Outcomes and Improvements.

Managing Board Diversity

The importance of differentiating between diversity and representativeness

BY JUDITH L. MILLER

The effectively diversified nonprofit board will be the one whose members effectively represent the organization's constituency. Its members will be chosen for their commitment and ability to further the organization's mission, not solely for their demographic characteristics.

Managing diversity is one of the most important challenges facing all organizational leaders today. In the nonprofit sector, managers confront the additional task of adequately representing the interests of the constituencies their organizations serve. It is often believed that constituent interests will be adequately represented by mandating demographic diversity requirements for board and staff. These external mandates are most frequently imposed by government and private funding agents. Although the literature on nonprofit governance is growing, few reports have made clear the distinction between diversity and representation. An implicit assumption exists that a diverse board is a more representative board. This simply is not the case. The distinction between demographic diversity and meaningful representation must be insisted upon if either is to be accomplished. Critical examination of the concept of representativeness shows how externally imposed diversity requirements are important but not sufficient to achieve meaningful representation.

DEMOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY AND THE NONPROFIT BOARD

The topic of board diversity is one of the most critical issues facing nonprofit organizations today. Boards face pressure to diversify their memberships for many reasons. Understanding the complexities embedded in these reasons is important to understanding the push for diversity.

First, the concept of diversity is closely related to community perceptions of a nonprofit organization's egalitarian image and the ideals of fairness. There is an implicit assumption that board composition makes a difference in terms of accountability and accessibility; for an organization to be responsive to a diverse constituency, its board must comprise a diverse membership.

Second, it has been argued that diversity may be related to overall organizational effectiveness in several ways. Among them are the ability to recruit the most talented individuals; the creative problem solving that results when minority group members offer alternatives to standard approaches that come out of a different experience; a higher level of critical analysis as diverse perspectives and varied approaches are considered;

and a reduced emphasis on conformity to norms of the past, which frees the group to think more creatively. Other research has shown that heterogeneity in groups promotes creativity and innovation — that groups whose members have high capabilities and complementary skills and expertise perform better than groups whose members share a homogeneous body of knowledge. Similarly, it has been argued that heterogeneous work teams, as Rosabeth Moss Kanter put it, “create a marketplace of ideas to be brought to bear on a problem.” Heterogeneous views give rise to critical analysis, stimulate a thorough examination of assumptions, and generate multiple alternative scenarios useful for decision making.

Third, many nonprofit organizations are under outside pressure to diversify their boards. State and federal governments, funding agents, and service recipients have all articulated the desire to have diverse nonprofit boards so that appropriate representation is established and maintained. While diverse groups may have a broader and richer base of experience from which to approach a problem, simply meeting externally mandated diversity requirements may not be sufficient to achieve meaningful representation.

Achieving meaningful representation on non-profit boards of directors requires more than an externally mandated diversity policy. It requires a commitment to the benefits of diversity (i.e., creativity, differing perspectives, and innovation) and the pursuit of common interests and values. What is important to remember is that heterogeneity of opinion can be brought to bear on dimensions of diversity that extend beyond simple demographic characteristics. In recruiting individuals to serve as representatives, boards must look beyond demographic characteristics and examine the unique contribution each potential board member can bring to the organization. Whether the board is looking for an accountant, a senior citizen, or a person with a disability, the emphasis must be on the unique contribution that can be realized when attention is focused on what can be accomplished by a diversity of skills, interests, and perspectives.

Diversity is an abstract concept that cannot be properly captured on surveys and funding applications that require nonprofit organizations to check boxes and count heads. Gender, race/ethnicity, economic status, social class, age, religious affiliation, employment experience, and a host of other demographic characteristics provide an infinite number of dimensions that boards of directors can draw from to aid in the construction of diverse governance structures. While potentially controversial, it may be quite desirable for a nonprofit board to be exclusively homogeneous on one dimension yet diverse on others. Organizations must be free to build diverse boards that best represent constituent interests while also advancing organizational mission and purpose, irrespective of differences in basic demographic characteristics and without deference to externally mandated requirements.

<i>...boards must look beyond demographic characteristics and examine the unique contribution each potential board member can bring to the organization.</i>

THE REPRESENTATION OF CONSTITUENT INTERESTS

The goals and objectives of representativeness for nonprofit boards of directors have been neither explicitly stated nor empirically examined. Yet the idea of representativeness embodies the expectation that the representatives will think, feel, and — most important — make decisions in a way that reflects the constituencies they represent. An examination of the underlying assumptions of four normative theories of representation — delegate, trustee, symbolic, and practical — may facilitate a better understanding of how board members might view the representation of constituent interests.

DELEGATE REPRESENTATION

Delegate representation occurs when an appointed agent is granted the authority to act on behalf of a principal. Whatever action the representative takes is considered to be an act of the represented. A. Phillips Griffiths' work focuses exclusively on the functions performed by the representative and argues that the representative's decisions and behavior commit the represented to a course of action. Absent from the notion of delegate representation is a system of checks and balances. Nothing is said about how the represented are consulted, how their interests are presented, or even whether the representative is responsible to those represented.

The theory of delegate representation is neither appropriate nor practical for nonprofit organization governance. Board members are not always elected or appointed to terms of office by those they are expected to represent. Although official appointment to the board of directors may be approved by a majority vote of the organization's membership, board candidates are often nominated by a subcommittee or selected members of the board. The constituency served by the organization is neither consulted nor asked to propose candidates. A second problem with delegate representation is that board members have no legal obligation to act on behalf of the constituency the organization serves. They may have a moral responsibility to conduct the affairs of the organization as public stewards, ensuring that the organization addresses the interests of those it serves; but the board's primary legal responsibility is to provide direction for the organization as a whole and to ensure proper fiscal oversight and supervision.

