

Communication gap among the generations

[Sociology](#), [Communication](#)



Executive Summary: This report is an analysis of the different communication styles among Baby boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y/Millennials. The report discusses the different mindsets, values, and goals among the different generations. The differences above make it hard for organizations to place emphasis on the real issue; the communication gap among the different generations due to different communication styles. The report recommends ways for organizations to integrate the different communication styles to create a more driven, cohesive, and successful organization.

The research enforces the fact of the differences in communication styles among different generations causes a communication gap in organizations, making organizations less effective. The research further reveals the gap in communication amongst the different generations makes it difficult to manage Baby boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y/Millennials. The research shows that bridging the communication gap will decrease misunderstandings and motivate the different generations to be more interdependent and team oriented.

Finally, the research reveals integration of the different communication styles among the generations will create effective and successful organizations. According to the research communication is the most intricate part of any successful business relationship. There is a 20 year gap between each generation. Organizations' inability to bridge the 20 year gap will be a cost factor, make organizations less efficient, and dismiss interdependency amongst the different generations. It is recommended: Organizations need to ensure the employees' goals are aligned with the organizational goals *

<https://assignbuster.com/communication-gap-among-the-generations/>

Ongoing training and workshops to ensure all employees are knowledgeable of the organization's product Closing the Communication Gap Communication is the most intricate element of any type of relationship; whether business or personal. In corporate America the different styles of communication among Baby-boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y has caused a communication gap in today's organizations.

Integrating the different communication styles across generations will improve the effectiveness of communication in organizations, bridging the communication gap to create a more driven, cohesive, and successful organization. The communication gap among the different generations has made communicating difficult for individuals to work effectively and efficiently. The lack of attention organizations give the communication gap among generations makes organizations less capable of reaching their organizational goals.

From my experience when communicating with Baby Boomers I receive pushback, Generation X is more receptive, and Generation Y/Millennial will receive the message, yet look for an incentive. Many organizations are unable to attract motivated or driven employees due to unsuccessful attempts to integrate the different communication styles among the different generations. For example, the wages, benefits and incentives offered to the different generations differ due to the time each group entered the workplace.

The younger generations are not attracted to organizations who are not trying to bridge the gap of communication among the different generations. The younger generations aren't attracted to businesses that aren't trying to
<https://assignbuster.com/communication-gap-among-the-generations/>

bridge the gap because they know that there are thousands of other businesses that are up to date with the current technology. Example, Verizon and Apple give their employees devices to help with training. By doing so, employees will have more of a hand on training, versus reading multiple books on the device(s).

Baby boomers and Generation X make up the largest part of the workforce, because Baby boomers were born in a rich economic era filled with job opportunities and stable their work ethics and moral are stronger than those of Generation X and Generation Y/Millennial. Baby boomers are more self absorbed, and individualized. Baby boomers are not fans of teams and have to be trained to work in a team environment. Baby boomers prefer a directive leadership style approach. They want to know exactly what to do, how to do it, and when to do it. Generation X is more innovative, team oriented, and self sufficient.

This generation will research an issue and make a decision based upon their knowledge and good judgment; they are entrepreneurs. Generation Y/Millennial brings back to the workforce a strong sense of self worth. They welcome feedback because it helps advance their career to the next level. Generation Y/Millennial communicates openly and is always looking for ways to improve the work process. Baby boomers live to work, Generation X work to live, and Generation Y/Millennial work to satisfy personal goals; the different work characteristics and birth eras makes organizational communication difficult.

Baby boomers do not trust authority therefore they avoid communication with superiors; Generation X has an informal approach to superiors they are

<https://assignbuster.com/communication-gap-among-the-generations/>

not afraid to voice their opinions or refutes, and Generation Y/ Millennial communicate openly. The different styles of communication among the three generations cause different perspectives, thoughts and problem solving methods to arise when organizations are trying to complete a task. Organizations bridging the communication gap among the generations will enhance the values and knowledge of their employees.

By doing so, this motivates them to align their personal goals with the goals of the organization, which contributes success of the organization. The different views on communication causes the generation to take focus off of the goals the organization is trying to achieve and put more focus on how the company is communicating the goal. Once organizations find a way to integrate the communication styles of the different generations the organization will be able to motivate their employees to be more driven towards achieving the goals of the organization.

