# Generational Divide in the Public Sector

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# Fact

**For the first time in the modern workforce, five generations are working alongside one another.**

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# Thought To Consider

*Collaboration tools are still the equivalent of hammers and saws; while you may need them to build a house, you need to learn about the principles of design, architecture, utility and project management to be able to do this over many times, efficiently, and with changing needs as well. As many social business experts will remind you, the tools by themselves are a small part of helping people collaborate; you need to understand how to apply them correctly per the behaviors of the people involved.*

**- Rawn Shah, 2011**

# Today's Goal

**To learn more about generational nuances and with acquired knowledge, manage and promote a more cohesive and productive professional environment.**

## Previous Generations

➢ **The Lost Generation**
  ➢ Defined as those born between 1883 – 1900
  ➢ Defining generational characteristic as those who fought in World War I

➢ **The "Greatest Generation"**
  ➢ Also known as the "G.I. Generation"
  ➢ Defined as those born between 1901 - 1924
  ➢ Defining generational characteristic as those who came to age during the Great Depression and fought in World War II

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## Silent Generation
### 1925 - 1945

➢ Also referred to as the "Lucky Few," touching upon the low birth rates of the time given the deployment of troops within WWII

➢ First generation in American history to be smaller than the preceding generation

➢ Generational characteristic of some fighting in WWII, but most fought in the Korean War and Vietnam War

➢ "Lucky" given the post-war employment boom and opportunities within the 1950s and 1960s

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# Silent Generation
## 1925 - 1945

➤ Focused on careers verses activism

➤ Age of McCarthyism, prevalent thinking that one should not speak out

➤ **Generation known for "lacking ambition" as they learned to "make things work"**

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# Baby Boomers
## 1946 - 1964

➤ Reference to the large population "boom" immediately following World War II

➤ **Raised in an era of change and questioned social norms and behaviors. Inherent traits of experimentalism, activism, individualism and free spiritedness**

➤ Defining events include the Cold War, Civil Rights movement, Cuban Missile Crisis, JFK assassination, RFK assassination, Korean War, Vietnam War, lunar landing, equal rights movement for women, sexual freedom and drug experimentation

➤ Reared by parents eager to provide more for their children, offering greater privilege

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## Baby Boomers
### 1946 - 1964

➢ In 1948, *Time* published "Babies Mean Business," introducing the idea of marketing with a focus to the population trend and generational distinctiveness.

- Coined the "Me" generation
- Baby Boomers control more than 80% of personal assets and account for more than half of consumer spending
- Purchase 77% of all prescription drugs in the marketplace
- 80% of all leisure travel

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## Baby Boomers
### 1946 - 1964

➢ Contemporary "end of life" issues

- 57% of all baby boomers feel that each generation should earn its own money
- 1/3 will give all personal wealth to charity upon death
- 42% are delaying retirement past 67
- 27% say that will never retire and would prefer to work until death
- Lack of post-retirement financial planning and denial of aging has placed large strain on their children, the workforce, and society

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# Generation X
## 1965-1980

➢ Raised in a time of shifting societal values

➢ Coined the "latchkey generation," referencing reduced adult supervision, raised in two-parent working households, rise in divorce rates, and widespread options for childcare outside the home

➢ A sandwiched generation, much smaller in size and placed between two significantly larger generations (Baby Boomers and Millennials). Introduction of the birth control pill and legalization of abortion contributing factors to the decline in the Generation X birth rate.

# Generation X
## 1965-1980

➢ **Entrepreneurial tendencies and the first generation to be "peer" oriented, which encourages team-driven environments**

➢ Gen X seeks work-life balance, willing to accept reductions in compensation for external benefits

➢ First generation to not "be better off" than preceding generation
  • Concerns of Medicaid and Social Security availability by Gen X retirement

# Millennials In The Workplace

https://youtu.be/Sz0o9clVQu8

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# Millennials/Gen Y
## 1981-2000

➢ Defined as a tolerant generation, raised in an era void of segregation, post-ERA, political correctness, emphasis on individual feelings, and greater understanding of globalism

➢ Socially oriented, with a draw towards activism

➢ Raised in an age of technology, with information instantaneously available.