TRUSTEE REPRESENTATION

Representatives have also been viewed as trustees with an obligation to look after those they represent rather than consult with or obey their wishes. As the term is used here, trustees identify the ways in which the organization has failed to interpret the needs of the constituency and recommend proper action to correct these deficiencies. The problem is that these paternalistic trustees often lack the first-person perspective of the group or viewpoint represented. They are expected to act on behalf of a greater social good, rather than in response to the competing demands of a pluralistic society. Trustees bring valuable information to the governance process so that competing interests are translated into policies drafted and decided on the basis of impartial, technical criteria such as efficiency or effectiveness.

There certainly may be times when trustee representation is appropriate for nonprofit governance, particularly when there is a need for expert knowledge, when the constituencies served are incapable of speaking for themselves, or when the competing demands of a diverse society call for neutrality in the decision-making process. The Alzheimer's Association, the Humane Society, and Kidspace National Center for Kids in Crisis serve clientele who, for various reasons, are unable to represent their own interests effectively. Although trustees bring unique technical knowledge or specific professional expertise to represent constituent interests on a nonprofit organization's board, trustee representation is not sufficient to meet the demands of nonprofit governance. Often the constituency served are interested in and capable of discussing the decisions and policies that will affect their lives.

It has been shown that some government aid programs — designed by dominant “expert” groups with the intent to help less advantaged groups — provide an example of a process that, by leaving out a capable constituency, led to the future deterioration of depressed communities, encouraged crime, and increased minority group dependence on public assistance. When social policies are not developed in consultation with those who are targeted for assistance, they fail to consider the concerns, needs, and priorities of the individuals and families they are intended to benefit. Such policies have been said to be more frequently designed to “protect” disadvantaged groups than to empower them. Social policies should be geared toward maximizing independence, economic opportunity, and freedom to choose among an array of services. When board members function as trustees, they — like the detached designers of social policy — lack the essential first-person perspective of the constituency they represent.

SYMBOLIC REPRESENTATION

When diversity is accomplished simply by adding people with certain demographic or personal characteristics to an organization's board of directors, the representation achieved is symbolic at best. Externally mandated diversity requirements focus on the identity of the representative rather than on the identity of who or what is to be represented. They have the potential to reduce the multidimensionality of experience and demographic variations within seemingly homogeneous groups to one-dimensional social constructions, when in fact modern society is composed of individuals and groups with overlapping memberships. Citizens are neither isolated individuals nor people whose condition in life is determined by the group to which they belong, but rather a bundle of diverse interests and affiliations. Julius Cohen, in his paper presented over 30 years ago at the annual meeting of the American Society for Political and Legal Philosophy, stated: “It is as if in sketching the representative, one's eye were glued to a mirror without checking to find out who might be standing in front of it. The mirror image would, of course, be representative of someone. But the question is, of whom?”

Symbolic representatives are merely reflections of the personal and demographic characteristics that the mandating organization would like to see mirrored in nonprofit organizations and governing bodies. Demographic characteristics offer little information about the functions, interests, or behaviors of the representatives; they merely provide superficial information about some of their personal characteristics.

Citizens are neither isolated individuals nor people whose condition in life is determined by the group to which they belong, but rather a bundle of diverse interests and affiliations.

One study by Amitai Etzioni hypothesized that the reasons for an individual's participation in organizations or relationships affect the quality of involvement: Those who act out of "moral commitment will behave differently from those who do it purely out of self-interest." Furthermore, he claimed that committed participants will be more motivated to make greater sacrifices or persist in a course of action despite personal hardships or public opposition than their less committed counterparts. Mandated diversity requirements have the potential to produce representatives who are not committed or participatory.

A related study by researchers Barbara E. Taylor, Richard P. Chait, and Thomas P. Holland examined the relationship between the motivation of college trustees and the effectiveness of their boards. "Effective" boards were densely populated with alumni, relatives of alumni (or former trustees), or individuals who were in some other way intimately connected to the institution. Effective boards were also more likely to have members who were active in alumni affairs and who participated in college activities and special events. According to the study, trustees of effective boards joined because they identified deeply with values and goals intrinsic to the institution. By contrast, 50 percent of the trustees serving on ineffective boards had absolutely no connection to the college before they joined and had agreed to participate because of mild to moderate interest in the institution as an instrument for achieving such extrinsic goals as meeting the needs of the community, the church, or a family member. These findings suggest that a decision to simply increase the number of minority members on a board of directors without considering a candidate's commitment or motivation may actually do more harm than good.

When symbolic representation is achieved through externally imposed diversity mandates and membership in a group has been established, all persons within the group are considered to be equivalent to one another. Any unique qualities they may possess (educational attainment, religious affiliation, or employment experience) are basically lost. These one-dimensional social constructions of diversity are deficient for three major reasons: They ignore the intersection of multiple demographic characteristics; they fail to recognize important variations within seemingly homogeneous groups; and they disregard the many dimensions of experience.

Illustrations of these deficiencies abound. First, the literature on feminism is rich in examples of how socially constructed views of gender marginalize the unique experiences of women and reduce the multiplicity of their demographic characteristics to a single common denominator. One example is that even though the feminist movement was originally expected to unite women against gender-based injustice, it actually divided women along the lines of race, class, and religion. A scathing analysis by bell hooks of Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* noted how the specific problems and dilemmas of leisure-class White housewives were not the same concerns

facing the majority of American women. By making her own personal plight synonymous with a social condition affecting all American women, Friedan presented a one-dimensional perspective on feminine reality. In doing so, she created a point of departure for those who considered themselves feminists but were unable to see how the major tenets of feminism applied to their own lives. Attention was focused by hooks on the ways in which classism, racism, and sexism interacted to create unique interrelated experiences that defied attempts to isolate simple causal explanations of social reality.

