

GEN-Y:
THERE IS
NO ROOM
FOR ME!

GEN-X:
I AM
WAITING.

BOOMER:
I'M NOT
RETIRING.

2013
XYBOOM
CONFERENCE
FIVE GENERATIONS. ONE FUTURE

A resource from the 2013 XYBOOM Conference for your use in the workplace and beyond.



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WELCOME

This document is a compilation and reflection of the 2013 XYBOOM Conference, From Workplace Tension to Intergenerational Collaboration. In the following pages, you will find key learnings, insights and strategies from all attendees - panelists, participants, live case study storytellers - as well as tweets, photos and the graphic recordings from the day, links to video highlights and much more.

From Gen Y, Gen X and Baby Boomers, to non-profit and corporate representatives, students and new graduates to VP's and Executive Director's, the information we are sharing here was compiled directly from the wisdom, experiences, successes, frustration and hopes shared by the diverse attendees at this year's conference. Despite the the varied perspectives, many common themes emerged around how participants envision workplaces truly valuing and benefitting from intergenerational collaboration.

Whether you attended the conference or not, we hope you will find inspiration here to bring positive, collaborative change to your workplace and beyond.

The XYBOOM Team.

PANEL 1 | OUR WORLD TODAY & TOMORROW

THIS FIRST PANEL SERVED AS A BACKDROP TO THE CONFERENCE DAY. THE FOCUS WAS ON THE ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND SOCIAL EVENTS FACED BY THE VARIOUS GENERATIONS. OUR PANELISTS EXPLORED THE PAST AND FUTURE TRENDS IN INCOME LEVELS, COST OF LIVING, AND SUPPLY OF JOBS.

1.



LYNELL ANDERSON
Senior Family Policy
Researcher, UBC
Early Learning Part-
nership; Generation
Squeeze

2.



IGLUKA IVANOVA
Economist and
Public Interest
Researcher at the
Canadian Centre
for Policy Alterna-
tives

3.



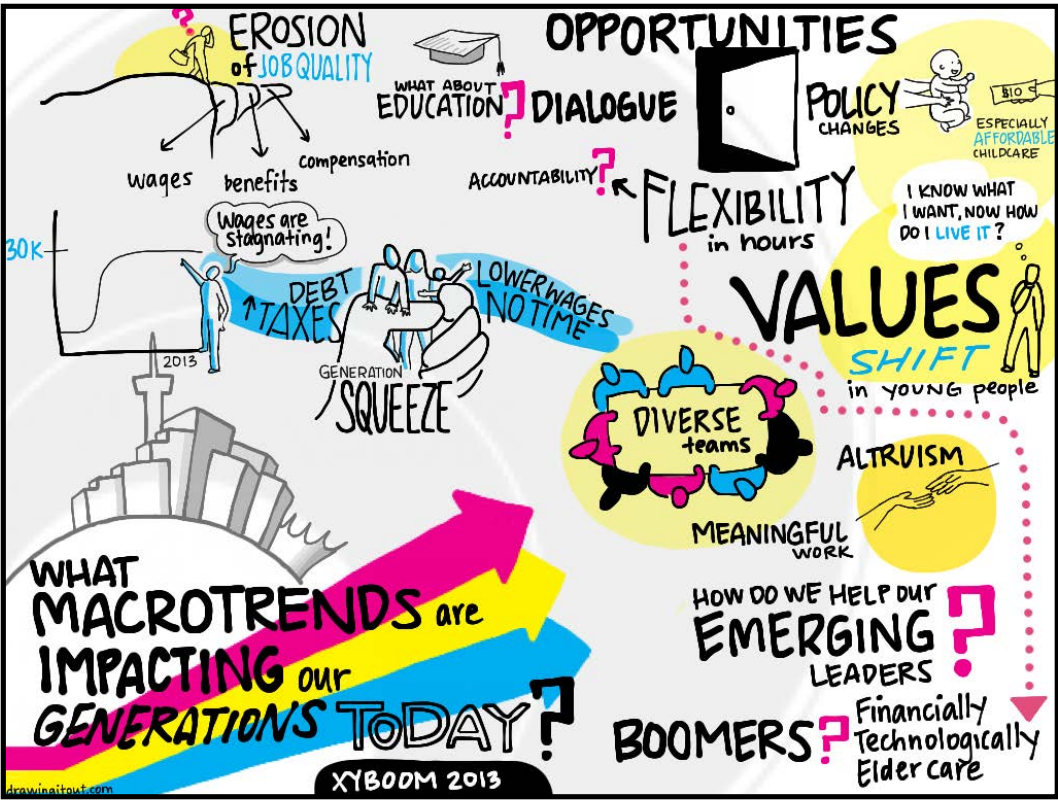
HEATHER HAY
Executive Director,
BC Non Profit La-
bour Market Pro-
gram at Vancouver
Foundation

4.



PETER REEK
Principal at
Smart, Savvy +
Associates

CLICK HERE
TO WATCH
THE PANELISTS
SPEAK



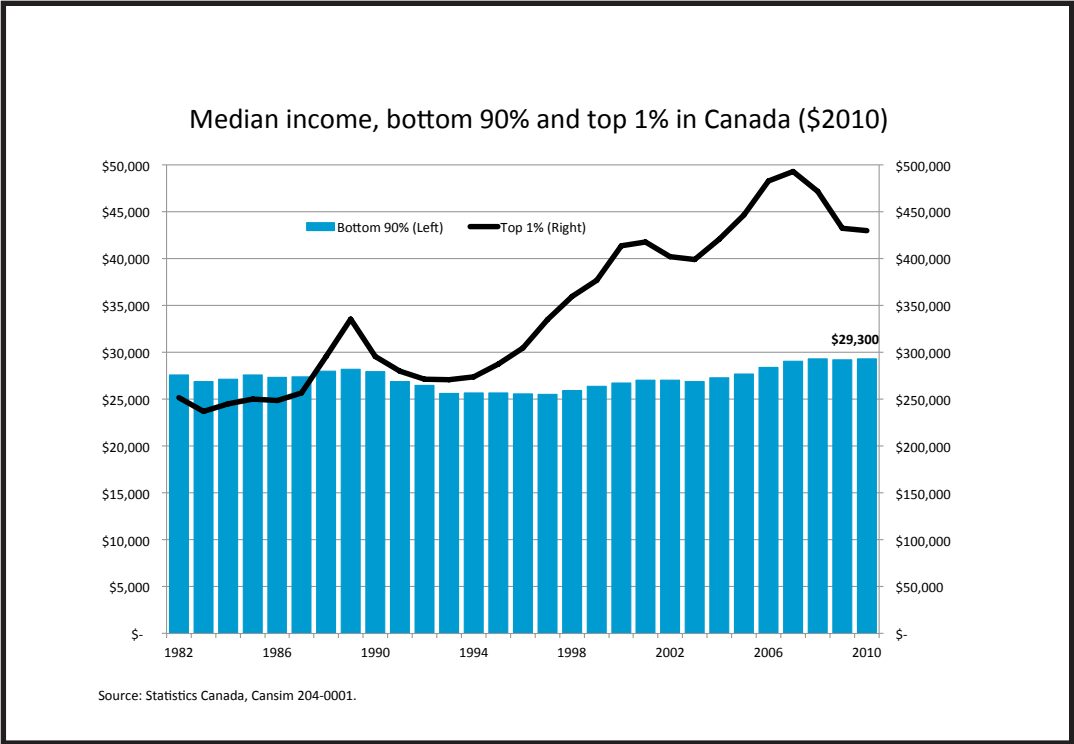
PANEL 1

QUESTION: “WHAT MACRO ECONOMIC OR SOCIAL TREND DO YOU SEE HAS THE GREATEST IMPACT TO OUR GENERATIONS TODAY?”