➢ **With these advancements, Millennials have a tendency to be introverted, seeking individual tasks or online environments with greater anonymity**

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# Millennials/Gen Y
## 1981-2000

➢ Prolonged retirements by preceding generations and recession led to large-scale unemployment and lack of professional opportunity

➢ Generation defined by experiences, leading to delayed marriage and child rearing

➢ Confining purchases, such as homes and cars are often avoided offering experience based opportunities. Urban environments with communal options preferred.

➢ **Preference towards meaningful work, a flat corporate culture, social consciousness, flexibility, less stability with enhanced short-term opportunity, and instantaneous feedba**

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# Post-Millennials/Gen Z
## 2001 - ???

➢ Struggle to enter the workforce given social changes on attitudes towards service jobs. Has created a draw towards fiscal conservatism.

➢ Culture of uncertainty brought on by 9/11 attacks, Columbine and the recession

➢ Concerns with attainment of higher education and student debt

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## Post-Millennials/Gen Z
### 2001 - ???

➤ **Seeking more than a job; seeking professional fulfillment**

➤ Social media has redirected their focus from collective experiences, to one-on-one

➤ Advancement in technology and experience has prepared Gen Z to work in a truly global environment

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## Voting Trends & Politics

| Generation | Clinton (D) | Trump (R) |
|---|---|---|
| Silent | 47% | 47% |
| Baby Boomers | 40% | **55%** |
| Generation X | **46%** | 44% |
| Millennials/Gen Y | **61%** | 29% |
| Post-Mill/Gen Z (Polling, not voting) | 41% | **47%** |

**USC/*Los Angeles Times* 2016.**

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## Contemporary Office Environment

➢ **Silent Generation** known for "lacking ambition" as they learned to "**make things work**." Raised in an era of economic boom with high prospects for employment.

➢ **Baby Boomers** raised in an era of change and questioned social norms and behaviors. Inherent traits of experimentalism, activism, **individualism** and free spiritedness. Desire for acquired wealth creates tendency to continue working.

➢ **Generation X** has entrepreneurial tendencies and the first generation to be "peer" oriented, which encourages **team-driven environments**, seeking work-life balance, willing to accept reductions in compensation for external benefits.

➢ **Millennials** have preference towards meaningful work, a flat corporate culture, social consciousness, **flexibility**, less stability with enhanced short-term opportunity, and instantaneous feedback.

➢ **Gen Z'ers** are seeking more than a job; seeking professional fulfillment. Social media has redirected their focus from collective experiences, to **one-on-one**.

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## Contemporary Office Environment

### How do we make it work?

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## Millennial Response

https://youtu.be/C1a6M3dBNwc

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## Contemporary Office Environment

The Silent, Baby Boomer and Generation X have all made it work together.

*This is about the Millennials and understanding how they work.*

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## Debunking Preconceptions

➢ *Millennials have higher turnover rates than previous generations.* **FALSE.**

- Data that shows Millennials have higher turnover rates are skewed by age-specific turnover data.
- Millennials are staying in school longer earning advanced degrees, which has their generation entering the workforce at a later age. This skews the data.
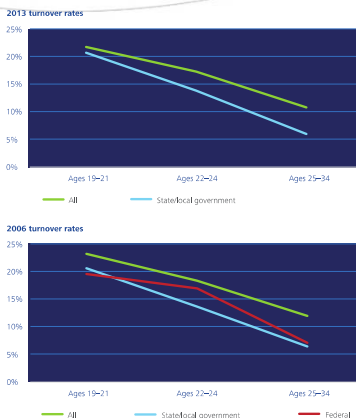- A Deloitte study shows that Millennials have a lower turnover rate than their Generation X cohorts.