Second, the ways in which important variations within seemingly homogeneous groups are obscured by one-dimensional social constructions of diversity can be found in studies of poverty among Asian Americans and among Hispanic women engaged in industrial home-work. By analyzing a prevalent social problem within a socially prescribed homogeneous group, one study by Sharon Lee was able to identify two distinct but related chains. The analysis suggests that while the route to poverty for Asian Americans is clearly related to immigration and the generational status of Asian families, the effects of poverty also have varied ethnic dimensions because the Asian population is not a single-dimensioned ethnic group but rather a diverse group of various ethnicities. Symbolic representation based on ascribed characteristics would miss the unique perspective that various ethnic groups could bring to a discussion regarding the eradication of poverty among Asian Americans.

The study by M. Patricia Fernandez-Kelly and Anna Garcia of Hispanic women showed how involvement in industrial homework varied based on household composition. Although there were underground garment industries dominated by a female Hispanic workforce in both Miami and Los Angeles, these informal economies were characterized by a considerable degree of variation dependent upon the intersection of culture, norms, and economic factors. The study concludes by arguing that the role played by households and families in the allocation of female Hispanic workers into various segments of the labor market underscores the importance of studying the underground economy as an “uneven and richly integrated spectrum, rather than as a homogeneous phenomenon.” This observation again emphasizes the fact that nonprofit boards must recognize the ways in which individuals might reflect homogeneity on one demographic dimension and variability on others.

Third, the multidimensionality of experience can also be found in research that explicitly explores the relationship between multiple demographic characteristics, such as studies that examine the intersection of race and class or of gender and race. With every case, it becomes more apparent that the symbolic representation that is achieved when externally mandated diversity requirements treat complex individual characteristics as single-axis demographic frameworks is insufficient to meet the demands of nonprofit governance. Such a juxtaposition limits the representation of some interests while theoretically erasing others altogether.

PRACTICAL REPRESENTATION

Although it too has its limitations, the fourth normative model, practical representation,

may best embody the ideals of representation for nonprofit organizational governance. A historical analysis of the growth of representation shows that those with something at stake in the decisions to be made have a right to participate in the process. These rights date back to early 16th-century England and the formation of a separate House of Parliament where commoners met to present their demands jointly, claiming that they spoke for the people against the King. In the nonprofit sector it is both necessary and desirable to have those served by the organization represented on the board of directors, particularly when the business at hand is of considerable concern to those receiving services. Constituent opinions, ideas, and judgments are crucial to a board's ability to resolve competing claims for organizational resources and to arrive at a commonly accepted policy, consensus, or cooperative action. Robert L. Woodson's analysis of the success community residents achieved in managing public housing units noted the dramatic changes that might take place when practical representation is applied:

...scores of small businesses and hundreds of jobs have been created, crime and vandalism have decreased, teenage pregnancy statistics have been reversed, and fathers and husbands have returned to abandoned families. At the same time administrative costs have been drastically reduced, vacant apartments repaired, and rent collections doubled and tripled. Now operating multi-million dollar budgets, resident managers have turned crime-ridden hell-holes into healthy communities that place a premium on education, family, and self motivation.

Effective representation involves engaged activity. It is not delegated, paternalistic, or symbolic. The substance of the activity is expected to further the interests of those who are represented. The whole idea is to empower the constituency being served by consulting them regarding the social policies that will affect their lives and by creating a safe participatory environment where diverse views are encouraged and appreciated. To incorporate constituent participation in nonprofit organization governance is to take seriously the rights and responsibilities citizens have to influence the policies that will affect their lives.

The mechanism by which citizens are invited to represent their interests and participate in nonprofit governance affects institutional and policy outcomes. The method of integration into the decision-making process cannot obliterate institutional development. Authors have studied how the combined impact of racism and forced integration has destroyed the integrity of Black institutions, affecting Blacks' ability to develop sources of human capital and to direct and control material and institutional resources. Externally mandated diversity requirements as the antecedent to minority participation on a nonprofit board of directors focuses attention on the goals of these mandates rather than on the intent of the goals. The amount and quality of representation occurring in any social arrangement is directly dependent upon the kind of representative structure that is established. Diversity requirements may heighten a board's awareness about the importance of diversity, but checklists are far from what is needed to ensure effective representation. Meaningful representation functions properly only when all members are represented as equals.

...nonprofit boards must recognize the ways in which individuals might reflect homogeneity on one demographic dimension and variability on others.

CONCLUSION

Because governing boards are important to organizational survival, organizations should pay close attention to the composition and the structure of their boards. Choice of board representatives should be based on a desire to incorporate constituent opinions and ideas. In this way, candidates are invited to participate based on an evaluation of their ability to carry out specified roles and functions in furtherance of the organization's mission, not on narrowly defined demographic characteristics. Boards of directors should be free to look outside the strict confines of gender, race, age, and the like to identify individuals whose dedication and commitment to a greater social good furthers the board's commitment to its core mission, irrespective of differences in basic demographic characteristics.

Community groups and organizations can be a source of access to underrepresented groups on an agency's board. If the goal, for example, is to learn how a specific nonprofit can better serve the senior citizen community, then attracting and recruiting senior citizens to the organization's board might start with a glance through the telephone book to learn of other organizations that serve that constituency. Visiting those other groups, sharing facts and data about the constituency served, presenting information about services provided, and explaining how the nonprofit organization can benefit from their participation are essential first steps.

Effective management means understanding that which must be managed. For nonprofit boards of directors, the objective of managing diversity is to create governance structures in which all members of differing backgrounds can contribute and achieve to their full potential. The goal of representativeness is slightly different. Managing effective representation means that board members act in the interests of those they represent, individual dignity is ensured, and the representatives are held accountable for their actions.