If employees feel they are not receiving the information they need to fulfill the role of their position. Organizations have to find a way to get Baby boomers onboard with electronic communications. Most Baby boomers shy away from text message, email, social media and other electronic communications. Generation X and Generation Y/Millennial prefer the electronic communication; concise and saves time. Organizations do not consider the communication gap when considering the elements that are causing the organization to fail.

Organizations do not realize ineffective communication among the different generations affects the quality of the teams and causing confusion among the members. Baby boomers are workaholics, while Generation X and

<https://assignbuster.com/communication-gap-among-the-generations/>

Generation Y/Millennial do what is required and go home. Baby boomers will stay until the project is complete; Generation X and Generation Y will leave the work for the next day. Organizations have to learn how to deal with the differences among the generations to improve the drive of the members.

To get everyone to focus more on bringing the different generations together, organizations have to stop categorizing people into groups based on their birth era. Organizations need to understand employees who are more driven will produce more high quality work. To put the drive in employees organizations have to know what motivates all their employees and how it affects them personally. Organizations have to close the communication gap among the difference generations to effectively deliver feedback and receive feedback from employees.

To create team cohesiveness, organizations must bridge the communication gap so the different generations will be interdependent on one another. The generation gap eliminates team cohesiveness because some team members are unable to effectively express themselves or are too self absorbed to ask for understanding of a problem. The different styles of communication among the generations can cause individuals to be stubborn towards change, while others welcome change and see change as an opportunity for growth.

Bridging the communication gap will prevent manipulation of the organizational system for self gain and put more focus on developing the team. An organization must have great communication skills to be successful. Organizations must be willing to put forth the extra effort to successfully communicate among the different generations. Organizations

<https://assignbuster.com/communication-gap-among-the-generations/>

have been unsuccessful in many ventures due to lack of loyalty, lack of productivity, and lack of respect caused by the gap in communication. The gap in communication has caused organizations to downsize and lose customers.

Organizations have to give individuals the cause and effect of successfully integrating the different communication styles. The organization has to let the employees know how the integration of communication styles can be a benefit for them. Due to the birth era different generations are comfortable communicating face to face versus using an electronic source. Organizations have to respect the difference in the styles of communicating and create a work environment where people aren't afraid to voice their opinions to make the organization successful.

Organizations inability to accommodate different communication styles and promote open communication has caused them to be unsuccessful. Organizations have experienced cost issues due to the communication. The cost associated with resolving the communication gap is minimal. Changing the way things are viewed is a key component to organizations being successful. Promoting organizational communication among the different generations will assist organizations with successfully integrating the different communication styles. The organization has to be more aware and put them in a position to apply the strengths of each generation.

Once organizations understand the different styles of communication the gap will begin to close. Organizations have to do their research to understand the communication styles of the different generations. Organizations will need to establish a relationship among the generations to

<https://assignbuster.com/communication-gap-among-the-generations/>

integrate the different communication styles, increase employee drive and be more successful. In order to save highly efficient employees, organizations will need to take more time to construct plans to integrate the different communication styles. Today Corporate American employs various generations across different departments.

The mixture of Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y has caused conflicts with communication due to misunderstanding. Implementing a plan or strategy that will capture the key values and personality of each generation is a way to avoid challenges due to the communication gap among the different generations. The different communication styles of the generations is more difficult to understand or respect the difference among the generations. In 2011, Hahn stated understanding generational differences can be a source of creative strength and an opportunity or a source of stifling stress and conflict (p. 20). Communication is the most intricate element of any type of relationship whether business or personal. In corporate America the different styles of communication among Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y causes a communication gap in today's organizations. Integrating the different communication styles across generations will improve the effectiveness of communication in organizations, bridging the communication gap to create a more drive, cohesive, and successful organization. Management would really need to step it up when it comes to managing multiple generations.

The different generations will be able to gain a better understanding of the values, work characteristics, and customs of each other's generation if organizations are able to bridge the communication gap. Bridging the

communication gap will decrease misinterpretation of information at meetings and will create a more driven organization. According to the article “Managing Multiple Generations,” familiarization with the characteristics and core values of each generation will help organizations to better understand the differences in the communication style of the generations and lead to improved team work (Hahn, 2011, p. 20). Once corporations gain an understanding of the differences in communication style among the generations and begin to implement work processes bridging the communication gap they will be able to attract and retain quality employees. According to the article, “Managing Multiple Generations,” the outcome of bridging the communication gap among the different generations will decrease workplace stress and tension creates a stronger more driven organization (Hahn, 2011, p. 120). Remember that your research has to be tied to your specific problem.