TREND 1

LACK OF WAGE INCREASE.

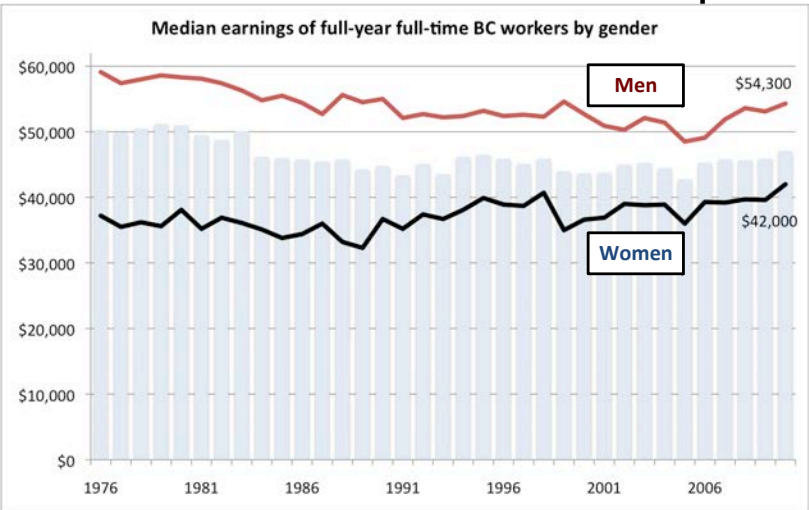
Starting wages since the 1980s have changed very little (less than a 5% increase) despite other macro indicators such as GDP per capita increasing by 30%. Most of the increases in wages have been concentrated to the top 1% wage earners.



SLIDES

Source: Statistics Canada, Cansim 204-0001
Provided by: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (BC Office)

These statistics hide other inequalities



Source: Statistics Canada (2012), CANSIM Table 202 – 0101
Provided by: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (BC Office)

TREND 2

CONSISTENT GENDERED WAGE INEQUALITY.

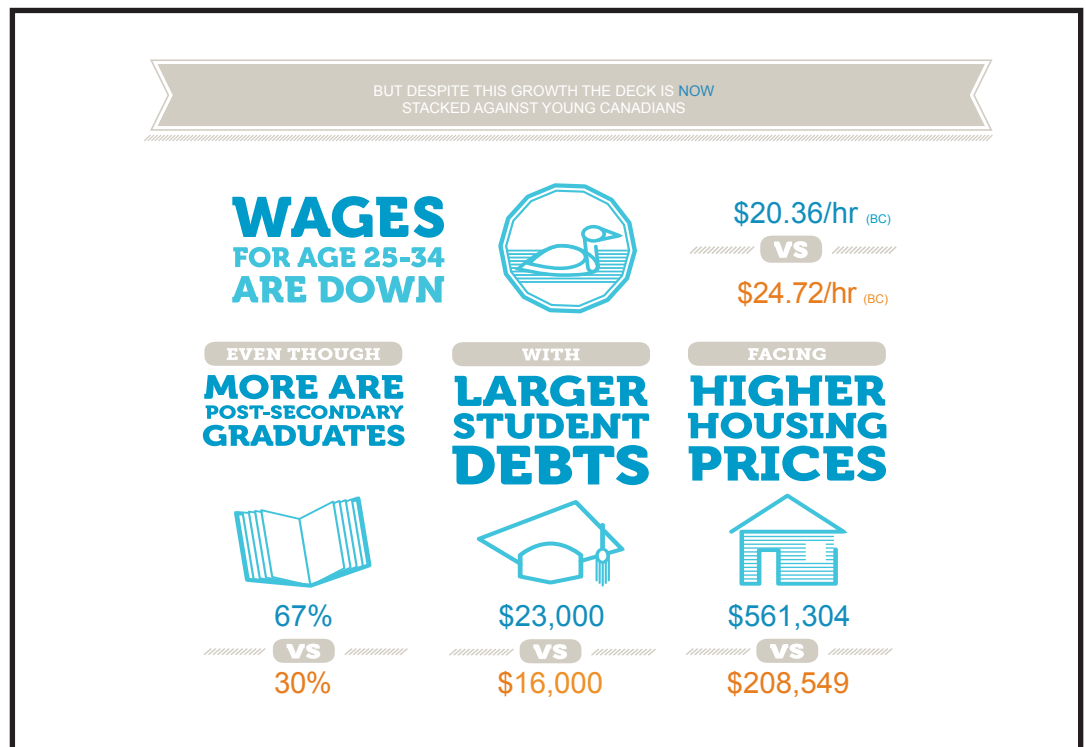
There are many different types of income inequalities with gender inequality topping the list. Over the past 30 years, men have consistently earned a higher median income compared to women.

SLIDES

TREND 3

IMPACT ON YOUNGER GENERATIONS.

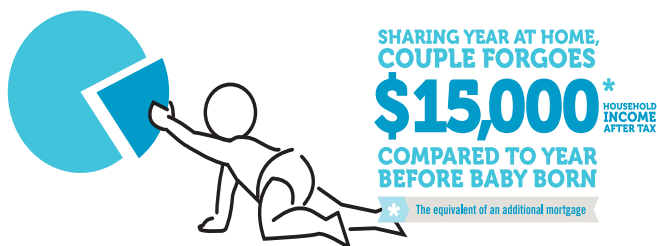
Wages are down for those 25 to 34 years of age, even though they are the most educated cohort to join the workforce. The lower wages are especially hard on individuals from this age bracket who carry more debt and face higher costs of living (especially higher housing costs) compared to counterparts in previous decades.



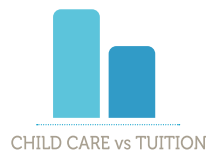
SLIDES

Provided by: Generation Squeeze

THE SQUEEZE TIGHTENS WHEN STARTING A FAMILY



SERVICES FOR ONLY 1/3 OF KIDS



AND THEY COST MORE THAN POST-SECONDARY TUITION

TREND 4

EFFECTS ON FAMILY LIFE.

Facing flat household incomes, when considering starting a family, those under 45 years of age are feeling the pressure to start families later, and when they do, they spend less time to be with their families and have very limited options for affordable childcare.

SLIDES

Provided by: Generation Squeeze

TREND 5

INCREASE IN MULTIGENERATIONAL HOUSEHOLDS.

50% of Gen Y in their 20s live with their parents vs. 28% of Gen X who lived with their parents when they were in their 20s.

TREND 6

VALUES AND EXPECTATIONS ARE CHANGING.

Today, more people value meaning, purpose and challenging work. As such, there is a higher expectation for more opportunities at the workplace for personal growth and more flexibility vs. previously, when people worked in exchange for wages, rather than to fulfill personal passions and dreams.

TREND 7

EMPLOYMENT CONTINUES TO CHANGE.