A nonprofit organization's social purpose serves as a common goal uniting all who are affiliated with the organization. Emphasizing those qualities that are shared by the board, rather than accentuating those qualities that create boundaries and divide membership along lines of demographic differences, directs attention to what some refer to as "centers of group ethnicity." Boards should not be expected to accomplish meaningful representation by adhering to mandates that define diversity in terms of narrowly prescribed demographic characteristics. They should be free to construct a meaning that has relevance to their organizations, their constituencies, and their communities. The objectives of diversity and representativeness are not necessarily mutually exclusive, yet their goals are not synonymous. When nonprofit organizations and their boards of directors fail to differentiate between the two, they risk running into some of the problems discussed here.

SUGGESTED RESOURCES

Cohen, Julius. "Commentary: Representation and the Problem of Identity." In J. R. Pennock and J. W. Chapman (eds.), *Representation*. New York: Atherton Press, 1968. Cohen's discussion of representation focuses on the identity of the represented rather than on the identity of the principal. In this way, Cohen addresses what he refers to as the "problem of identity" in the representation of interests.

Etzioni, Amitai. *The Moral Dimension: Toward a New Economics*. New York: Free Press, 1988. Citing relevant literature in psychology, philosophy, and sociology, Etzioni develops a comprehensive explanation of human behavior that departs from the dominant neoclassical economic model. His focus on the moral dimension of decision making sharply contrasts the behaviorist assumptions that underlie economic thought (i.e., that human motivation is based on maximization of self-interest). The author's paradigm stimulated a new way of thinking in the social sciences and in areas of public policy.

Fernandez-Kelly, M. Patricia, and Anna Garcia. "Informalization at the Core: Hispanic Women, Homework, and the Advanced Capitalist State." In Portes, Alejandro, Castells, and Benton, *The Informal Economy: Studies in Advanced and Less Developed Countries*. Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989.

The authors investigate the mechanisms that have led to the growth of the underground economy in an advanced industrial context. Their study examines two different urban settings, Los Angeles and Miami. They focus on the different experiences of Hispanic women working in the garment industry in both cities. The authors show the ways in which involvement in informal production can have multiple meanings based on the type of incorporation into the labor market.

Griffiths, A. Phillips. "How Can One Person Represent Another?" In H. F. Pitkin (ed.), *Representation*. New York: Atherton Press, 1969. In this article, the author distinguishes among what he calls the "four senses of representation." According to Griffiths, ascriptive representation is exclusively of persons, descriptive and symbolic representation may be of things, while representation of interests occurs when a person is an ascriptive representative of an abstraction, another person, or a group of persons. Griffiths argues that the substance of representation is the activity of representing.

hooks, bell. *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*. Boston: South End Press, 1984. As a Black woman living "at the margin," hooks argues that feminist theory has largely been developed by "privileged middle-class white women living at the center." Her critique shows the ways in which the feminism advocated by white middle-class housewives failed to acknowledge or integrate the life experiences of women with differing backgrounds.

Kanter, Rosabeth Moss. *The Change Masters*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1983. Based on five years of research on innovation, change, and response to external demands on corporations, Kanter challenges corporate leaders to be innovative. She

details the ways in which American business has stifled fresh ideas, and she points out the skills required and strategies needed so that “change masters” can respond effectively to environmental demands.

Middleton, Melissa. “Nonprofit Boards of Directors: Beyond the Governance Function.” In W. W. Powell (ed.), *The Nonprofit Sector: A Research Handbook*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994. The author contends that the nonprofit board of directors is part of both the organization and the environment. A board performs a boundary-spanning function in which it regulates exchanges of information and secures necessary resources from the organization’s operating environment. The author argues that by understanding the nature of the relationships a board maintains with external constituencies, one might begin to determine the relevant influence of that board.

Taylor, Barbara E., Richard P. Chait, and Thomas P. Holland “Trustee Motivation and Board Effectiveness.” *Nonprofit and Voluntary Quarterly*, Vol. 20, No. 2, 1991, pp. 207 – 224. In a study of college boards of trustees, the authors describe the relationship between board effectiveness and the motivating factors that influence individual participation on a board of directors. The authors found that effective boards were made up of individuals whose motivation for joining were institution-specific. That is, members of effective boards had a deep affection for and a connection to the college.

Woodson, Robert L. “Black America’s Legacy of Entrepreneurship.” *National Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 2, 1988, pp. 204 – 224. This article shows how an “American Black tradition of self-sufficiency” is at the heart of a successful self-help renaissance in the black community. Woodson presents an historical analysis of the social forces that have shaped Black America. He demonstrates that only when policy makers incorporate the abilities and ingenuities of the “underclass” will social policy be developed that inspires economic independence and self-sufficiency.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Judith L. Miller is a doctoral candidate in Public Administration at the State University of New York at Albany. Her areas of research are nonprofit governance, administration, and philanthropy. She has taught as an adjunct faculty member at Marist College and SUNY Albany. She has worked as a development professional in the nonprofit and higher education arenas and as a consultant to nonprofit organizations and boards of directors. Her extensive volunteer experience includes board membership, youth sport and Special Olympics coaching, and various community activities.

Source:

<http://www.transformativegovernance.org/Perspectives%20on%20Nonprofit%20Board%20Diversity.pdf>

Subject :	Georgia Thespians Chapter Board: seeking position
From:	frankpruet@yahoo.com (frankpruet@yahoo.com)
To:	frankpruet@yahoo.com;
Date:	Monday, May 17, 2010 9:33 PM

Dear Frank Pruet,

The Georgia Thespians Chapter Board is seeking a coordinator of conference productions and conference stage management. The duties and responsibilities of this board position are:

- Attend the annual board retreat August 27, 28, and 29, 2010
- Attend planning sessions 9/11/10 and 1/8/11
- Coordinate screening procedures including creation and reception of application forms and scheduling show screenings/screeners
- Correspond with conference production directors throughout the process
- Select shows to perform at conference
- Schedule times and spaces for conference shows
- Coordinate a committee of conference stage managers for three venues
- Establish a cooperative working relationship with the professionals at the three conference performance venues
- Provide space and technical descriptions/requirements for show directors
- Work with the Chapter Director in a timely and efficient way
- Work cooperatively with other chapter committee coordinators
- Accept other duties as necessary This job requires organization and time-management skills as well as excellent personal relations skills.

