

ENGAGING GENERATIONS



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University of Illinois Extension
Northwest Region



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Generations



On the Farm

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ENGAGING GENERATIONS

Radio Generation
Born between 1926 and 1945

Baby Boomers
Born between 1946 and 1965

Generation X
Born between 1966 and 1985



Generation Y
Born between 1986 and 2005



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We can do it!



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Radio Generation
Born between 1926 and 1945

Life Influences

- ✓ Great Depression
- ✓ Electrification
- ✓ World War II
- ✓ Cold War



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Radio Generation

Born between 1926 and 1945

Who We Are

- ✓ Patriotic
- ✓ Conservative
- ✓ Sacrificing
- ✓ Work hard, play by the rules

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ENGAGING GENERATIONS

Radio Generation

Born between 1926 and 1945

Values

- ✓ Family and faith
- ✓ Loyalty, seniority, honesty
- ✓ Self-reliance (no handouts)
- ✓ Personal ownership of property
- ✓ Routine
- ✓ Law and order
- ✓ Being productive
- ✓ Being a contributor

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Radio Generation

Born between 1926 and 1945

Ag Innovations

- ✓ Soil Conservation
- ✓ 1920s: Corn Picker
- ✓ 1930s: Hybrid corn (legitimized the role of science in Agriculture)
- ✓ 1930s: 30% of farmers used tractors
- ✓ One person with a combine took the place of the work of 5-6 people
- ✓ Milking machines became widely used

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Radio Generation

Born between 1926 and 1945

Changes in Ag Education

1920: 31,000 enrolled nationwide in ag education

1940: 584,000 enrolled nationwide in ag education

1941: Extension Agents in every US county

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Don't trust anyone over 30

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Baby Boomers

Born between 1946 and 1965

Life Influences

- ✓ Vietnam War, the draft, and protests
- ✓ Civil rights
- ✓ Television
- ✓ The "Me Generation"

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ENGAGING GENERATIONS
Baby Boomers
 Born between 1946 and 1965
Who We Are

- ✓ Idealistic
- ✓ Liberal
- ✓ Believe the world is our oyster
- ✓ Duty to make the world a better place

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Baby Boomers
 Born between 1946 and 1965
Values

- ✓ Choice
- ✓ Change
- ✓ Early retirement (workaholism)
- ✓ Advancement

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Baby Boomers
 Born between 1946 and 1965
Changes in Ag

- ✓ Over production – decline in prices
- ✓ 1950s: Migration to cities; farms lost
- ✓ 1950s: Part-time farming starts
- ✓ 1950s: Infrastructure improves
- ✓ The face of agriculture changes along with the way the nation eats (self sustaining becomes consumerism)
- ✓ Farm equipment costs rise

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I want my way

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Generation X
 Born between 1966 and 1985
Life Influences

- ✓ Multiculturalism
- ✓ AIDS
- ✓ Technology
- ✓ Latchkey kids

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Generation X
 Born between 1966 and 1985
Who We Are

- ✓ Diverse (difficult to quantify)
- ✓ Realistic
- ✓ Work to live
- ✓ Increased cultural awareness

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Generation X
 Born between 1966 and 1985

- ✓ Appear to be “slackers,” disloyal, arrogant; have short attention spans; aren’t willing to pay dues; need immediate gratification. *(Harvard Business Review)*
- ✓ Downsizing led to decline of loyalty and commitment
- ✓ Loyal to their profession and to their projects

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Generation X
 Born between 1966 and 1985

Values

- ✓ Flexibility
- ✓ Telecommuting
- ✓ Time with family
- ✓ Competition
- ✓ Instant gratification
- ✓ Gifts, perks, and extras

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Generation X
 Born between 1966 and 1985

Gen X Era Changes

- ✓ Political power of farmers lessons
- ✓ Farm Bureau now advocate
- ✓ Labor intensive activities decrease
- ✓ Trading equipment among farmers returns
- ✓ Urban-rural issues return

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Generation Y
 Born between 1986 and 2005

Life Influences

- ✓ Downfall of heroes; youth violence
- ✓ Terrorism and international conflict
- ✓ Reality TV
- ✓ And . . . ?

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Generation Y
 Born between 1986 and 2005

Who We Are

- ✓ Mega-diverse
- ✓ Conservative
- ✓ Redefining tradition and religion
- ✓ And . . . ?