More jobs today are temporary, part-time, contract or project-based. Team-based work is created with smart people filling those temporary positions, convening together to achieve the goal, then disassembling for other teams to be built. The ability to work in diverse teams is as important as ever. However, with these project-based jobs, there is less security and a lack of benefits and pension.

TREND 8

RETIREMENT POSTPONEMENT.

1/3 of Baby Boomers have decided to postpone retirement beyond 65 years of age. This has both positive and negative implications. Tensions grow at the workplace with pressure to create space for new workers and those hoping to move up to higher positions, while opportunities such as knowledge transfer from Baby Boomers to younger generations can be plentiful.

“

The world has never been richer, and yet we somehow cannot see how we can leave the next generation a world better than what we inherited.

Are you willing to imagine together and take risks to realize possibilities for a better future?

”



PANEL 2 / OUR WORKPLACE

THE SECOND PANEL BUILT ON THE MOMENTUM OF THE FIRST PANEL BY ZOOMING INTO THE WORKPLACE. THIS PANEL EXPLORED WHY PEOPLE BEHAVE AS THEY DO IN THE WORKPLACE, CHALLENGED GENERATIONAL MYTHS, AND HIGHLIGHTED WAYS TO ACHIEVE EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND EMPLOYEE RETENTION.

1.



VAL LITWIN
VP of Franchise Operations at Nurse Next Door

2.



JANE TEREPOCKI
HR Administrator Recruitment/ Training at Mountain Equipment Co-op

3.



JAMES PALMER
VP of Sales and Marketing at Great Little Box Company

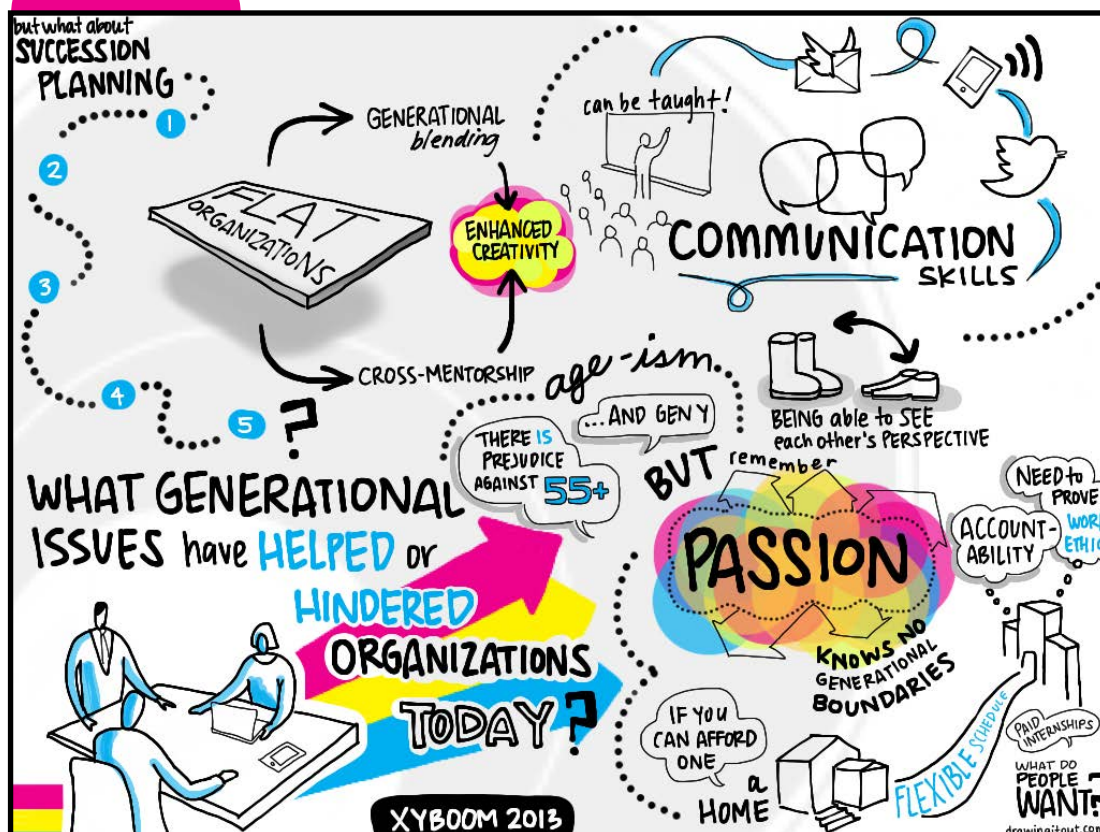
4.



CAROL CHIANG
Partner at KPMG

[CLICK HERE TO HEAR THE PANLELIST SPEAK](#)

PANEL 2



drawing it out
graphic facilitation

www.drawingitout.com

YOLANDA LIMAN
Graphic Recorder & Facilitator
Drawing It Out
www.drawingitout.com

QUESTION: WHAT GENERATIONAL ISSUES AT THE WORK PLACE HAVE HELPED OR HINDERED ORGANIZATIONS TODAY?

ISSUE 1

INTERGENERATIONAL ISSUES IN THE WORKPLACE ARE NOT NEW.

However, new dynamics such as employees staying in the workplace longer and flattened organizational hierarchies have forced intergenerational issues to the forefront. There is more generational blending with various generations working as cohorts rather than hierarchical structures, which may also result in more space for generational conflict.

OPPORTUNITIES: Different generations working closely can foster different perspectives and increase creativity – it is important to embrace generational diversity and challenge organizations or systems that don't. There are also more opportunities for mentorship with the wide spectrum of experiences working together.

ISSUE 2

PRACTICE EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE.

With the various generations together in the workplace, it is important to practice emotional intelligence and be aware of individual and generational preferences

EXAMPLE: Knowing when to compose an email that demonstrates formality and respect vs. an email that is brief and to-the-point may involve understanding generational preferences. Communications need to be customized based on who the audience is. The ultimate, regardless of generation, is effective communications.

ISSUE 3

CULTURE-BASED HIRING.

Those in hiring positions make decisions based on limited time spent with the candidates (e.g. the 45 minute interview) while candidates often focus on short-term needs such as immediate pay.

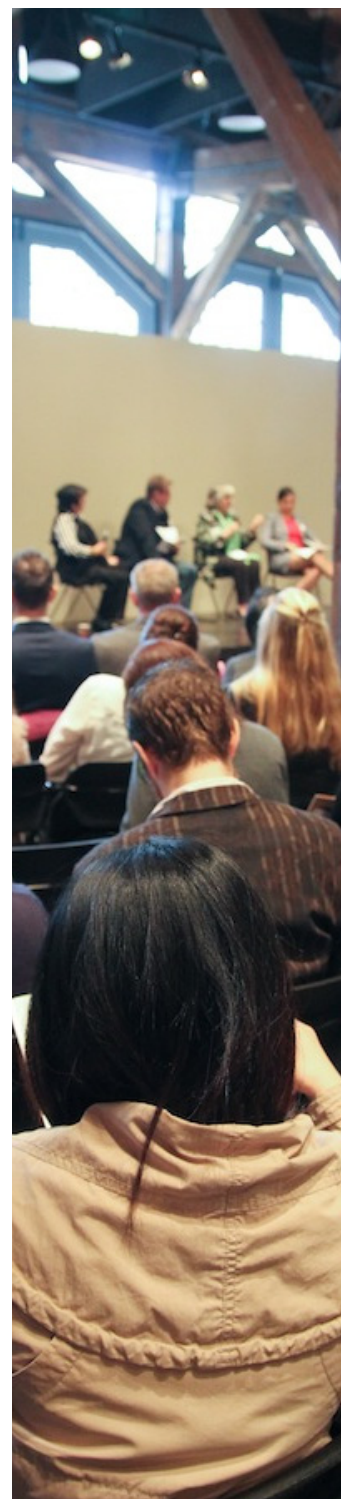
OPPORTUNITY: When hiring, more time must be spent on determining cultural fit and soft skills; these traits should take precedence over generational perceptions and hard skills.