To ask questions and/or express interest in the position, please contact Frank Pruet, Georgia Chapter Director, at frankpruet@yahoo.com by June 1, 2010.

Subject :	GA Thespians Chapter Board Position
From:	frankpruet@yahoo.com (frankpruet@yahoo.com)
To:	frankpruet@yahoo.com;
Date:	Wednesday, May 4, 2011 9:56 AM

Hello GA Thespian Troupe Directors!

Laura Stebbins has served for several years on the GA Thespians Chapter Board as the PlayWorks coordinator, as well as the ticketing coordinator. She is taking a break from teaching to be a stay-at-home mom, and we wish her well. She created and nurtured Playworks into the excellent program it is today.

I am looking for someone to replace her on the Chapter Board. This is a volunteer, non-paid position (as are all board positions). Duties include:

- Attendance at the annual Chapter Board retreat on August 26, 27, 28, 2011 in Peachtree City
- Coordinate the GA PlayWorks program
- Maintaining PlayWorks information on the GA Thespians website
- Being available throughout the year for help, guidance, and question answering for students and their directors
- Collecting and verifying submissions
- Selecting readers/evaluators of submissions
- Contacting winning writers in a timely manner
- Coordinating the PlayWorks schedule at conference
- Working with a guest artist at conference
- Having a passion for playwriting and nurturing new playwrights in Georgia
- Having a vision for the future of this program in Georgia
- Being one more voice representing other Troupe Directors on the Chapter Board

Ticketing duties include:

- Working closely with other board members
- Designing and conducting the conference show ticketing process and procedures

Individuals interesting in working with these two programs should email Frank Pruet, Georgia Thespians Chapter Director, at **frankpruet@yahoo.com** by **Monday, May 16, 2011** with a short description of their vision of the PlayWorks program and what contributions they can make to the board as a whole.

If you know of someone who is not a troupe director who might be interested, please forward this email to him/her. Board members do not have to be troupe directors. I will be glad to answer any questions you might have in considering volunteering your time and efforts.

Thank you for your work this past year. Our students benefit tremendously from dedicated, qualified directors.



**GEORGIA
THESPIANS**

AN EDUCATIONAL THEATRE ASSOCIATION AFFILIATE

Chapter Board Retreat

August 24 - 26, 2012

Dolce – Peachtree City

FRIDAY (August 24, 2012)

4:00 PM – 6:00 PM	Check-in	Inspiration Hall Dolce Atlanta
6:00 PM – 7:30PM	Dinner	Two01 Restaurant
7:30 PM – 10:30 PM	Meeting	Stonehaven Amphitheater <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome /Who's Who• Announcements/Celebrations• AIDA Report• Retreat facilities info• Retreat Schedule• Retreat procedures• Notebook contents• STO Report / 2012 conference theme• 2012 Conference reports• Challenges/Opportunities

SATURDAY (August 25, 2012)

7:00 AM– 9:00 AM	Breakfast	Two01 Restaurant
9:00 AM – 11:30 AM	Meeting	Stonehaven Amphitheater <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Financial Report• Contract Report• Approval of Minutes of last Board Meeting• Accepted Presentation• IE changes

- Planning Sessions
- Three required IRS Forms
- Board Information Forms
- Insurance Report
- Honor Troupe Program
- Scheduling issues
- GHSA One Act Play Judges Training Proposal
- Chapter Director Succession Planning
- RiverCenter program input session

11:30 AM – 3:00 PM	Committee Meetings (Breakout rooms available)	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Time to plan and design programs/info/forms and meet with other board members for help/advice ○ Meet with Webmaster to create web documents/info ready for posting ○ Meet with JR Board members 	
11:30 AM – 1:30 PM	Lunch	Two01 Restaurant
3:00 PM – 6:30 PM	Meeting	Stonehaven Amphitheater
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Session planning • Conference planning 	
7:00 PM – 9:00 PM	Dinner	Two01 Restaurant
9:00 PM – 11:00 PM	Meeting	Stonehaven Amphitheater
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update work • New Business 	

SUNDAY (August 26, 2012)

7:00 AM – 9:00 AM	Breakfast	Two01 Restaurant
9:00 AM – Noon	Meeting	Stonehaven Amphitheater
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voting on motions • Committee wrap up • Last minute business • Finalizing Information for Website 	
Noon – 1:30 PM	Lunch	Two01 Restaurant

Georgia Thespian 2012 Chapter Board Retreat

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Motion Board / Motion Cards Procedure

Anytime during the retreat that you would like to make a motion for the board to consider, please follow this procedure:

Get a Motion Card (index card sized Post It Notes).

Write your motion clearly and carefully. Begin with “**I move...**” and follow with specific and concise wording. Make sure that there is only one motion per card.

Sign your motion. Make sure the secretary can read your signature.

Find someone who will Second your motion and have him/her sign as well, with the notation: 2nd before his/her name. **Make sure the secretary can read that signature.**

Put your Motion Card on the Motion Board at the front of the room.

From time to time the Secretary will read the motions aloud. Feel free to discuss informally with other board members, working out the details.

You may withdraw your motion if you chose to by removing the Motion Card and handing it to the Secretary.

You may amend your motion by rewording it in a new Motion Card.

