

GAASHRM Diversity Café “Gallery Walk”

Question:

How can you engage individuals at all levels in your organization around diversity and inclusion?

Café Conversation Responses and Themes:

Get people together

- “All hands’ meetings
- All-staff meetings with “mix and mingle” time for 1-1 interaction
- Break up groups
- “War room”: Share ideas
- Bring new employee into culture
- Business resource groups: Hispanic network; black network; gay, lesbian, bisexual group, Asian resource group, international resource group
- Business teams
- Celebrations/food
- Cross functional teams
- Diversity team that works on challenges, orientation, and values checks
- Establish groups with BB/Gen X; Trad/Gen X
- Exchange program between USA and India
- Find interconnections between functional groups
- Fun activities
- Get suggestions from employees: Survey, employee outings, activities: Bowling
- Have upper level mgt on board and participating
- Holiday events
- Include everyone in meetings
- Invite “outsiders” into the group
- Lunch
- Lunch at end of each month for all employees
- Lunch, coffee with upper management
- Field trip with department
- Match up different generations
- Off-site meetings
- Pizza parties/co picnic/ co Christmas party
- Physical office space
- Pot luck: Chili cook off; carnival activities; fun activities every 8 weeks, mix up teams, ave. age 35
- Pull people into the group to avoid “bullying” situations
- Sales outings
- Social events, all forms

- Talk and listen to each other
- Use combinations of live meetings, webcams, phone conferences to connect across distances
- Use/force generations together
- Work teams

Market diversity/inclusion

- Advantages promoted
- Committee/champion
- “Creating a buzz”
- Beef up communication
- Demonstrate benefit of diversity to all stakeholders
- Diversity message on internet
- Diversity to develop and compete in today and tomorrow
- Help others know the benefit and value of diversity
- Identify the benefit of diversity
- Leadership needs to promote and believe in diversity
- Need HR metrics to support spending \$ on diversity efforts
- Quarterly communication: Video clip; pamphlet; email
- Show leaders examples of success
- Remind people of advantages of working with different generations/cultures
- Start with a plan to educate the top mgt. Think through how they learn, absorb info and change behavior
- Tools to spread the diversity messages
- Top down
- Top down approach
- Use company intranet as a communication tool

Educate

- “Grass roots” training
- Diversity training
- Diversity training: mandatory part at orientation for new hires
- Educate employees on different types of diversity
- Educate employees on what diversity is
- Educate leadership; consider videos, references, resources, long range strategic plan; dialogue
- Educate yourself on all departments: problems, issues, challenges
- Generational training at orientation
- Harassment training
- Mentoring to help boost engagement
- Orientations
- Repeated diversity events, not just at orientation
- Repetitions
- Training after 6 months of working at company, not first thing

Resources/Techniques

- “When Generations Collide” is a great book

Recruiting

- Age/gender specific recruiting: refresher programs/2nd careers
- Create opportunities for group dialogues/brainstorming about the benefits of effectively recruiting diverse populations and what that recruitment would look like
- Grass roots projects for difficult hires; male nurses; women in law enforcement.
- Work hard on inclusion with pioneers in field
- Recruitment: social websites
- Work with hiring committees

Misc.

- “Self worth”
- Actions speak louder than words
- Adapt to change
- Age is only a number
- Asking rather than telling; invite dialogue
- Be a part of something
- Be well!
- Break tradition
- Breaking down stereotypes
- Bullies
- Code of conduct
- Common tasks using each’s talents
- Consider the goal and how to measure then let the team figure out how to do it
- Creativity, innovation, efficiency
- Demystify people (mgt)
- Discovering commonalities
- Do not typecast
- Embracing change
- Engaged in working similar to engaged in inclusion/diversity: Bell curve: 16% disengaged; 68% semi-engaged; 16% highly engaged
- Establish language proficiency guidelines
- Feel important
- Flexible scheduling
- Focus on strengths
- Gradual change over time
- Hiring underutilized areas; we all bring some form of diversity to work; we have different rearings, ancestors, and experiences
- Homegrown candidate’s scholarships for high school students
- How to cross pollinate?
- How to deal with trust issues?

- HR challenge: to baby-step changes
- Ideas for retaining diverse people?
- Judy's game
- Leaders walking the talk
- Leadership not always the expert
- Legal: Creating negative environment; older workforce\
- Life mentoring
- Look at how people learn; do different things and not just one thing one way
- Make it fun
- NEO
- Plant the seed!
- Presentations by associates/employees on their grass roots
- Private vs. Public sector: Use changing world video. Did you know?
- Respect
- Setting agenda for meetings in advance
- Share information
- Strengths individual/team matrix: Quadrants are: at work, outside work, past, present. (Synko Associates)
- Themes: education award; diversity; group dialogue, visual, leadership expectations
- Tie efforts to philosophy and values of the organization
- Time spent 1 hour or more?
- Understanding/embrace of diversity to be successful throughout entire organization
- WIFM?
- Young vs. old

Question:

How can I benefit from the following to help me develop my knowledge, skills and abilities?