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Generation Y
Born between 1986 and 2005

Values

- ✓ Family
- ✓ Choice
- ✓ "Throw it away"
- ✓ Personal space
- ✓ Immediate gratification
- ✓ Constant stimuli

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Generation Y
Born between 1986 and 2005

What is the impact on the farm?

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Alternative Farm Enterprises

- ✓ Organics
- ✓ Utilities (e.g. wind power)
- ✓ Ethanol
- ✓ Agtourism

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Generations & Technology

1920s Television; polygraph; sound film; sliced bread
 1930s Nylon; FM radio, turboprop and jet engines; ballpoint pens; helicopters; ATMs
 1940s The Slinky; nuclear weapons; microwave ovens; mobile telephones; holography; mobile telephone service
 1950s Liquid Paper; transistor radios; hard drives; digital clocks; VCRs; integrated circuits; snowmobiles; bubble wrap
 1960s T-1 service (in Skokie, Illinois); lasers; computer mouse; video game consoles; Hypertext
 1970s Microprocessors; MRIs; Ethernet; hybrid vehicles; digital cameras; cellular mobile phones; personal computers
 1980s First TCP/IP network; DNA fingerprinting; Digital Light Processing
 1990s World Wide Web; GPS; DVD; Wi-Fi; Viagra
 2000s Digital satellite radio; VoIP; . . . ?

Adapted from Wikipedia.com 28

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Generations & the Workplace

Radio Generation: Discipline and consistency

Baby Boomers: Process and output, not implications and outcomes

Generation X: Relationships, outcomes, their rights and skills

Generation Y: Flexibility

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Generations & the Workplace

Radio Generation

- ✓ Formal
- ✓ Communicate face-to-face
- ✓ Looking for logic
- ✓ Traditional recognition (plaques, photos, etc.)

Baby Boomers

- ✓ Process-oriented; steps toward defined goals
- ✓ Stated objectives and desired results expected of team
- ✓ Love pep talks
- ✓ Recognition with wide public profile (e.g., company newsletter)

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Generations & the Workplace

Generation X

- ✓ Tell them what needs to be done, but not how to do it
- ✓ Give multiple tasks, but allow them to set priorities
- ✓ Ask for their reactions and opinions
- ✓ Provide informal recognition (e.g., days off)

Generation Y

- ✓ Provide opportunities for continuous learning and building skills
- ✓ Know their goals and explain how they fit into the big picture
- ✓ Be more of a coach, less of a boss
- ✓ Communicate informally, through email and hallway conversations

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Generations Today

Baby Boomers: Idealism has diminished

- ✓ Working more hours
- ✓ Experiencing more stress
- ✓ Less room in upper management with flatter, downsized organizations
- ✓ Paying for kids' college *and* parents' care
- ✓ Working longer (though not necessarily at the same job)

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Generations Today

Gen X: Mobility is key

- ✓ Job mobility (within first 4 years); expect to be laid-off; "free agents"
- ✓ Job satisfaction based heavily on relationships with supervisors
- ✓ Need consistent positive reinforcement

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Generations Today

Gen Y: Expect upheaval

- ✓ Almost as many as Baby Boomers
- ✓ Ever-changing skill set
- ✓ Basic education of far lower quality; dropout rates high nationwide
- ✓ Need consistent positive reinforcement

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Leadership

Radio Generation: Formal relationships, structure, hierarchy, directive, solo decisionmaking

Baby Boomers: Stars of the show, casual, consensus, participatory decisionmaking, teams

Gen X: Fairness, straightforward, access to information, competence, flat structures

Generation Y: Structure, goal setting, clear expectations

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Use your own generational strengths to meet the needs of other generations

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The greatest discovery of any generation is that a human being can alter his life by altering his attitude.

William James, American philosopher and psychologist Leader of the philosophical movement of Pragmatism 1842–1910

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The slide features a title bar at the top with the text 'ENGAGING GENERATIONS' in a bold, sans-serif font. Below the title bar is a large white area containing a quote in a standard serif font. Underneath the quote is a smaller line of text identifying the author, William James, and his role as a leader of the Pragmatism movement. At the bottom left of the slide, there is a small logo for the University of Illinois and a copyright notice for 2008. The number '37' is centered at the bottom of the slide. The slide is framed by a thin black border, and there are vertical colored bars (green, blue, and purple) on the right side.