We will discuss and vote on motions during the Sunday meeting session.

MIXING AND MANAGING FOUR GENERATIONS OF EMPLOYEES

BY GREG HAMMILL

Think of the last time you heard comments like these ...

You're right, but I'm the boss! Just do your job! I remember when ... The kid wants a promotion after six months on the job! No!

How did you react? Were you offended? Were you okay with the comment? Did you understand, or not understand, why someone would say these words? The words and your reaction, as well as the reactions of others, reflect generational differences in the workplace.

If you don't think generation makes a difference, think of this example. When asked to recall how and where Kennedy died, the Veterans and Baby Boomers would say gunshots in Dallas, Texas; Generation X remembers a plane crash near Martha's Vineyard, Mass.; and Generation Y might say, "Kennedy who?"

There is a serious new problem in the workplace, and it has nothing to do with downsizing, global competition, pointy-haired bosses, stress or greed. Instead, it is the problem of distinct generations — the Veterans, the Baby Boomers, Gen X and Gen Y — working together and often colliding as their paths cross. Individuals with different values, different ideas, different ways of getting things done and different ways of communicating in the workplace have always existed. So, why is this becoming a problem now?

The Power of Four

This is the first time in American history that we have had *four* different generations working side-by-side in the workplace. Remember, if you are old enough, when older workers were the bosses and younger workers did what was asked of them, no questions asked. There were definite rules as to how the boss was treated and how younger workers treated older workers. No longer: Roles today are all over the place and the rules are being rewritten daily.

At work, generational differences can affect everything, including recruiting, building teams, dealing with change, motivating, managing, and maintaining and increasing productivity. Think of how generational differences, relative to how people communicate, might affect misunderstandings, high employee turnover, difficulty in attracting employees and gaining employee commitment.

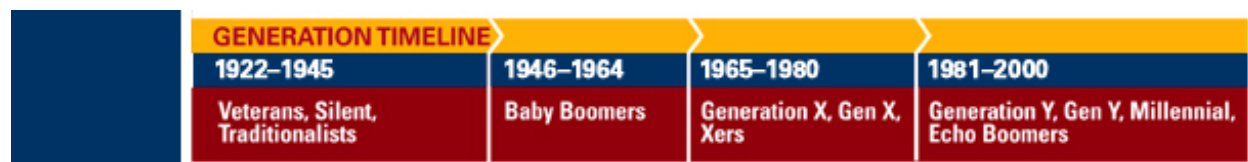
Research indicates that people communicate based on their generational backgrounds. Each generation has distinct attitudes, behaviors, expectations, habits and motivational buttons. Learning how to communicate with the different generations can eliminate

many major confrontations and misunderstandings in the workplace and the world of business.

Let's try an analogy to help understand the issue. What often happens when a family gets together for a holiday or a vacation? Four generations — you (let's assume you're a Boomer); your children (Xers); your grandchildren (Gen Y); your brothers and sisters (Boomers); and your parents (Veterans) — all trying to get along together. How long does it take before someone mentions "the good old days" and another says "I remember when ... ?" Is that when things become testy? How many times is so much friction created that family members leave the gathering saying never again? Do you usually attribute this to "your family" or do you find yourself saying, "that's just what we're like whenever we get together?" Could this be due to generational differences and not just be "the way the family is?"

Whether at a family gathering or in the workplace, how do you manage intergenerational groups with conflicting work ethics, dissimilar values and idiosyncratic styles? How do you get them to stop snarling at each other? How do you motivate them to get along or work together?

Every generation has created its own commotion as it has entered into the adult working world. And, every generation says the same things about other generations — "They don't get it" or "They have it so much easier than we did."



Unlocking the Mystery

To begin to understand how individuals in different generations act and react, one must first start with understanding oneself. Begin by seeing where you fall on the "Generation Timeline" above. Since this timeline represents a conglomeration of many views, the starting and ending dates (birth years) of the generations are subjective, not scientific or fully agreed-on time spans. However, this subjectivity poses no real problems since the variation of years is not significant enough to impact the big picture of a generation's description.

The first thing to consider is the individual and his or her underlying values, or personal and lifestyle characteristics, which seem to correspond with each generation, as shown in the following table.

PERSONAL AND LIFESTYLE CHARACTERISTICS BY GENERATION				
	Veterans (1922–1945)	Baby Boomers (1946–1964)	Generation X (1965–1980)	Generation Y (1981–2000)
Core Values	Respect for authority Conformers Discipline	Optimism Involvement	Skepticism Fun Informality	Realism Confidence Extreme fun Social
Family	Traditional Nuclear	Disintegrating	Latch-key kids	Merged families
Education	A dream	A birthright	A way to get there	An incredible expense
Communication Media	Rotary phones One-on-one Write a memo	Touch-tone phones Call me anytime	Cell phones Call me only at work	Internet Picture phones E-mail
Dealing with Money	Put it away Pay cash	Buy now, pay later	Cautious Conservative Save, save, save	Earn to spend

The characteristics listed in the table are but a very few of those that have been studied and reported by various authors. Not every person in a generation will share all of the various characteristics shown in this or the next table with others in the same generation. However, these examples are indicative of general patterns in the relationships between and among family members, friends and people in the workplace. Individuals born at one end of the date range or the other may see overlapping characteristics with the preceding or succeeding generation.

From the above table, you can easily see why Generation X cannot understand what their grandparents mean by the traditional family or what fun it was to spend Christmas together as a family. Are you worried about the possibility of your Baby Boomer children being unable to retire or having to move in with you or their children as they reach the latter years of their lives? Possibly you should be.

Do you now see why your view of education might differ from your children's views? Do you understand why your children may not want to go to a movie with you? Can you see how generational issues, like what to do for entertainment, can create friction on those family vacations or at holiday get-togethers?