- The Traditionalist's length and depth of experience
- The Baby Boomers' knowledge of "who's who"
- The Generation Xer's technical savvy and entrepreneurial spirit
- The Generation Yer's/Millennials ability to use technology and multi-task

Café Conversation Responses:

Discussion points from 1st table:

- Everybody is a star!
- A big need for increased listening skills!
- No Typecasting!
- Questioning of knowledge due to age/"shop around"
- Education: Learn from all – see different values as a positive. Present diverse image. Willing to be continuous learner.
- Open door of communication. Ask questions – is this the way we have always done it? The only way?
- Enlightenment – be accepting, cautious on judgments, change is good, make time to get clarity in HR – this is more important than ever in order to work effectively with all groups.
- Top down and bottom up. Need champion to do the push. Benefits/values.
- Veteran/seasoned – use as mentors. Take responsibility to be involved. Fear of the unknown. Baggage of kids/parents.
- Be open – team listening. Get better definitions of expectations. Provide clarification of the basics.
- Build trust – this is not always easy to do. Don't stereotype "kids" (watch for controls of another group). Flexibility important and more education of supervisors.
- We all need to listen (not merely by generations). Too many assumptions. We tell – not share. Don't share enough. Computer knowledge is greater w/ less face to face. With more technical communication, the generational gaps are felt more. (X/Y)
- Traditional & Baby Boomers are more alike than different. Knowledge of subject important.
- Play to generational strengths. Straightest line not always computer/internet based. Get it done by capitalizing on skills and abilities. Attention span, power point presentation: adverse to touching paper. (Typecasting)
- Mode of communication varies. Tend to focus on differences rather than similarities. Identify strengths and then leverage.

Discussion Points from 2nd Table

- Respect – use ‘café etiquette’ along with skills. Mix generational on projects/teams. Project manager needs to facilitate all generations to listen, understand, contribute, etc. Managers play key role as model.
- 1. Refer to traditionalist to seek clarification in problem-solving. More exposure.
- 2. Baby Boomers – connect with other organizations, may help seal the deal, who you know “networking” very important. Since there is an issue in connecting with other age groups, having someone within your organization can continue contact. (attitude same level) BB deals best with other BB’s. Get past ‘gatekeeper’. Able to open doors. Person to person contact better than email.
- 3. Generation Xers – new ideas, high energy, eager to please & succeed, short-cuts, reunite/close age gaps.
- 4. Generation Yers/Millennium – Stuck on technology, don’t like to use paper & pencil, close-minded, push you to be tech-savvy, multi-taskers.
- All groups are necessary to assist with finding balance. Traditionalists mentor individuals in certain education programs or job training to develop skills. Baby boomers create opportunities within organizations because they have established many contacts (people skills/networking). Xers eliminate papers by creating strategies & databases to maintain files & information.
- Benefits of seniority – traditionalist knows what’s been done in the past and how it worked (could be positive or negative). Baby boomers have less fear with technology and people than traditionalists.
- Generation Xers – willing to share knowledge & technology. How do we all work together? Patience, assumption that you have to work together, education/training, cultural understanding, etc.

Discussion Points from 3rd Table

- When all generation of workers take personal responsibility and this leads to greater healthy self-awareness, then the long term solutions and increased organizational profitability will follow. (Modeling this process is effective.)
- Creating opportunities for ‘informal conversations’ (i.e. coffee with different managers based on their expertise) can bridge more gaps between generational workers than top down management required programs.
- Pick a day when a senior person is paired with Gen X or Y to mentor each other. This helps promote a level playing field & mutual respect for what each person contributes to the organization.
- Think out of the box regarding communication activities (email vs. face to face)
- Create projects that bring all generation of employees together.
- Create a ‘walk in my shoes’ program. Build in opportunities where employees can compliment one another.
- Key is communication – at new hire orientations hunt for people in a department and talk to them about generational issues, company, position, etc.
- Take the fear out of change. Listen to what everyone has to say. Recognize different ways of doing things. Keep an open mind. Have projects/committees staffed by all generations (diversify teams), play on strengths and build in legacy development.

- Show contribution to the bottom line, where possible. Cross-pollination of skills – gain & share knowledge transfer.
- Give tasks/projects based on skills to let employees 'shine' at any age.
- Generation Y come in with excellent technical skills & need less training – share with traditionalists and baby boomers.
- Practice 'mentoring on the spot or mentoring in the moment'.
- Include generational information (games or just educate) or networking opportunities in orientation.
- Creative communications – email-free Fridays.
- Appreciate the differences among your generational workers.
- What's your legacy? Reward to sustain. Customization in training is important.