ISSUE 4

FOSTERING PASSION.

Individuals can and should bring their passion to an organization. However, organizations must have a clearly communicated rallying cry that channels these passions effectively.

OPPORTUNITIES: If people know what is the organization expects from them, it will help to drive the passion within themselves. Passion can also be complimented with recognition and reward programs.



ISSUE 5

SUCCESSION PLANNING.

People change careers more often today and retention strategies need to keep pace. The average duration for individuals of any generation with a company is about 5 years. This, combined with flattened organizations and people delaying retirement makes workforce management especially tough.

OPPORTUNITIES: Companies need to balance succession planning for tomorrow vs. managing the perceived bottlenecks of today.

ISSUE 6

WORK-LIFE BALANCE FOR ALL GENERATIONS.

There is a societal shift taking place that places higher importance on work-life balance. When compared to other countries with rapidly growing economies such as China or India, Vancouver's workforce is not as high strung.

OPPORTUNITIES: Create meaningful flexibility for employees. For instance, flexibility can be in the form of allowing work from home when it makes business sense, or a focus on output rather than hours worked. Vancouver-based businesses may need to manage perceptions they are not as competitive as their counterparts in other parts of the country globally.

ISSUE 7

WORK ETHIC AND PERCEPTION.

It is evident that all generations work hard, but do younger generations expect to be recognized and rewarded for their hard work faster? There is a perception that Gen Y-ers are not as willing to put in the hours to build a strong foundation but are more focused on instant gratification. While companies need to be transparent that long hours are the norm (if that is the case), potential and new employees still need to understand strong work ethics is what is valued.

OPPORTUNITIES: Mentorship is important for putting expectations in context. It can be a great way to build organizational trust and empowers individuals to be their own leaders and figure out how they want to move forward. Mentors can be sought within an organization but also in the community, which can then extend mentorship into life experiences.

ISSUE 8

UNPAID INTERNSHIPS.

There appears to be more and more unpaid internships. Young people and new graduates are faced with the cost of working in unpaid internships in order to gain experience to be more competitive for paid positions.

OPPORTUNITIES: If faced with the decision to accept an unpaid internship, negotiate what other benefits the position would result in (e.g. contacts, leads for paid employment).



Blend of working together, cross-mentorship, coaching and sharing lead to better partnerships - Carol Chiang #XYBOOM - XYBOOM Conference @XYBOOMdotCOM



Changing the mindset of the community to promote instead of look down on trades. #xyboom - Jonathan Tsang @OfficeCritic



"It's about emotional wisdom & respect, acknowledging that we are at different stages and backgrounds"- @vltwin #xyboom - CYBF BC @CYBFBC

LIVE CASE STUDIES

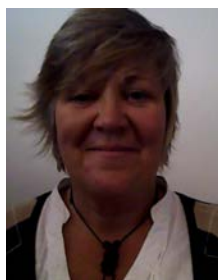
BEYOND THE WATERCOOLER

The XYBOOM 2013 Conference was based around the theme “From Workplace Tension to Intergenerational Collaboration.” A key element of the days’ programming includes a series of live case studies, where individuals (or pairs in one case) shared their own career and/or workplace experiences – strategies, promising practices, challenges, outcomes and more. Based on a participatory process called *Collective Story Harvest*, the Live Case Studies allowed participants to create stronger connections with each other, shared understanding and deeper learning on the issues at hand.

Keep reading to find out more about each case study and the key learnings that were compiled and filled out by conference participants during this process. [Click here](#) for a guide on how to re-create this process in your own workplace, compiled by XYBOOM Facilitator Amanda Fenton.

ENGAGING/RETAINING

ENGAGING/
RETAINING:
How to
Increase
Workplace
Flexibility



WATCH HER
INTERVIEW

MICHELLE FORTIN

Executive Director at Watari Counseling and Support Services

Michelle shared her strategies on creating an intentional workplace that places priority on honoring the whole lives of individuals and as a result, has an extremely high level of retention and a waiting list of individuals interested in employment.

Key Learnings:

1. As an Executive Director, view employees as clients when considering how they experience their job in the workplace.
2. Saying ‘Yes’ has far more positive outcomes than saying ‘No’.
3. Succession planning strategies: Intentional hiring, job sharing, including practicum students in strategic planning etc.
4. Be flexible with time, communication, thinking and behaviour – this requires establishing your values, an intentional culture, acknowledgement of employee feedback and autonomy, and courage.

Questions to Consider:

What are the things, life events etc. that take individuals away from work? What keeps them at work?

RECRUITING & HIRING

RECRUITING:
An
Entrepreneurial
Career



WATCH HER
INTERVIEW

CHRISTINE MCLEOD

Founder, Impact People Practices

Christine shared her unique perspective on being an intrapreneur in the corporate world and then transitioning to being an entrepreneur, with two successful businesses, a speaking career and a deep passion for making an impact on global workplace engagement.

Key Learnings

1. Have confidence in yourself and the impact of what you want to achieve. When the work becomes about the greater impact that becomes a unifying factor that encourages people to be more creative and open in working with each other.
2. Be resilient: everyone has faced loss or challenges in diverse yet relatable way; use these challenges to build relationships and ‘fail forward’.
3. Hold yourself to standards higher than anyone expects from you; create opportunities.

TIP: Who you are is more important than what you do.

LIVE CASE STUDIES

RECRUITMENT & HIRING

RECRUITMENT/ HIRING: Gen Y and Recruitment



WATCH HER
INTERVIEW

PAULINA LIPSKA

Co-Founder/President at Young Women in Business; Business Development Manager at Canadian Youth Business Foundation

Paulina is a Gen Y who shared her knowledge around recruitment of Gen Y's, including the recruiting values and strategies that have proven successful in her experience recruiting for YWiB.

Key learnings from the conference participants:

1. Hire based on passion and values over hard skills.
2. Engage in personal, honest, vulnerable conversations and create opportunities for such conversations, especially between generations and employers/employees.
3. Leadership should provide: 1. Mastery (the urge to get better at things that matters) 2. Autonomy 3. Purpose*.

*From [Dan Pink's book Drive](#)

TIPS for Job Seekers: Take time to learn what your strengths and values are and, if possible, wait and take the time to truly consider if they align with potential employment opportunities.

Questions to Consider:

How do you harness the best people you have? Do you take the time to truly get to know your employees as whole individuals, including their values, passion and goals? How is your organization's work culture portrayed to the externally, and through what avenues?