Understanding these characteristics about individuals makes it easier to look at workplace characteristics and how they manifest themselves in business (see Workplace Characteristics below).

WORKPLACE CHARACTERISTICS				
	Veterans (1922–1945)	Baby Boomers (1946–1964)	Generation X (1965–1980)	Generation Y (1981–2000)
Work Ethic and Values	Hard work Respect authority Sacrifice Duty before fun Adhere to rules	Workaholics Work efficiently Crusading causes Personal fulfillment Desire quality Question authority	Eliminate the task Self-reliance Want structure and direction Skeptical	What's next Multitasking Tenacity Entrepreneurial Tolerant Goal oriented
Work Is ...	An obligation	An exciting adventure	A difficult challenge A contract	A means to an end Fulfillment
Leadership Style	Directive Command-and-control	Consensual Collegial	Everyone is the same Challenge others Ask why	*TBD
Interactive Style	Individual	Team player Loves to have meetings	Entrepreneur	Participative
Communications	Formal Memo	In person	Direct Immediate	E-mail Voice mail
Feedback and Rewards	No news is good news Satisfaction in a job well done	Don't appreciate it Money Title recognition	Sorry to interrupt, but how am I doing? Freedom is the best reward	Whenever I want it, at the push of a button Meaningful work
Messages That Motivate	Your experience is respected	You are valued You are needed	Do it your way Forget the rules	You will work with other bright, creative people
Work and Family Life	Ne'er the twain shall meet	No balance Work to live	Balance	Balance

*As this group has not spent much time in the workforce, this characteristic has yet to be determined.

An example, based on these traits, would be to think about how words are received differently. When a Boomer says to another Boomer, "We need to get the report done," it is generally interpreted by the Boomer as an order, it must be done and done now. However, when a Boomer says to an Xer, "This needs to be done," the Xer hears an observation, not a command, and may or may not do it immediately.

Getting Back to Work

With the above observations in mind, let's look at a few work situations and how one might handle them.

- At annual appraisal time, a manager from the Veterans generation gives out a nice bonus for a project well done. The Generation X employee is ungrateful and says, "Why didn't I get this six months ago, when the project was completed?" Gen X wants instant gratification, whereas a person in the Veterans generation is happy to get money anytime. The solution here may be for the company to explore reward plans geared to

the different generations, or things like monetary rewards and recognition given at the time when it is earned.

- A Generation X manager tells a Boomer he has been working too hard and should take time off to take the family on vacation. Instead of saying thanks, the Boomer replies, “I work to get ahead, to get a promotion, not for a vacation.” The next time that situation comes up, the manager might elect to give this particular employee a bonus, rather than suggest a vacation.

- A top-notch, cross-functional team with individuals from several different generations has been set up to recommend a solution to a nasty manufacturing problem. After a couple of weeks, the manager responsible for the team cannot understand why there is constant bickering and nothing is getting done. If the manager were aware of just one characteristic of each individual relating to communication needs, he or she might understand the stalemate. The Veterans on the team are looking for handwritten notes and direct, specific requests for work to be done. The Boomers do not like to work independently, and they expect to have meetings any time, any place — and it is fine if they are called day or night. Xers do not want to hear about the project outside of work, and don’t dare call them at home. And the Yers don’t want any meetings at all, they only communicate via voice mail and e-mail. Is it any wonder that the team is having trouble getting motivated toward the goal? At the beginning of any team formation, an effective leader should consider spending time learning how team members wish to communicate.

- A Boomer is working for a Generation Y individual, and there is nothing but animosity between the two. Why? Generation Y individuals, born since 1980, have many of the traits of the Veterans. They are not like their parents. They are curious, goal-oriented and loyal. Solution, consider having Boomers work for Veterans rather than Gen Ys.

There are more pronounced differences between the generations today than ever before. What can one expect with the dramatic changes in our world in the last 60 years? Being aware of these differences can help individuals tailor their message for maximum effect, regardless of the task, or the relationship — family, friends, workplace peers. Good business is based on understanding others. The majority of us think the correct way, and the only way, is our way. In business, as well as in personal life, that is just not true. To work effectively and efficiently, to increase productivity and quality, one needs to understand generational characteristics and learn how to use them effectively in dealing with each individual.

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SOURCE: <http://www.fdu.edu/newspubs/magazine/05ws/generations.htm>



PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

Understanding and Managing Different Generations

There are many generations at work, interacting with each other on a daily basis. Sometimes this gives rise to frustration, conflict and misunderstanding. Yet each generation has something worthwhile and exciting to offer.

Generational work styles

It's helpful for managers to not only identify their own work style but also the style of those they manage. One way to do so is to take a "generational" view. The following are some typical characteristics of each generation.

Traditional Generation members (born between 1922–1945) tend to:

- believe in conformity, authority and rules
- have a very defined sense of right and wrong
- be loyal, disciplined, logical, detail-oriented
- view an understanding of history as a way to plan for the future
- dislike conflict
- seek out technological advancements
- prefer hierarchical organizational structures

Baby boomers (born between 1946-1964) are drawn to:

- long hours at the office, including evenings and weekends
- building their career over the long term and loyalty to their employer
- viewing themselves and their career as one and the same
- commitment to quality and doing a good job
- "hanging tough" through difficult work situations and policies
- finding solutions to problems
- being in charge and respecting authority

Members of Generation X (born between 1965-1980) tend to:

- prefer high-quality end results over quantity
- set and meet goals and are very productive
- multitask
- balance work and life; like flexible working hours, job sharing
- see themselves as free agents and marketable commodities
- be comfortable with authority but not impressed with titles
- be technically competent
- value ethnic diversity
- love independence

Members of Generation Y (born between 1981-1994) tend to prefer:

- effecting change and making an impact
- expressing themselves rather than defining themselves through work
- multitasking all the time
- active involvement
- flexibility in

work hours and appearance; a relaxed work environment • teamwork • on-the-job training • getting everything immediately • a balance of work and life

Tips for managing different generations

Managing the mixture of ages, faces, values and views is an increasingly difficult task. Ron Zemke, Claire Raines and Bob Filipczak in their book *Generations at Work: Managing the Clash of Veterans, Boomers, Xers, and Nexters in Your Workplace* describe it as “diversity management at its most challenging.”