Baby boomers make up most of corporate America, are very loyal and are very serious about their careers or job duties. According to the article, “Managing Multiple Generations,” this population grew up in a time of economic prosperity (Hahn, 2011, p. 120). Baby boomers are now being managed by people who are the ages of their children. For example, I have a friend and her manager is 15 years younger than she is. When her manager instructs her to do a task she hesitates due to the age gap and the difference in communication style.

She reacts this way because she feels the younger generation does not take the time to weigh the pros and cons of a situation, they go with what is good for right now, which isn't good for the organization. By being a Baby Boomer,

she's resistant to change and feel as if a thirty year old is experienced enough to be a manager. She enjoys working independently and defines herself through her work title. Today many corporations gravitate to team environments; Baby boomers are unfavorable to team environments. Baby boomers have strong work ethics and measure work with self worth and fulfillment.

Baby boomers are the group that arrives early to work and views overtime as a moral obligations (Hahn, 2011, p. 120 Organizations identifying the different communication style among the generations help them use the correct tools and sources to effectively communicate with their employees. Once an organization implements an effective communication style accepted by Baby boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y/Millennial have overcome the obstacle that has caused many organizations to lack cohesiveness and the communication gap due to different generations in the workplace. Organizations are more successful when they effectively integrate the different communication styles across generations. Without great communication skills an organization will fail. According to Gibson, Greenwood, and Murphy (2010) organizations have effectively integrated the different communication styles among the different generations when they are able to identify the unique characteristics and values of each generation (p. 40).

Once the unique characteristics and values are identified, the organization creates processes that manage and reconcile the differences in the communication styles among Baby boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y/Millennial (Gibson, Greenwood ; Murphy, 2010, p. 42). I have noticed in my

workplace how management has implemented different ways to bridge the communication gap among Baby boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y/Millennial. For example, they will send out an email advising they are having refresher courses on the different electronic communication applications.

Sending out a mass email to everyone in the organizations does not stereotype a particular group; it allows anyone the opportunity to attend a training class to become more familiar with the different media applications. According to Gibson, Greenwood, and Murphy (2010) by doing the refresher trainings organizations are able to reconcile the different styles of communications among the different generations, and understand the strengths of each generation (p. 42).

The refresher courses also prevent generational exclusivity (Gibson, Greenwood ; Murphy, 2010, p. 43). Once the company effectively integrates the different communication styles among the different generations, they'll be able to send the right message to the right channel to each generation; therefore, creating a more successful organization. Effective communication is the key in any successful relationship; an organization, just like a marriage, will fail if there's a gap in communication.

According to Gibson, Greenwood ; Murphy (2010) understanding and accommodating value differences, organizations can effectively close the communication gap among the different generations and eliminate the barriers to attaining a successful organization (p. 43.) The ultimate question is, what would we need to do in order to bridge the gap? According to all the

data and research, an organization would need to make sure the employee's goals and way of thinking is in line with the company's organizational goals.

The company should also conduct workshops to help the employees bring efficiency to the organization. Motivation and incentives also play a big part in generation gaps. An example would be, some generations would be motivated by higher salaries and/or bonuses, while other generations would be motivated by recognitions/awards. Another factor would be, technology. As I stated earlier in the paper, Verizon and Apple gives more of a hands on training, rather than administering paper manuals/test. Technology is the key in this age, and technology will make or break a company's success.

The younger generation IM (instant message), send text, and/or emails as their source of communication (indirect). On the other hand, the older generations would choose more of a direct source of communication. With the job markets changing, the demands for all generations are needed. The key would be to balance the generations to utilize all the advantages.

References: Bailey, A. , ; Ngwenyama, O. (2010). Bridging the Generation Gap in ICT Use: Interrogating Identity, Technology and Interactions in Community Telecenters. *Information Technology For Development*, 16(1), 62-82. doi: 10. 1080/02681100903566156 Hahn, J. A. (2011). Managing Multiple Generations: Scenarios From the Workplace. *NursingForum*, 46(3), 119- 127. doi: 10. 1111/j. 1744-6198. 2011. 00223. x Murphy Jr. , E. F. , Gibson, J. , ; Greenwood, R. A. (2010). Analyzing Generational Values Among Managers and Non-Managers for Sustainable Organizational Effectiveness. *SAM Advanced Management Journal* (07497075), 75(1), 33-55. Ochs, L. , ;

Adams, R. (2009). Generational stereotyping and group communication. *Radiation Therapist*, 18(2), 155-158.