RECRUITING: An Entrepreneurial Career



WATCH HER
INTERVIEW

DAWN LONGSHAW

Managing Director, Professional Recruitment at Vertical Bridge Corporate Consulting

Dawn is a Baby Boomer who shared how changes in the business model of her workplace of over 20 years lead to her successful transition to an entrepreneurial career in her field of recruitment.

Key Learnings:

1. While work places are changing and the way people do work is changing, there are spaces for people to move into.
2. Relationships and those who see value in your relationships can be key to career transitions.
3. Focus on understanding your value and on output (regardless of your generation), especially in changing work environments. This can lead to synergy with other generations.

Questions to Consider:

How is your industry/sector/role evolving and how will you evolve with it? Who will see value in your relationships, portfolio and values?

LIVE CASE STUDIES

RETAINING

RETAINING:
Inter-
generational
Conflict



WATCH HER
INTERVIEW

STEPHANIE PAPIK

Program Lead, Aboriginal Youth Internship Program at The Learning Centre, Talent Management Division, BC Public Service Agency

Stephanie shared her strategies on managing and addressing intergenerational conflict in complex situations, highlighting how she has pro-actively sought to develop resiliency and leadership skills to do so through co-mentoring.

Key Learnings:

1. Embrace opportunities to learn different tools and models that not only support your own skill development, but also help bridge differences/conflict, making you the best person for the job.
2. Convening individuals in a circle helps break down hierarchies (perceived or real) and allows for deeper levels of commitment and communication.
3. Create opportunities for individuals to share perspectives.

Questions to Consider:

Why do employees find it so hard to talk openly with employers? How do we ensure that we nurture relationships and help personal development? How can we be more open to other's work ethics, processes and values?

RETAINING:
Gen Y in a
Gen X/Boomer
Workplace



WATCH HER
INTERVIEW

LAUREN LAU

Administrative Officer at Human Resources and Skills Development

STUART DAY

Manager of Strategic Initiatives, Pacific Federal Council

Lauren is a Gen Y working in a predominately Boomer/Gen X workplace within the federal public service. Her case study was about how she created a space for intergenerational collaboration, bringing together over 150 participants across the public, private, and non-profit sectors to share ideas and dialogue on how to improve workplace relationships. Stuart Day, a Gen X who attended the Lauren's event was on hand to share his perspective on the event and its outcomes.

Key Learnings:

1. Cultivate ideas and inspiration from events, individuals, and experiences of peers and colleagues to find ways to take initiative and execute change making opportunities.
2. Processes such as Pechakucha, Open Space Technology and using a Twitter wall help break down 'traditional' or very structured work cultures that don't seem as open to new ideas and collaboration across the workplace.
3. Putting in 'face-time' and developing trust with management is key to creating and executing such new opportunities for collaboration.

Stuart's (Gen X) Perspective:

"It was a leap of faith in supporting Lauren and her team to control the agenda and plan the day. The event has forever altered our perspective on mentorship - Boomers have at least as much to learn from Gen X and Gen Y as the other way around."

Questions to Consider:

In your workplace, where do you see an opportunity for innovation or change? What could organizational performance look like if true collaborative working partnerships existed amongst all generations and/or individuals in your workplace?



WATCH HIS
INTERVIEW

LIVE CASE STUDIES

RETAINING CONTINUED

RETAINING: Inter- generational Conflict



WATCH HER
INTERVIEW

ROANNE WEYERMARS

Senior Manager, Brand & Advertising at Coast Capital Savings

Meeting rooms and boardrooms can be uncomfortable places. Even more so when you realize that there is an obvious age gap between yourself and nearly everyone else in the room. Roanne shared strategies on how she has learned how to 'win the room over' by finding the courage to prove her own value and overcome intergenerational biases.

Key Learnings:

1. Recognize you are there – in the boardroom, meeting etc. – to add value; we all have a competitive edge, regardless of generation and because of our generation.
2. Look for opportunities to contribute, don't wait for chances to contribute.
3. Be heard; you don't have to say something profound.
4. Build relationships with allies.

TIP: Feeling anxious or stressed in a big meeting? Grip the side of your chair to release tension. Seek out strategies for managing anxiety and tension and for public speaking through professional development opportunities.

Questions to Consider:

Who is intimidating who? What is really going on? How can we better understand each other, each generation's perspectives, and consciously look past perceived age barriers?

RETAINING: Mentoring



WATCH HIS
INTERVIEW

DAVID REEVE

Chief Strategy Officer at Fully Managed

David shared how his mentorship philosophy, which focuses on what he has employees 'becoming' rather than what are 'doing', builds amazing synergy in teams and manifests into award winning cultures.

Key Learnings

For the Workplace:

1. Leaders see things in people that individuals don't necessarily see in themselves: Get to know individuals and focus on their outcomes, and what they can become, not just corporate outcomes.
2. Build a company by design and not default – understanding your employees' core values and supporting their aspirations through mentorship builds a positive, mutually beneficial work culture.

For Individuals:

1. Engage a personal advisory group who understands your goals, can help advance them and/or cheer you on in accomplishing your dreams.
2. Learn to control negative self-talk and develop positive self-talk.

"Anyone at any age can dream: Share your dreams, create vision boards or dream books and write down dreams that you've already accomplished and remind yourself of them!"

LIVE CASE STUDIES

SUCCESSION PLANNING

SUCCESSION PLANNING: Career Planning



WATCH HIS
INTERVIEW

ALDEN HABACON

Director, Intercultural Understanding Strategy Development at UBC

Alden is a Gen X who shared how his career has evolved and how branding himself has really helped him build a reputable and successful career.

Key Learnings:

1. Build relationships and mentorships – they allow for a safe space to ask questions, explore opportunities, network.
2. Volunteer on boards to meet influential people.
3. Mentorship with older generations is important, but build relationships and network with everyone, ‘up, down and sideways’.
4. Be kind, open and willing to learn across all generations and reach out to others.

TIP: Get to know the Executive Assistants of the high-level individuals you want to build relationships with; they are the ‘gatekeepers’!

Questions to Consider:

How do you brand ideas and turn them into opportunities? Has your personal brand limited your growth?

SUCCESSION PLANNING: Gen X, Ready and Waiting



WATCH HER
INTERVIEW

REBECCA ATAYA

Director of Member Services & Engagement at the Federation of Community Social Services of BC

Rebecca shared her experience of working as a Gen X seeking leadership responsibilities in a Boomer-filled sector, as well as her experiences with expectations around skill and capability vs. age and years of experience.

Key Learnings:

1. Mentors or your ‘circle of influence’ can help you prepare for greater responsibility in your leadership journey.
2. Find opportunities to “lead where you stand” even when the culture works against you.
3. Create spaces of constructive intergenerational dialogue to support succession planning.

Questions to Consider:

How do we support emerging leaders be successful in our organizations, especially in the non-profit sector, so they don’t leave? How can knowledge transfer opportunities be integrated into non-profit work structures which are often stressed with capacity and funding issues, to ensure succession planning and opportunities for younger generations?

LIVE CASE STUDIES

ATTRACTING

ATTRACTING:
Strategies on
attracting
Gen Y, Mining
sector



WATCH HER
INTERVIEW

JILL TSOLINAS

Director at RODOS Consulting

Jill shared how her organization moved from brochures and paper to media-based attraction and recruitment strategies geared towards younger generations – including developing a TV program to showcase employment possibilities and engaging with social media – highlighting lessons learned and the current results of these efforts.

