Speaking the Same Language: Multi-Generational Communication

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RETTEW

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Things to Keep in Mind:

- Preferences are shaped by who raised you
- There are no rules when it comes to generational preferences
- Preferences are shaped by who influenced you
- There are no lines in the sand when it comes to aligning with a particular generation
- Preferences are shaped by who work raised you

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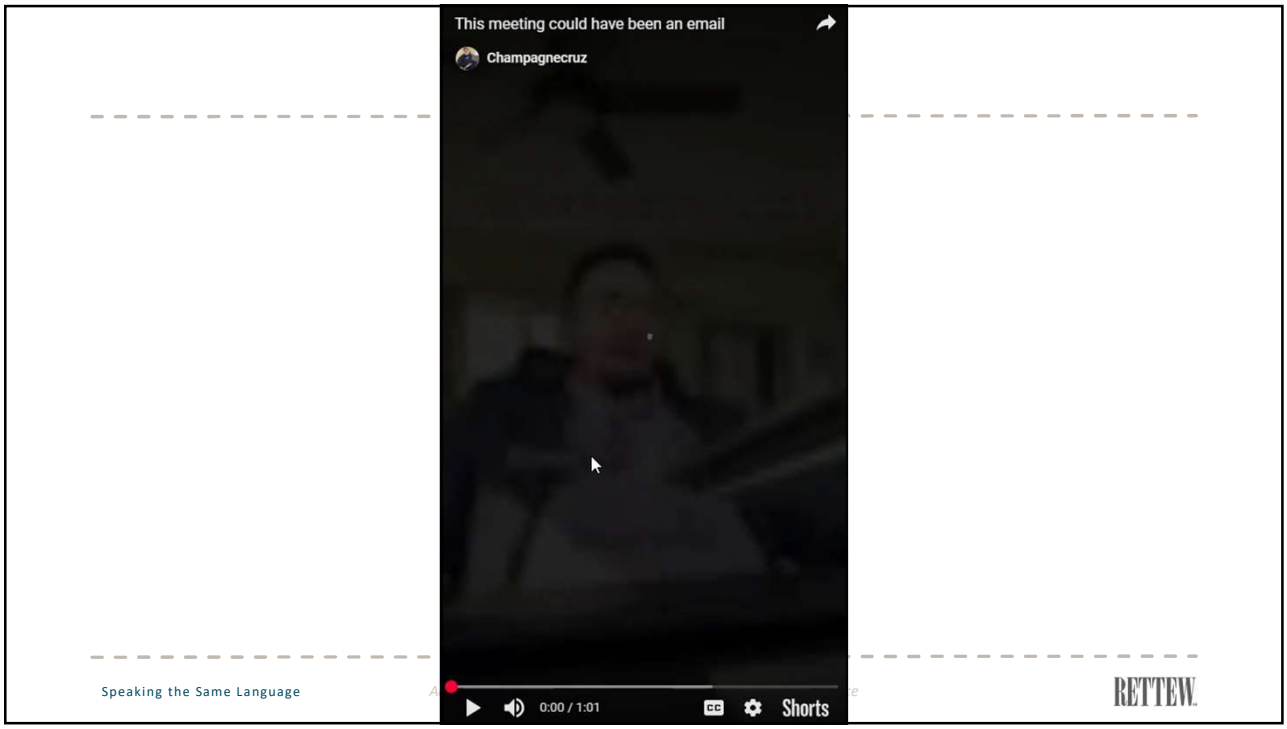

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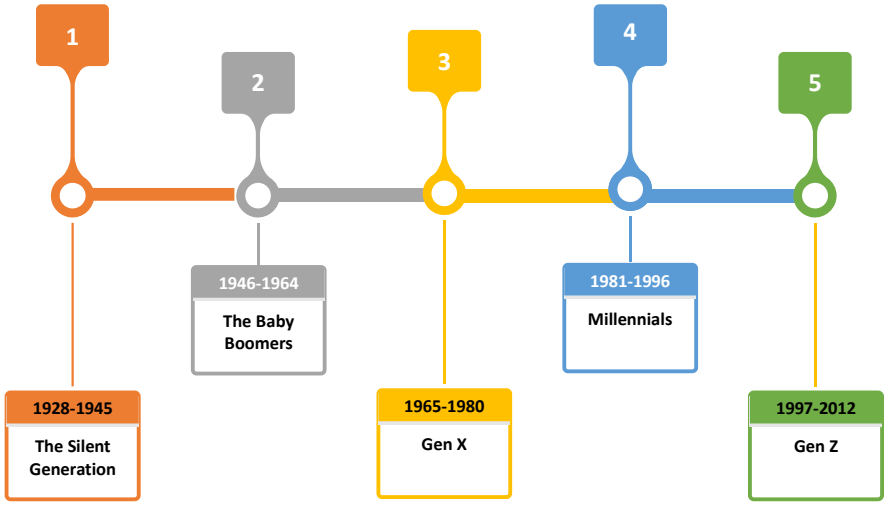
Communication - Generations



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Communication – The Silent Generation

Demographics

Born between 1928 and 1945
Age 80+

Who are they?