Discussion Points from 4th Table

- Identify what knowledge is important. Work on the overlap between knowledge transfer and succession planning.
- Ask questions – is it worth changing the culture given the time certain employees have left with the company?
- Use a variety of communication methods – email, phone calls, in person, etc.
- Survey staff to find out their preferences and how they want to receive information.
- Practice respect for every person, regardless of who they are.
- Cross train
- Learn what is important to each generation.
- Identify learning styles and length of time. "Dragon" utilize technology. Transfer of ideas, knowledge base. Mentoring & job sharing. Identify champion.
- Open communication – merge the boxes.
- Is the way we were trained the only way? Understanding needed between Traditional and X generations.
- Gain knowledge of the differences between all generations and then identify a champion.
- Support technology – dragon speech recognition. Mentoring – job sharing. Frustration w/ technology. X & Y babysit with technology for traditionalists & boomers. Tailor your technology support training.
- Understanding – because one generation can do something different, doesn't make them any less.
- Have crucial conversations – create a safe zone to talk!
- Say some of the harder things to hear in a kind, open dialogue manner.
- Retain knowledge base through succession planning. Avenue of processing/transferring information via IT. Dragon – automatic dictation. Can help with mentoring between generations. Long term tech support – tailor training to level of trainee (some are quicker to pick up than others).
- Show respect. Brainstorm ideas on techniques for handling specific tasks (among different generational groups).
- Rote learning/teaching (Traditionalist pass knowledge to baby boomers, etc.)

- Is there anything inherently wrong with different generational behavior? Listen and learn before interacting. Establish the goal and then let the groups of generations working together figure out how to get there.
- The leader of the organization needs to embrace whatever process is used to remedy inter-generational issues.
- Succession plan – use technology, job share, mentor, tech support and training flexibility. Expose all generations to the differences between generations.
- Foster an environment where one on one interactions can take place. Where employees can meet others as 'people' rather than 'employees'.
- Learn what is important to each generation.

Discussion Points from 5th Table

- Generation X: Job changes & variety of experiences. Generation Y: Technology Assistance. Traditionalists: experience/direction/trends. Baby Boomers: Experience. Meetings: bring & invite all generations.
- Introduce unique ideas. Find industry expert.
- Keep an open mind and practice cross-training.
- How to overcome the fear of change. Be consistent in growing and changing with the company. Set up mentoring between generations. Educate across generations what each values. (Flexible time is huge to Gen. Y)
- Experience with long years of service employees. While growing, offer more benefits that attract younger workers.
- Technological advancements as organizational tools and time savers.
- Be aware of the benefits from learning from staff that belong to diverse generational groups. Keep this benefit in mind when forming/leading a team.
- Change is good!
- Network widely – different generations learn from each other.
- Why do the traditionalists 'get stuck in a rut'?
- Evolution of generations – influences always with them, but new influences may help them change/mature.
- Younger workers can bring in new, fresh ideas.

Question:

Considering there are different generations in the workplace, how do you create and sustain a respectful and inclusive environment?

Café Conversation Responses:

- How do we get past intellectualizing and move to behavior change?
- Golden Rule policy?
- Show your work: Metrics EE, Satisfaction Surveys, Exit Interviews
- Educate top management: start on top management; starts from the top; managers can help ID when generational differences create conflicts; trickle down from the top; leaders model-create communication instead of diversity; top management buy-in
- Transfer/Sharing of knowledge Educate-leaders and staff give them tools for problem solving and conflict resolution
- Turnover
- Communicate using different styles; communicate inclusion; Lunch and Learn; share why/how of various generations
- Coaching after training
- Listen, Listen, Listen
- With conflict, address and move on
- "Define expectations"
- Reframe it for each generation
- Social vs. work environment
- "Reality job shadowing"
- Mentoring both ways-encourage mentoring trend analysis
- Luncheon
- Value communication differences
- Focus on business knowledge
- Involve entire team in decisions
- Work hard; get out; ear to the ground; be connected; move on, take care of it immediately and move on
- Help avoid pitfalls
- Be clear about results and flexible in how the work gets done
- No passive/aggressive
- Reward consistent behavior
- Speak mind
- Can't be all talk-follow up and DO
- Work/Life balance
- Sensitize
- Training/leadership ROI
- Set Limits
- Focus on the common ground

- Pair up (Maybe pair a Baby Boomer with a Gen X to gain benefits-especially on projects)
- Eliminate groups
- Manner in which you speak
- "Break the Ice"
- Awareness Education Team building
- Open to change
- Gen X and Mil-Slow Down! Learn from the others
- Technology-being able to move with the environment and changes
- Creating longevity
- Salaries are equal for generations
- Open discussions to understand traditions/cultures
- Industry influences
- Create first impression
- Create value of all employees
- Open door trust
- Accept what you can't/shouldn't change
- Pick your battles
- Learn about different values/priorities
- Humor in the workplace
- Do not typecast
- Awareness in a cross generation
- A person may be:
 - by age-gen xer;
 - by marriage-boomer;
 - brought up –traditionalist;
 - raising children-millennials
- Recognition-let ee's decide how they want to be recognized
- Avoid pigeonholing