Key Learnings:

1. If you aren't attracting your target audience, define the problem(s) and find a way to communicate with that audience within their own comfort zone.
2. Don't be afraid of trying new and different ways to connect with your target audience; if one doesn't work, find out why, and try others.
3. Facebook and Twitter allowed for organic conversations, and a TV series as part of a dynamic website created the opportunity to be more relatable while educating about sector employment opportunities.

Check out the TV show and communications efforts Jill played a key role in producing, transforming how the mining industry communicates with Gen Y: <http://www.miningyourfuture.com/>

Question to Consider:

The use of social media can create large amounts of traffic and produces exposure. How does/can this translate into jobs filled, especially in sectors with labour shortages?

ATTRACTING:
A Non-Profit
Entrepreneurial
Approach to
Finding and
Engaging Talent



WATCH HER
INTERVIEW

LYNDA GERTY

Director of Engagement at Vantage

Lynda is passionate about equipping not-for-profit organizations to view the whole community as their potential workforce. Her case study highlighted how this approach has allowed her to engage and learn from Boomers, Gen X and Millennials.

Key learnings from the conference participants:

1. Peer-based mentorship where both perspectives and feedback is valued can provide immeasurable aid in providing support and filling gaps in knowledge in the workplace.
2. Focus on knowledge abilities and attributes when engaging talent; don't get stuck on title/position/career level; allow for opportunities of leadership from younger generations.
3. Qualities to Consider when Engaging Talent: 1. Openness 2. Non-Discriminatory Leadership 3. Empathy.

Question to Consider:

How can we utilize more empathy in leadership so that we are more open to understanding why an individual is acting/performing the way they are?

LIVE CASE STUDIES

TRANSITIONING

TRANSITIONING:
Inter-
generational
Networking



WATCH HER
INTERVIEW

KRYSTAL GABRIEL
Consultant

Krystal is a Gen Y who shared how she has reframed 'networking' in a way that has lead to some of her most rewarding jobs and relationships to date.

Key Learnings:

1. Barriers are mostly internal: self-doubt, and the conviction that you don't offer value. Get out of your own way!
2. You often will not know things; when that happens, just ask. Curiosity can open doors and questions are usually more useful than answers.
3. Allow yourself to be vulnerable; people love to help.
4. Build relationships by being present and finding common ground. Cultivate relationships by finding opportunities/offering to give back, use your skills to contribute. How can you make someone's day?

TIP: Read, and read often! Suggestions from Krystal include: [Never Eat Alone](#) and [How to Win Friends and Influence People](#).

Questions to Consider:

Who do you respect? Who is doing great things? Who is in your network?
What makes you happy? What conversations do you want to have? Who do you want to have them with?

COLLECTIVE STORY HARVEST TO-GO

Want to re-create the live case study process in your workplace?

Here's a '[How-To](#)' guide on the process, courtesy of XYBOOM facilitator [Amanda Fenton](#).



#xyboom panel highlighting the need for effective workplace communication skills to help unleash passion & chemistry - Connie Chong @connie_chong



It's the relationship building and informal conversations that lead to successful formal business pitches and ideas #XYBOOM - Carolyn Shum@shumbum1210



Last audience question: how do you get dialogue to start within your company? #XY-BOOM - XYBOOM Conference@XYBOOMdotCOM

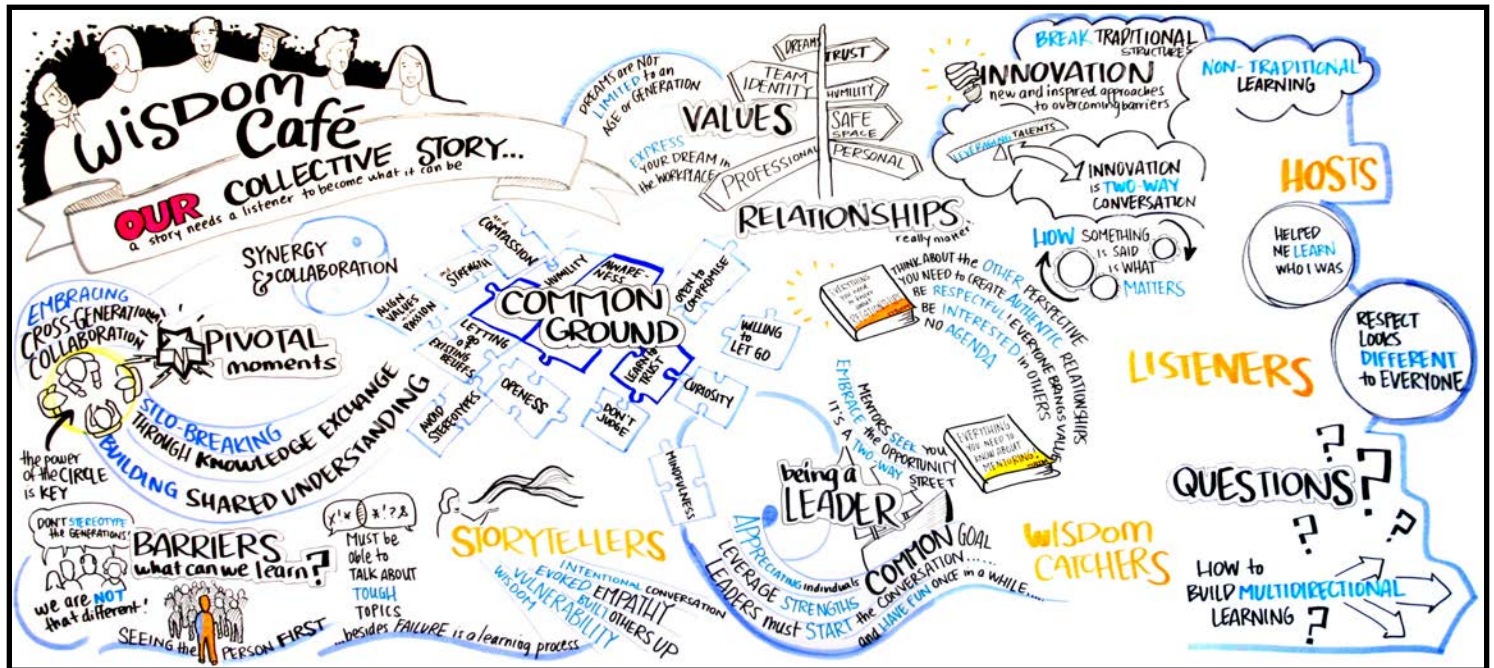


Breakdown hierarchy with oldest form of governance, meet in a circle, every leader in a chair. #XYBOOM - Punigabluk @enkindle23

WISDOM CAFE

After the Live Case Studies, we cross-pollinated the richness from all the stories by reconvening in a plenary Wisdom Café. We broke off into smaller groups across stories, then mixed together over several rounds of conversation to share and find out what participants learned and discovered from all the stories that were shared.

QUESTION 1: What did you learn through the lens of your theme that could help all of us move from intergenerational tension to workplace collaboration? What gifts or key insights are you taking away from sharing or hearing the story?