- Oldest generation working
- Raised without technology
- Lived through difficult economic times
- Strong core values and hard workers

Ideal Workplace

- Where there is offline options for task completion and project management
- Personal interactions
- Thrives on face-to-face communication

How to Manage

- In-person discussions
- Encourage them to share their knowledge and expertise
- Respect, hierarchy, and experience play a crucial role at work.

Preferred Communication

- Formal ways of communication (written and face-to-face)
- Appreciate being consulted

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Communication – The Baby Boomers

Demographics

Born between 1946 and 1964
Age 61-79

Who are they?

- Wealthiest and most influential generation in the world
- Significant part of the modern-day workforce
- Lived through many violent events

Ideal Workplace

- Job security is a top priority
- Thrive on formal and structured work settings
- Comfortable with group meetings and work flexibility

How to Manage

- Value being recognized for their knowledge and skills
- Happy to share knowledge
- Great candidates to mentor younger employees

Preferred Communication

- Prefer face-to-face communications
- Value formality, directness, and background information
- Rely on email and phones for work communication

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Communication – Gen X

Demographics

Born between 1965 and 1980
Age 45-60

Who are they?

- Self-reliant, resourceful, and industrious
- Shaped by the rise of personal computers

Ideal Workplace

- One that puts more emphasis on individuality, has physical and psychological space
- Flexibility to manage workload
- Invented phrase "work-life balance"

How to Manage

- Allow autonomy to complete work
- Resourceful assets they are well-established in their careers
- Shun micromanagement

Preferred Communication

- Flexible and informal communication
- Emails are preferred over phone calls and meetings
- Only communicating during work hours

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Communication – Millennials

Demographics

Born between 1981 and 1996
Age 29-44

Who are they?

- Started working during the Great Recession
- Grew up with the Internet

Ideal Workplace

- Making the world a better place
- Fully embrace remote and hybrid work
- Prefer inclusive and diverse work settings

How to Manage

- Value transparency and honesty
- Don't focus on number of hours worked, rather quality of work
- Value well-being initiatives at work

Preferred Communication

- Texts, IMs, chatting, emailing
- Do not prefer in-person meetings or conversations

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Communication – Gen Z

Demographics

Born between 1997 and 2012
Age 13-28

Who are they?

- Digital native – dependent on smart phones
- Focused on people and personalities, not race or ethnicity

Ideal Workplace

- Value work security
- Ideal workplace is flexible with completing tasks and working hours
- Social responsibility is important

How to Manage

- Prefer highly collaborative management relationships
- Believes a strong company mission helps them learn and grow professionally
- Thrive by being mentored, coached, and taught by senior employees

Preferred Communication

- Transparent and immediate
- Rely on video and voice communication
- Do most work on phones

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Lead Using Individual Preferences

1928-1945 The Silent Generation
- Provide an enjoyable work environment
- Emphasize stability
- Create opportunities for contribution

1946-1964 The Baby Boomers
- Give specific goals and deadlines
- Allow them to be mentors
- Offer coaching-style feedback

1965-1980 Gen X
- Give immediate feedback
- Provide flexible work arrangements and work-life balance
- Extend opportunities for personal growth

1981-1996 Millennials
- Allow for flexible schedule and work assignments
- Results-oriented, not time oriented
- Get to know them personally and give immediate feedback

1997-2012 Gen Z
- Offer opportunities to work on multiple projects simultaneously
- Ensure work-life balance
- Support self-directedness and independence