How do successful companies handle this dilemma? According to *Generations at Work*, they build nontraditional workplaces, exhibit flexibility, emphasize respectful relationships and focus on retaining talented employees. Zemke, Raines and Filipczak recommend five ways to avoid confusion and conflict at work:

- **Accommodate employee differences.** Treat your employees as you do your customers. Learn all you can about them, work to meet their specific needs and serve them according to their unique preferences. Make an effort to accommodate personal scheduling needs, work/life balance issues and nontraditional lifestyles.
- **Create workplace choices.** Allow the workplace to shape itself around the work being done, the customers being served and the people who work there. Shorten the chain of command and decrease bureaucracy.
- **Operate for a sophisticated management style.** Give those who report to you the big picture, specific goals and measures. Then turn them loose. Give them feedback, rewards and recognition as appropriate.
- **Respect competence and initiative.** Treat everyone, from the newest recruit to the most seasoned employee, as if they have great things to offer and are motivated to do their best. Hire carefully to assure a good match between people and work.
- **Nourish retention.** Keeping valuable employees is every bit as important in today's economy as finding and retaining customers. Offer lots of training—from one-on-one coaching sessions, to interactive computer-based classes, to an extensive and varied classroom curriculum. Encourage lots of lateral movement and broader assignments.

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Millennials need fun, flexibility at work

By Elise R. Zeiger, CNN

July 20, 2011 9:09 a.m. EDT

Last year, 27-year-old Grant Gadoci declared that he needed a year off of work.

"I love traveling," said Gadoci, who works for the software company HotSchedules. "So here, if you need to take time off, you send an e-mail notification, and they say, 'have a good time!' "

Gadoci took his boss up on an offer for a leave of absence and moved to Italy. He's now back in the office, working in sales, after his year off.

"They recognized that work-life balance, for many people, is just the definition of being a happy worker," Gadoci said.

Unlimited paid vacation -- as long as you still get your work done -- is one of the many perks Gadoci enjoys at Austin, Texas-based HotSchedules. The company also provides its young staff members with a massage chair, a pingpong table, a tricked-out gaming suite including "Rock Band," and a monthly cookout served by the boss.

Gen-Y'ers: Delaying adulthood

HotSchedules CEO Ray Pawlikowski, who founded the company in 1999, says that catering to Gen-Y workers is smart business. Thirty-nine of his 65 employees are under the age of 32.

"If you create an environment like we have here, which is a fun place to come work, and you engage them and you really capture their attention, they're fantastic employees," Pawlikowski said.

Who is this new breed of worker, and why do companies like HotSchedules pamper them?

Generation Y, or millennials, make up roughly 50 million 18- to 30-year-olds. According to a 2010 Pew Research Center study on social trends, this generation is on course to become the most educated in history and, in a decade or so, will account for nearly half the employees in the world.

Dr. John Butler, a University of Texas professor, has conducted extensive research on innovation and millennials. He says one defining characteristic of millennials is their short attention spans.

"I think that Gen-Y does not expect necessarily to be tied to a job," Butler said.

That's a gutsy decision for a generation with 13 percent unemployment.

"The big one I hear about, and I'm guilty too, is a sense of entitlement," said Gen-Y consultant Jason Dorsey, who rakes in up to \$25,000 per speech teaching Fortune 500 companies how to work with his generation. "It's showing up and just feeling like people owe you things," the 33-year-old says.

Dorsey adds that some millennials also have a hard time dealing with negative feedback. He says it stems from the way many were raised.

"The reality is, we've had parents who have told us how great we are since we were kids, you know. We listen to Baby Einstein to get smarter. We go to school and suffer from grade inflation, and if we didn't get an A, we went and negotiated. We've built up our self-esteem, and the result is, we can't deal with adversity," Dorsey said.

Millennials: Marriage ideal but parenthood the priority

Why would anyone even want to hire millennials? Are they worth the trouble?

"We want to make a difference from day one, which is totally huge. We show up, and that's why we think we should be vice president," joked Dorsey. "Gen-Y brings a lot of valuable skill sets in terms of thinking outside the box. We don't know what status quo means, but we know that if something doesn't work, we're going to speak up about it."

Dorsey has words of wisdom for companies like HotSchedules that employ a multitude of Gen-Yers: "When millennials show up at the office, you have to provide specific examples of what you expect. And the reason is, we often lack real world experience. So we may have degrees and big expectations, but we don't necessarily know what 'business casual' means.

"You have to give feedback to millennials at least once a month. Other generations were taught if your boss is talking to you, you're doing something wrong. Millennials were taught the exact opposite: If your boss isn't talking to you, you're doing something wrong."

HotSchedules boss Pawlikowski swears by his staff. "I think the biggest thing is that they bring a new level of dedication that we haven't seen in the past."

And his Gen-Y employees, including Gadoci, may have a better perspective on life than generations before them.

"I want to make sure I'm doing things that make me happy," Gadoci said. "So if it means maybe starting a little bit later down a long career path, then I'm absolutely going to take that opportunity to enjoy life."

Perhaps Dorsey sums up the Gen-Y work attitude best: "The truth is, millennials just want something they can put on Facebook!"

SOURCE: <http://www.cnn.com/2011/LIVING/07/20/hot.schedules.millennials/index.html>