POSTER

“

BARRIERS (WHAT THEY ARE; BREAKING THEM)

- Master your story: Reflect on your own life and your experiences to really learn who you are. Then minimize the gap between who you think you are and who others think you are.
- Maintain transparency.
- It's counterproductive to internalize the stereotypes about your own generation.
- Stereotypes: be aware of your personal biases.
- Value others as well as yourself.
- Someone has to let go of something.
- Coming together in a circle helps build understanding (power of a shared circle).
- Focus on what people can do, not their title, position or labels.
- Don't be afraid to empower and trust the younger generation. Be open.
- Communication is different across generations/cultures... intent is not always what it seems.
- Don't stereotype the generations.
- Trust the person; don't judge.
- Don't make assumptions.
- Each generation and individual see things differently as time evolves.

COMMON GROUND

- Respect looks different to everyone – treat everyone as a human, not as an “age”.
- Somebody who is your opposite might be your best collaborator.
- Connections start with finding common group, interests, values etc.
- We are not that different.
- Everyone has to be willing to discuss the tough topics.
- Be open to learning what each generation can contribute.
- Dreams are not limited to an age/generation. Express your dream in the workplace and work together to attain them.
- Never too young/too old to accomplish your dreams.
- Building common ground requires safe space for dialogue, innovation and trust building.
- Create a space for intentional conversation to voice empathy, vulnerability and connection.
- Recognize each person's right to their own freedom.
- How something is said, not what is said, is what matters.
- Look to history for solutions. These aren't new problems.
- Be willing to challenge the current status quo.

”

WISDOM CAFE

“

LEADERS

- Mentors see you. Embrace the opportunity.
- Realistic expectations and managing those expectations.
- Find alignment with leaders rather than perceptions of companies and jobs.
- Leaders must start conversation.
- Leverage the strengths of employees.
- Have leadership from all directions.
- Structural impact: break the traditional molds, have the courage and vulnerability to make change.

RELATIONSHIPS

- Ensure nontraditional communication techniques in traditional businesses.
- Be a connector: have a diverse network.
- Create authentic relationships with one another to learn from each other.
- Build relationships by being genuine.
- Relationships really matter.
- Need to be self-aware to be a good listener so you can foster the relationship.
- Mentor authentic relationships.
- Mentorship is a two way street.
- Be respectful, show interest in other perspectives, develop interest in learning.
- Innovation is both ways. Innovation is conversational.

VALUES & ATTITUDES

- Everyone has value and brings something unique to the table – we need to recognize this.
- We are all working towards the same vision and each of us brings value to the organization.
- Authenticity, humility, curiosity: links to relationship building, engagement and collaboration.
- A common set of values and purpose will help define the identity of your team/group/workforce.
- Align passion and value with strength.
- Be open: to ideas, curiosity, no agenda.
- Let go of existing beliefs, learn to trust.
- Take risks in your job to find your passion. Take opportunities to discover your passion.
- Be okay with failure – failure is a learning process.
- Wisdom is experience, reflection and curiosity.
- Have the humility to ask for help.

”

QUESTION 2: What are you discovering from the themes and stories that could help all of us move from intergenerational tension to workplace collaboration?



ACTION SPACE

CO-CREATING IDEAS FOR A COLLABORATIVE INTERGENERATIONAL WORKPLACE AND BEYOND

Participants identified bold ideas for action that would help spread innovations 'out and up' and allow everyone to observe the patterns in what emerged. We hope you read the Top 10 ideas from participants and feel empowered, inspired and motivated to take ideas from XYBOOM into your world!

QUESTION: If you were 10 times bolder, what big idea for intergenerational collaboration would you recommend for your workplace? What first step would you take?

TOP 10 IDEAS

1. HAVE MENTORSHIP DAYS SIMILAR TO VOLUNTEER DAYS

2. BI-DIRECTIONAL MENTORSHIP

Mentorship from retirees and from the younger generation to current and potential leadership/management.

3. DRAGON'S DEN EVENT FOR COMPANY IDEAS

Host a corporate retreat where individuals are organized into intergenerational groups, discuss issues, come up with ideas/solutions and finally, pitch their ideas to the CEO.

4. CROSS DEPARTMENTAL AND GENERATIONAL MENTORSHIP

Should be company wide company wide to promote networking and cross pollination of ideas throughout the company.

5. MANDATORY MENTORSHIP PROGRAM AT WORK

6. CREATING AN ELDERING PROGRAM

Teaching older generations to be Elders and teaching younger generations how to receive eldering.

7. TAKE A GROUP OF GEN Y'S AND BOOMERS ON A HUMANITARIAN WORK TRIP

For example: building a school in Guatemala. No technology would be allowed. An exchange of knowledge and respect across all perceived barriers would be facilitated, and then that team of people would be sent back to their companies as ambassadors for a new model of employee engagement and organizational development.

8. CREATE SOCIAL STRUCTURES WITHIN THE WORKPLACE TO SUPPORT PARENTS WHO WORK.

This could be affordable childcare spaces, networks of families who can help each other and/or truly flexible work week across all organizations.

9. BRING IN ALL THE HIGHEST BC REVENUE COMPANY CEOS TO XYBOOM

10. MAKE VULNERABILITY AND SHARING WITH EACH OTHER A STRENGTH IN OUR SOCIETY;

Convince organizations, parents, teachers etc. to let younger generations fail with grace, encouraging innovation, learning, curiosity and courage – this will develop great leaders.

TOP 5 RECURRING THEMES

1. CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR EMPLOYEES/EMPLOYERS TO CONNECT AND COLLABORATE
2. INTRODUCE WORKPLACE MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS
3. CREATE OPPORTUNITIES TO (TEMPORARILY) BREAKDOWN TRADITIONAL CORPORATE HIERARCHY
4. HOLD A CORPORATE RETREAT TO ADDRESS INTERGENERATIONAL TENSIONS AND TEAM BUILDING
5. ENSURE MULTI-GENERATIONS/DIVERSITY ON BOARDS/ EXECUTIVE TEAMS



Enjoyed the #XYBoom conference. Especially loved the collaborative & interactive storytelling session. @xyboomdotcom. Back to the basics! - bchrma @BCHRNA



Audience question: Younger generation demands flexibility, but is the current workplace feasible to achieve this? #XYBOOM - XYBOOM Conference @XYBOOMdotCOM



Overheard at #XYBOOM: "At the end of the day we are all human" - XYBOOM Conference @XYBOOMdotCOM



Overheard at #XYBOOM: Differentiate yourself! Employers need to invest in employees if they are looking for a particular skill set#note... - XYBOOM Conference @XYBOOMdotCOM

TWITTER HARVEST



“Boomers returning from retirement: How do you let go of your legacy? To create space for new people?” #xyboom - umi Ang @yumi_ang



Gen X/Y and Boomers need to learn and teach each other to create intergenerational collaboration. It's not a one-way mentorship#XYBOOM - Carolyn Shum @shumbum1210



Love this. Flexibility in work hours/place can occur when “organizations hold individuals accountable for outcomes” - Heather Hay #XYBOOM - Roanne Weyermars @roanneweyermars



The power of storytelling, everyone can do it regardless of age, generation, or experience. #XY-BOOM - lauren I @laurenmlau



Getting a handle on what's happening in your employees lives (outside work) cements connection #xyboom @mec@janeterepocki #lifestage - Smart Savvy @smartsavvy



My takeaway from the live case study experience-gather in a circle without the table to create better relationships/ conversations#XYBOOM - Roanne Weyermars @roanneweyermars



