



SMX 2008

**Generational Change:  
Understanding and Influencing the Different  
Generations**

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**Learning Outcomes**

- Examine the behavioural characteristics and distinctions between different generations
- Understand the needs of a diverse population
- Understand why demographics have changed
- Identify how we can communicate with sport participants of different ages and generations

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**Society Demographics are Ever Changing**

- Issues, implications & impact
- Demographic population trends
  - Ageing population & workforce
  - Fertility rates dropping
  - Trend towards early retirement
- Need to address individual factors & organisational factors

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**Introduction**

- What Observations Have You Made?

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**Generational Differences**

- A Generation
  - shares historical, political, economic or social life experiences
  - effects relatively stable over lifetime
  - distinct from another generation

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**Generational Differences**

- Traditionals/ Silent Generation (b 1925 – 1946) 63-83 years old
- Baby Boomers (b 1946 - 1964) 44 - 62 years old
- Generation X (b 1965 - 1981) 27 – 43 years old
- Generation Y (b 1981-2002) 6 - 25 years old
- Generation Z (b 2002-) 5 + years old

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### Generational Differences

- Generational conflict
- Mixed messages/ misunderstandings/ miscommunications/ mismatches
- Necessity to understand & manage generational groups. Why?

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### Generational Differences

- Caveat:
  - Generational research is fundamentally flawed
  - Use insights

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### Traditionals/ Silent Generation

Born 1925 – 1946

- Influencing Experiences?

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### Traditionals/ Silent Generation

Born 1925 – 1946

- Behavioural Characteristics:
  - Respects authority
  - Place duty before pleasure
  - Believe patience is its own reward
  - Value honour & integrity
  - Avoid challenging the system

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### Baby Boomers

Born 1946 - 1964

- Influencing Experiences?

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### Baby Boomers

Born 1946 – 1964

- Post WW2 – leisure, prosperity
- Witnessed foibles of political, religious & business leaders
- Lack of respect for & loyalty to authority & social institutions
- Pressure to care for ageing parents & own children
- Positions of corporate & national authority
- Embraced material success

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### Baby Boomers

Born 1946 – 1964

- Created the two-income household
- Stable employment history
- High divorce rate
- Gender revolution

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### Baby Boomers

Born 1946 - 1964

- Behavioural Characteristics:
  - Live to work
  - Appreciate respect
  - Willing to go into debt
  - Preserve their youth
  - Nostalgic

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### Baby Boomers

Born 1946 - 1964

- Examples?

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### Generation X

Born 1965 - 1981

- Influencing Experiences?

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### Generation X

Born b 1965 – 1981

- Grew up with financial, family, societal insecurity; rapid change; great diversity; & a lack of solid traditions
- Well educated
- Dot.com generation
- Grew up in homes with both parents working or only one parent
- Grew up with high divorce rate amongst parents

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### Generation X

Born b 1965 – 1981

- Value relationships – turn to small enclaves of friends for support ("Friends"/ "SATC")
- Grew up with increased downsizing of parents
- Increased abortion rates & teen pregnancy
- Economic recessions
- Increased youth crime & violence

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### Generation X

Born b 1965 – 1981

- WIIFM
- Cynical & untrusting
- Accustomed to receiving immediate feedback from technology
- Influenced by MTV, AIDS, & worldwide competition
- Technically competent
- Comfortable with diversity, change, multi-tasking, & competition.

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### Generation X

Born 1965 – 1981

- Behavioural Characteristics :
  - Confident
  - Rapid career transitions
  - Sense of belonging, autonomy & entrepreneurship
  - Interested in short term rewards
  - Question authority
  - Desire versatility

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### Generation X

Born 1965 – 1981

- Behavioural Characteristics :
  - A sense of individualism
  - Exciting, challenging, thrilling experiences
  - Opportunities to be innovative & creative
  - Immediacy
  - Engage them quickly
  - Keep them busy & give ongoing, immediate feedback

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### Generation X

Born 1965 – 1981

- Behavioural Characteristics :
  - Clearly defined tasks & expectations
  - Technology
  - Collaboration & teamwork
  - Being a respected equal
  - To ask questions & challenge assumptions
  - View jobs within context of a contract

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### Generation X

Born 1965 - 1981

- Examples?

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### Generation Y

Born 1981- 2002

- Influencing Experiences?

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**Generation Y**

Born 1981-2002

- Born into a wired world - connected 24/ 7
- Mosaic learners
- Crave higher salaries, flexible work arrangements, and more financial leverage
- Opinionated yet assured
- More trusting and secure than Gen X-ers
- Experienced 9/11 & terrorism

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**Generation Y**

Born 1981-2002

- Behavioural Characteristics :
  - Optimistic & idealistic
  - Fiercely independent
  - Multi-skilled
  - Challenged attention span - extremely bored quickly
  - Expect heightened stimulation

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**Generation Y**

Born 1981-2002

- Behavioural Characteristics :
  - Care about family, education, environment
  - Diversity
  - Volunteerism
  - More team oriented than Gen X-ers
  - Multiple job & career paths

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**Generation Y**

Born 1981-2002

- Behavioural Characteristics :
  - Constant feedback
  - Resent micromanagement
  - Seek new learning experiences
  - Aspire to more job stability than Gen X-ers
  - Creative, innovative
  - Emotionally & intellectually open

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**Generation Y**

Born 1981-2002

- Behavioural Characteristics :
  - Lack experience
  - Need guidance
  - Young Gen Y-ers may have Gen X-ers for parents
  - Richest, best educated and healthiest generation in history

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**Generation Y**

Born 1981-2002

- Behavioural Characteristics :
  - Communicate through SMS and email
  - Embrace continuous learning
  - Freely expressive with strong views
  - More conservative than Gen X-ers
  - Adhere to old fashioned values - more likely to aspire to marriage and kids than Gen X-ers

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### Generation Y

Born 1981-2002

- Examples?

