

Feedback and the Multi-Generational Workforce

Below is a general approach to understanding the multi-general workforce.

	HELPFUL HINTS	STRATEGIES
Senior and Silent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electronic forms of communication are impersonal and complex. Formal communication is preferred using proper channels View of Feedback: <i>"No news is good news" and "As long as I am not hearing from the boss, I am doing okay"</i> Will conform to feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>One on One communication in person, by phone or personal note</i> <i>Prepare worker (in advance) for feedback session and explain "why". Provide reports to review in advance.</i> <i>Tie individual performance to the firm goals acknowledging their experience and dedication to the firm</i> <i>Speak positively to the 'history' of the firm</i> <i>Refrain from references to their 'age'</i>
Baby Boomer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uncomfortable with conflict and autocracy. Somewhat formal communication is preferred through a structured network by mixing electronic with face to face. View of Feedback: <i>"Play nice"</i> Will compete during feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Provide a variety of communication methods (meetings, email, reports, conference calls)</i> <i>Allow employee to add their suggestions and observations before giving feedback and allow them to accept ownership</i> <i>Tie individual performance to the importance function or position</i> <i>Create time for informal conversations</i> <i>Find common ground</i>
Generation X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Casual and direct. Somewhat skeptical and prefers electronic communication methods. View of Feedback: <i>"I'm not sure if this is in my best interest"</i> Will challenge during feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Utilize all types of electronic tools (PDA, online calendar, shared networks, webcasts, conference calls)</i> <i>Allow employee to collaborate (and possibly lead) the discussion</i> <i>Tie individual performance to individual career goals</i> <i>Communicate perceived negative news quickly and refrain from 'sugar coating' the message. Use logic and reason</i> <i>Save meetings for issues that truly require face to face interaction</i>
Generation Y and Millennial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fast, casual, and direct and high tech. Eager to please and prefers electronic communication methods. View of Feedback: <i>"Okay"</i> Will comply during feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Provide a variety of communication methods (meetings, email, reports, conference calls)</i> <i>Offer opportunities to broaden skills</i> <i>Tie individual performance to the people involved with the project</i> <i>Acknowledge their talents and fresh perspectives and be willing to learn from them</i> <i>Keep conversations to a minimum and periodically follow-up</i>

Georgia State Case Studies: IABA

Case Study One:

Professor Courtney sometimes invites students to the board to solve problems before the class. She believes students learn more from solving problems themselves with her guidance than from passively watching her complete the process. But the same students – all white men and one black woman -- always volunteer. She knows, from the homework assignments, that there are other women, as well as a few international students, who are also doing well and who should feel confident solving before the others. But if they don't want to participate, that is their choice. She also notices that some of the international students don't make eye contact and it bothers her that they are so disengaged in the class. Why force them to contribute if they aren't really there?

Case Study Two:

An African American actuary decides that she wants to leave consulting because she wants to start a family and have a better work life balance. She is high performing, high potential, and on the track to become a Sr. consultant in the firm. Lately, she has been dis-engaged, and has come to talk to a peer about her concerns. You are the peer, you value her work, and her friendship, and understand her point of view, but do not want her to leave. Not only will it impact her career, but it would be a loss to the company. She supports 3 of the major accounts that you work on. What are some of the things you would consider in preparing to have a conversation with her. Who else do you consider talking to and why?

Case Study Three:

Human Resources has come to you as a focus group and wants to hear about what is going on with new associates. They are hearing that people are not happy and want to know how to fix it but do not know what is going on. As a team, you have your ear to the ground, and you know what the real concerns are. The pay increases have been smaller, head hunters are calling you every day and offering more money, the stress level is high, and there are no diverse managers to help support you. Come up with HOW you will communicate to HR to get the key points across without being too emotional, yet make a compelling argument for change.

Case Study Four:

Your boss is a gay white male, and you are the only diverse person on your team. Everyone seems to get along really well. You often wonder why the other team members are often asked to go have lunch, meet up for drinks after work, or get invited to golf. After months of this happening, you begin to wonder if you are being isolated because of your ethnic background. You get your work done, you always have high performance ratings, but you don't have close connections with the team. What do you do, and how would you frame a conversation with your direct manager without accusing him or the team.

Can you follow directions?

Please complete this 3 minute test

1. Read everything before you do anything?
2. Put your name in the upper right hand corner of this page
3. Circle the word "name" in sentence 2
4. Draw 5 small squares in the top right hand corner
5. Put an X in each square you have just drawn
6. Put a circle around each square
7. Sign your name under the title of this page
8. After the title write YES YES YES
9. Underline sentences number 7 & 8
10. Put an X on the lower left-hand corner of this page
11. Draw an X around the X you have just made
12. On the back of this page multiply 70 by 30
13. Draw a circle around the word "top" in sentence 4
14. Loudly call out your first name when you reach this point in the test
15. If you think you have carefully followed these directions call out "I have carefully followed these directions"
16. On the reverse side of this paper add 107 & 278
17. Count out in your normal speaking voice 1 to 10
18. If you are the first person to get this far shout out loudly "I am the first person to get this far following these instructions"
19. Punch 3 holes in your paper using your pencil or pen
20. Now that you have finished reading carefully, do only sentences 1&2