“a story needs a listener to become what it can be”@amandafenton Great quote! #xyboom #wordsofwisdom - XYBOOM Conference @XYBOOMdotCOM



Powerful Essence Statements #XYBOOM: Wisdom= experience + reflection +curiosity – XYBOOM Conference @XYBOOMdotCOM



“Intergenerational issues/conflicts don't just happen between employees but with customers as well..” - Val Litwin #XYBOOM - Carolyn Shum @shumbum1210



Powerful Essence Statements #XYBOOM: the power in finding yourself in somebody else's story - YBOOM Conference @XYBOOMdotCOM



Watching @AmandaFenton talk about the power of storytelling and “gathering around the campfire” in creating human connection.#XYBOOM - Lynda Gerty @thegert



Age doesn't neccessarily equates wisdom RT @XYBOOMdotCOM: Powerful Essence Statements #XYBOOM: Wisdom= experience + reflection +curiosity - Carolyn Shum@shumbum1210



It's the relationship building and informal conversations that lead to successful formal business pitches and ideas #XYBOOM - Carolyn Shum @shumbum1210



The conference room is silent as everyone writes down their big ideas. #XYBoom - XYBOOM Conference@XYBOOMdotCOM



Overheard at #XYBOOM: “Seeing the person first not the age or generation” - XYBOOM Conference@XYBOOMdotCOM

GENERATIONAL GRAPH



MILLENNIALS

BORN
1980 - 2000



GEN X

BORN
1960 - 1980



BOOMERS

BORN
1943 - 1960



TRADITIONALISTS

BORN
BEFORE 1943

COMING OF AGE DURING

Gulf War, World of
Terrorism (9/11), Growth of
the Internet

Cold War, Growth of TV
(MTV Generation)

Post World War 2
Economic Boom, Man on
the Moon, Vietnam War

World War 1, Great
Depression

VIEWED AS

Skeptical
Spoiled
Protected

Pessimistic
Slacker

Optimistic
Excessive
Greedy

Can do
Resilient

CORE VALUES

Self Confident
Socially Minded
Sense of Civic Duty
Goal Oriented

Global Thinking
Balance
Self Reliant
Goal Oriented

Personal/Immediate
Gratification
Hard Work
Personal Growth
Equality

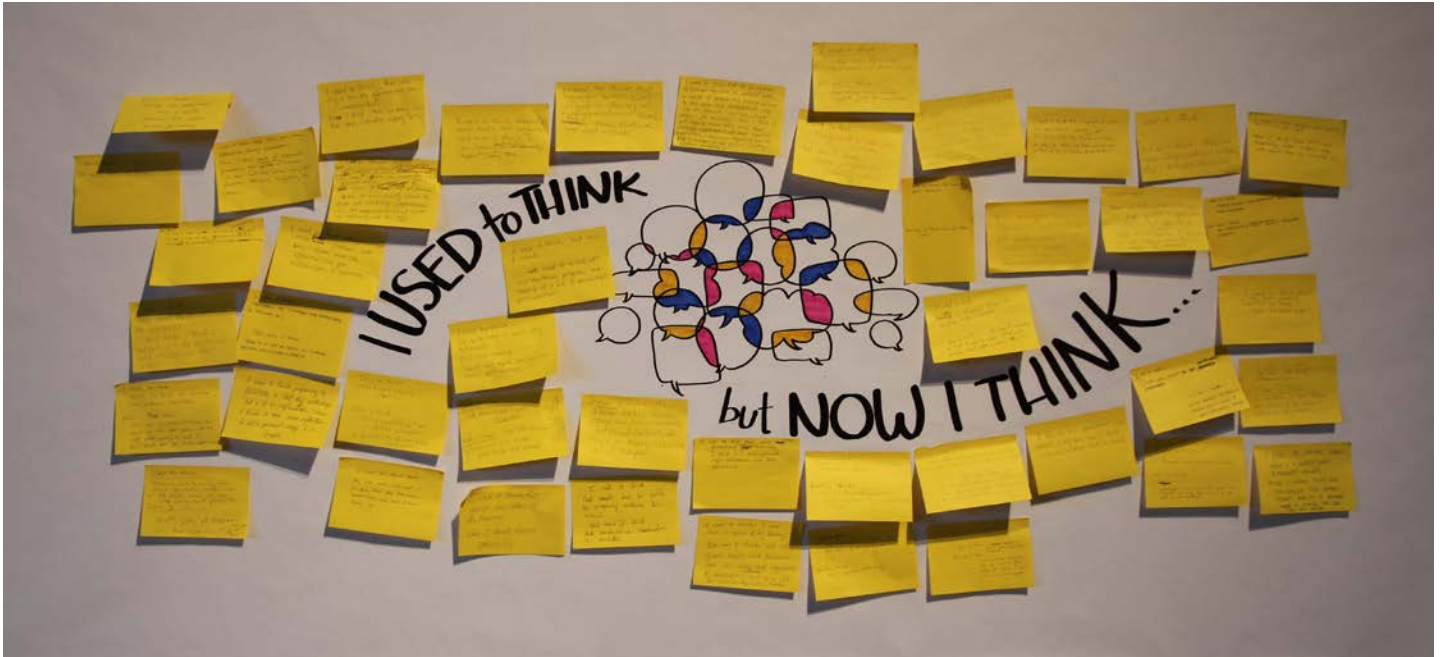
Sacrifice
Conformity
Respect for Authority
Delayed Reward

Sources:

"Generations at Work: Managing the Clash of Boomers, Gen Xers, Gen Yers in the Workplace", Ron Zemke, Claire Raines, Bob Filipczak
<http://theechoboom.com/2010/10/generational-differences-baby-boomer-generation-x-and-generation-y-comparison/>

"Traditionalist, Baby Boomers, Generation X, Generation Y (and Z) Working Together", Executive Office, Talent Management Team, United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund

CLOSING



“

I used to think I was out of date as a Boomer but now I know my ideas are not that out of date: I am quite adaptable and I'm looking forward to working with all generations.

I used to think that intergenerational issues are complicated to address. But now I think they are still complicated but there are ways of addressing them and some have provided us with shining examples of how to do it.

I used to think there were many generational differences among generations. Now, I think people of different generations have some things in common. We have common values: desire for freedom, flexibility, recognition, to dream.

I used to think Boomers were traditional and scary, now I think stereotypes are bad, don't generalize, everyone has the opportunity to be open-minded and grow.

I used to think that Gen X and Gen Y had different values, now I know we all value the same things, and as a Boomer, I need to change, not the other way around.

I used to think there were some intergenerational differences but I'm reminded by what the Dalai Lama said "when you remove all labels we are all human". So now I think on a very "human" level we are all pretty much the same, we all bring experiences – it's the experiences that make us different, not the age.

I used to think that everyone accepted change but now I think safe spaces need to be created to support positive change and collaboration between generations.

I used to think that mentorship/training/learning usually comes from older groups/individuals to younger people, but now I think that learning and mentorship is indeed a two-way stream and that regardless of age/generation, you teach/learn from everyone.

I used to think that it's hard to structure real/authentic discussions, now I know that real discussion/dialogue can occur in the right space, with the right people guiding it, and if participants are open to the experience.

I used to think more about the problems in the workplace, and now I think all about the solutions and innovations that exist.

”

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