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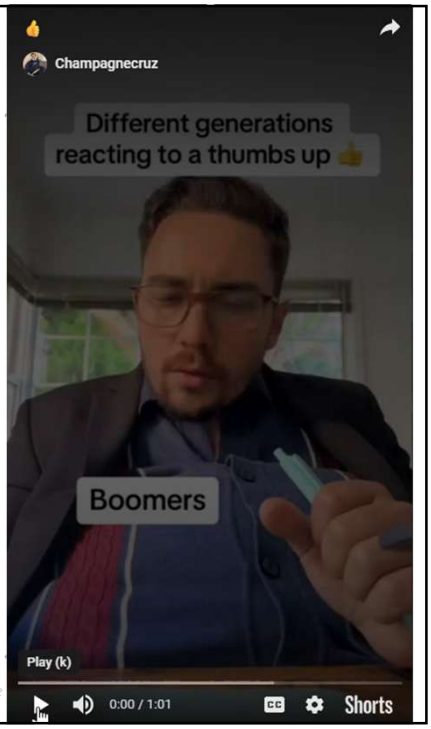
Why is Communication Important?

Misunderstanding, miscommunication, misconception



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Why is Communication Important?

Misunderstanding, miscommunication, misconception

I'll have that to you tomorrow morning ☺

Stop by my office today before you leave.

tbh, that shouldve been done last week

I NEED YOU TO CALL ME

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Why is Communication Important?

Misunderstanding, miscommunication, misconception

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Why is Communication Important?

Misunderstanding, miscommunication, misconception

Speaking the Same Language Act Like an Owner | Value Relationships | Exemplify Excellence RETTEW

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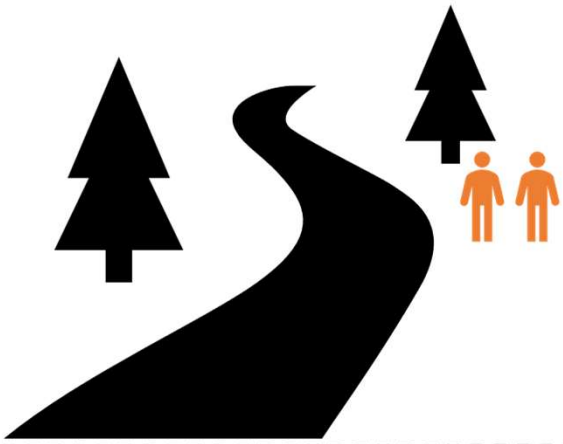

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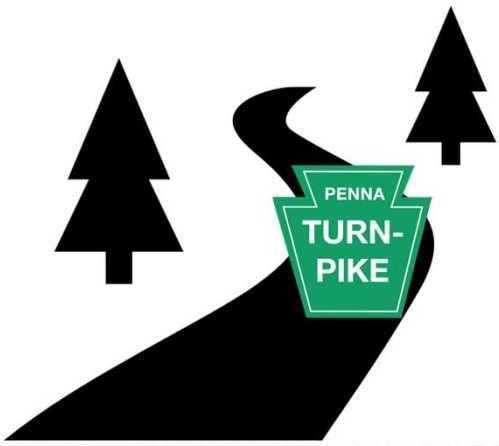

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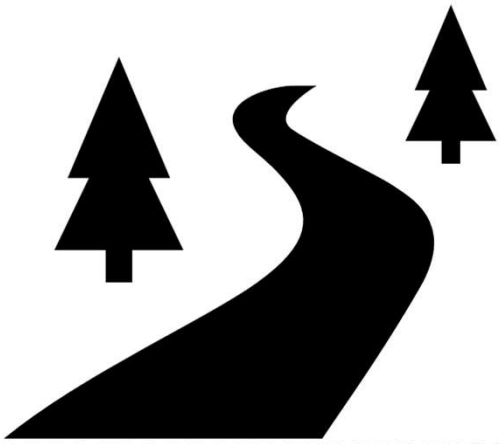

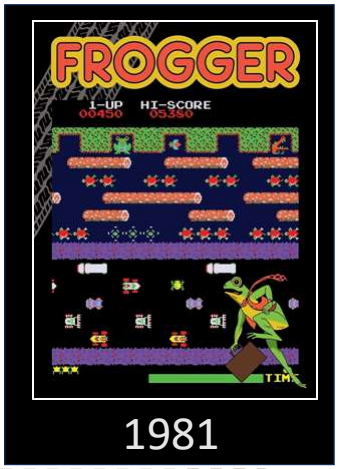

1981

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Communication Best Practices

- Support frequent communication while also having generational or preference awareness.
- Create a learning environment.
- Be a role model.
- Aim for a salad bowl, not a melting pot.
- Respond to communications using the same channel it was received.
- Give each other some grace and assume positive intent.

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Path to Better Communication

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How would you prefer I communicate with you?

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Thank you!

How would you prefer to communicate with me?

Connect on LinkedIn

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