**Deloitte, 2015.**

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## Debunking Preconceptions

Understanding Millennials in government

Figure 1. Turnover rates for government Millennials vs. those of Gen Xers



Source: Deloitte analysis of US Census Bureau Quarterly Workforce Indicators.
Note: Data for federal workers not available for 2013.
Graphic: Deloitte University Press | DUPress.com

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# Debunking Preconceptions

➢ *Millennials will not stick around the public sector at any time.* **FALSE.**

- Data that shows public sector Millennials have less of a desire to seek new employers than their private sector counterparts.
- Similar data shows that Millennials have a greater tendency to stay with their public sector employers than their counterparts from other generations at the same age.
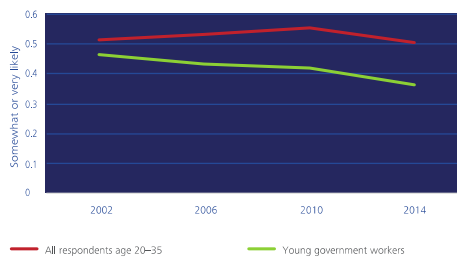
Deloitte, 2015.

# Debunking Preconceptions

Understanding Millennials in government

Figure 3. Young government workers less likely to look for new jobs

How likely is it that you will make an effort to find a new job in the next year?



All respondents age 20–35          Young government workers

Source: Deloitte analysis of NORC GSS data.
Graphic: Deloitte University Press | DUPress.com

# Facts

> ➢ *Millennials intrinsically like to give back, but now have greater avenues than their predecessors to do so professionally due to the strength and rise of nonprofit sector.*

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# Facts

> ➢ *As Millennials entered the workforce, the public sector stopped hiring.*

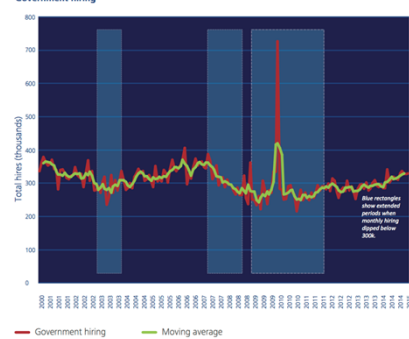**CALBO**
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# Facts

> *As Millennials sought employment, the government curtailed its hiring practices and recruiting efforts.*

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# Facts



Figure 6. Governments shrank their hiring quotas as Millennials entered the labor force

Government hiring

Source: US Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics, Table 325.85.
Graphic: Deloitte University Press | DUPress.com

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# Facts

> *A study by the National Association of Colleges and Employers found that 24.9% of college students ranked government as one of their top three career choices among 19 industries.*

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# Social Learning

- Traditional thinking of knowledge can only be learned from the top down. Teacher to Student. Master to Apprentice. Manager to Employee.

- With five generations in place, this thinking needs to become more integrated, whereby coworkers see themselves as peers, not defined by generations.

- *The experiences, knowledge and cultural familiarity that each generation carries can be best delivered through social learning. It is not simply about mentoring between older people who have more experience in their line of business, but also learning from other peers in other areas and younger folks the how things may work differently in different environments.* (R. Shah)

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## Strengthening Relationships
### *What Can the Public Sector Do?*

- Publish more data on recruitment, retention, and employee development
  - Avail data on strengths of public sector employment: promotion data, retention data, salary data, benefits data.
  - Promote public service as an opportunity

Deloitte, 2015.

## Strengthening Relationships
### *What Can the Public Sector Do?*

- Ensure that existing benefits programs are available to Millennial employees
  - Retirement plans
  - Medical plans
  - Student loan/aid packages
  - Although difficult in the public sector, seek flexible options within the workplace that will still meet the needs of the constituency. Telecommuting. 9/80 work-week. Promotion.

Deloitte, 2015.

## Strengthening Relationships
### *What Can the Public Sector Do?*

- Accountability
    - Trophy Generation
    - Non-hierarchical management/leadership
    - Superman/Firefighter/Astronaut/Ice-Cream Man
    - Understand Millennial employees are entering the workforce with much higher levels of debt, and have differing economic needs than their predecessors.
    - In summary, "we" created the circumstances within the current workforce and now we need to ensure the success of future generations.

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## Questions?

## Thank you

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