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### Generation Z

Born 2002-

- Influencing Experiences?

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### Generation Z

Born 2002-

- sophisticated technology experiences in their formative years
- Mobile & wired marketing
- Environmentally conscious

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### Generation Z

Born 2002-

- Behavioural Characteristics :
  - Theory that the characteristics of generations are cyclical, and the generation currently being born will share characteristics with the Traditionals/Silent Generation

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### Generation Z

Born 2002-

- Examples?

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### Relationship Between Age and Work Values

Are individuals' work values influenced more by generational experiences or do they change over time with maturity?

- Mixed research results
- Work ethic developed during years 6-16
- Personality and temperament settled after this stage except for life changing experiences
- Influenced by experiences & expectations during "critical window"
- These are strongly affected by environment & home

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### Experiences and Events That Shaped Generations

Influence	Baby Boomer	Generation X	Generation Y
Role models	Men of character	Men & women of character	What is character?
Television	<i>I love Lucy</i>	<i>X - Files</i>	<i>Lost</i>
Musical Icons	Elvis Presley	Madonna	Rihanna
Music Mediums	LPs & EPs	Cassettes & CDs	Digital (iPods & MP3)
Computer Games	Pong	Pacman	World of Warcraft
Money	Earn it	It's not everything	Give it to me
Loyalty to employer	Work my way to the top	Shortcut to the top	Give me Saturday off or I'll quit
Respecting your elders	Automatic	Is polite	Whatever!
Sex	After marriage	Casual	Online
Change	Resist it	Accept it	Want it
Technology	Ignorant of it	Comfortable	Feel it in their gut
Justice	Always prevails	Up to the courts	If you can afford it

Adapted from Sheahan, P. Thriving and Surviving Generation Y at Work

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### The Workplace by Generation

	Baby Boomers Born 1946 – 1964 Aged 40's – 50's	Generation X Born 1965 – 1981 Aged 20's – 30's	Generation Y Born 1981 – 2002 Aged Teens – 20s
Values at work:	Work ethic. Industry - Focused	Achievement Company - centric	Ownership Individuality
Motivations for work:	Financial security Responsibility	Career Progression Opportunity	Job Variety Creativity
Influences over career choice:	Parents Authorities	Career Advisors Experts	Internet Peer Groups
Shapers of career perceptions and views:	Tradition Reputation	Observation Recommendation	Perception Experience
Key Management tools:	Recruiting Supervising	Training Promoting	Innovating Empowering
Key Communication Tools:	Technical data Evidence	Visual examples Demonstration	Hands-on Learning Participation
Typical Training Style:	Formal Monologue	Programmed Dialogue	Interactive Multi - Model
Typical Leadership Style:	Control Thinkers	Coordination Doers	Consensus Feelers
Influencers and Values	Local Long-Term Needs	Regional Medium – Term Goals	Global Short – Term Wants
Management Approach:	Telling "yes boss"	Selling "what's in it for me"	Involving "here's what I think"

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### Workforce Planning Generational Management Tip Sheet

	Baby Boomers	Generation X	Generation Y
<b>Personality</b>	Optimistic Idealist Driven	Sceptical Fiercely Independent Work life balance	Confident Socially minded Structured / planned
<b>Leadership Strengths</b>	Participative Style Leadership with Heart Political Savvy	Thrive on change Competent and Straightforward Not intimidated by Authority	Dedicated Optimistic in the face of overwhelming odds
<b>Leadership Challenges</b>	Mastering Soft Leadership Skills Dealing Directly with Conflict Practicing what they Preach	Tact vs. Brutal Honesty Corporate Politics	Intimidated by conflict Need structure and supervision
<b>Key to Motivating</b>	Recognise their experience and contributions Provide opportunities to give back Monetary Rewards	Create a flexible work environment Provide learning and development opportunities	Help them see meaning in their work Provide opportunities to "move up the corporate ladder" and / or contribute at high levels

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### Relationship Between Age and Work Values

- Differences in Work Values/ Commitment between generations?

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### Work Values

- Change in work values is influenced by organisations' / teams' lack of commitment to individuals:
  - Work findings can be applied to sporting context
  - Downsizing/ Axing
  - Employees/ players disposable

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### Work Values

- "Sea-Change" amongst Baby boomers
- Gen X & Y seek more balanced lifestyle
- Current "War for Talent"

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Activity

Construct a Strategy to work professionally with athletes from :

- Baby Boomer
- Generation X
- Generation Y
- Generation Z

Activity

- How do we manage transition from one generation into the next?

Activity

- Why is there potential for conflict in multi-age teams/ clubs?
  - How do we address this?

Activity

- How can we better understand and meet the needs & goals of our athletes and teams of different generations?

Thank you for your participation!

Further Contact

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