



STATE OF NEW JERSEY CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

EMPLOYEE ADVISORY SERVICE NEWSLETTER

The New Jersey Civil Service Commission's Employee Advisory Service (EAS) Newsletter contains useful articles and information for managing various well-being and work-life issues in order to create a healthier, happier, and more productive workplace. EAS is committed to improving the quality of life for all New Jersey Civil Service employees by encouraging a good work-life balance.



UPCOMING WEBINAR

HOW TO THRIVE IN A MULTI-GENERATIONAL WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT

About the Webinar:

This session discusses the differences between the five generations in today's workplace and provides tools to help the participants to better understand and collaborate with colleagues from each.

WHAT'S INSIDE

- Page 2:** Generations at Work
- Page 5:** Monitoring your Energy to be the Best at Work
- Page 7:** Parents: Make Time For You
- Page 8:** Boost Your Self-Esteem & Self-Confidence
- Page 9:** Upcoming Webinars
- Page 10:** Did You Know?

 REGISTER NOW

Date: August 22, 2024
Time: 2:00-3:00 PM

GENERATIONS AT WORK

The workplace brings together a mix of people—people of different backgrounds, ethnicities, races, genders, sexual orientations, and ages. The success of any organization depends on its ability to motivate a diverse workforce to perform collaboratively toward common goals. In the same way, your success as an employee or manager depends on your ability to work with, learn from, and bring out the best in people who are different from you.

Age differences are an element in this workplace diversity, and generational groupings can be a helpful way to understand and work more effectively with people of different ages—as long as generalizations aren't used to stereotype colleagues.

The Theory of Generational Differences

Researchers who study generational differences point to formative experiences as defining the unique character of each generation. These include national and world events that have affected the lives of large numbers of people; economic booms and busts as observed by children and experienced by workers, especially early in their careers; and technology changes that have affected how people communicate and obtain information. The theory of generational differences is that these shared experiences become part of a generation's makeup and affect how people in different age groups think, act, and relate to work. Studies of large numbers of people of various ages, over time, can reveal tendencies in the different generations, and these tendencies are the basis of claims made for the unique character of each generation.

The Risk of Generational and Age-Based Stereotypes

These generational tendencies can be interesting, and sometimes useful, but they must be approached with caution. They can't be assumed to give insight into the character, communication style, work habits, motivations, or technical skills of any individual. When applied to individuals as stereotypes, they can blind you to the unique strengths and abilities of your coworkers or the people you manage.

Other peoples' stereotypes of you based on your age or generation can also be damaging.



Your concern about negative stereotypes can undermine your confidence. It can also push you to act in ways that aren't authentic or comfortable.

It's important, too, to separate what might seem like generational characteristics from attitudes and priorities that are simply factors of age or stage in life. It's natural for younger workers to be impatient to advance in their careers, for example, or for workers with children to want more flexibility in their schedules.

The Generations at Work

There are five generations in the workplace today, if the dwindling numbers of people born before 1945 are included. Here's how the generations are most commonly defined, with some of the characteristics attributed to them and other information for context:

Silent Generation (or Traditionalists)

- Born: between 1925 and 1945
- Formative experiences: The Great Depression, World War II, radio and movies, post-war economic boom
- Attributed characteristics: Loyal, disciplined, hard-working, tactful, respects authority
- Age-related priorities: Respect from others for experience, transferring knowledge, mentoring, quality of life in later years, leaving a legacy through meaningful work and quality relationships, family, ongoing learning
- Percent of labor force in the 2020s: dropping from 1 percent to very low numbers

Baby Boomers

- Born: between 1946 and 1964
- Formative experiences: Vietnam War, civil rights movement, Watergate, post-war economic boom, 1970s oil crisis, late 1960s and early 1970s inflation, greater opportunities for women in the labor force
- Attributed characteristics: Competitive, hard-working (to the point of workaholism), optimistic, team-oriented, self-centered, questioning authority
- Age-related priorities: Respect from others for experience, transferring knowledge, mentoring, financial security in retirement, leaving a legacy through meaningful work and quality relationships, family, ongoing learning
- Percent of labor force in the 2020s: projected to drop from 19 percent at the start of the decade to less than 10 percent by its end

Generation X

- Born: between 1965 and 1980
- Formative experiences: AIDS epidemic, fall of the Berlin Wall, rise of the internet, dot-com boom, increase in the numbers of women (this generation's mothers) in the labor force
- Attributed characteristics: Independent, task-oriented, self-reliant, flexible, skeptical, values work-life balance
- Age-related priorities: More responsibility and a greater voice at work; work-life balance for personal interests, social connections, and family; ongoing learning
- Percent of labor force in the 2020s: projected to drop from 32 percent at the start of the decade to 27 percent at its end

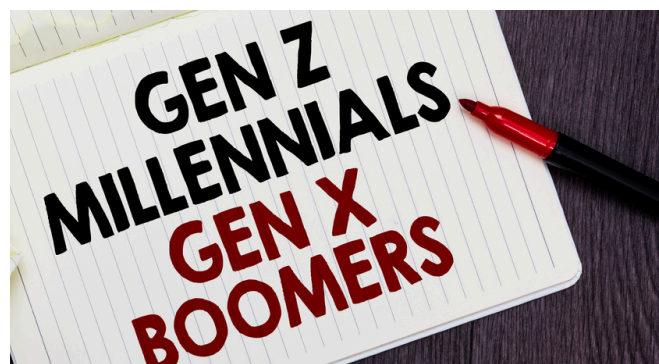
Generation Y (or Millennials)

- Born: between 1981 and 1994 (or to the mid-1990s)
- Formative experiences: Expansion of the internet, Columbine school shootings, 9/11, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, global competition, recession of 2008-2009, increasing cost of higher education
- Attributed characteristics: self-directed, realistic, goal-focused, competitive, flexible, entrepreneurial, community-oriented, values knowledge sharing and work-life balance, welcomes diversity
- Age-related priorities: More responsibility and a greater voice at work; work-life balance for personal interests, social connections, and family; learning new skills; repaying student loans
- Percent of labor force in the 2020s: projected to remain stable at just over 30 percent



Generation Z (or Centennials)

- Born: between 1995 and 2015 (or from the mid-1990s to a yet-to-be-determined cutoff)
- Formative experiences: Ready access to the internet and smartphones from an early age, post-9/11 security, recession of 2008–2009 (experienced as children), increasing cost of higher education
- Attributed characteristics: self-reliant, values authenticity and personal freedom, flexible, global outlook, entrepreneurial, values knowledge sharing and work-life balance, welcomes diversity
- Age-related priorities: More responsibility and a greater voice at work; work-life balance for personal interests, social connections, and family; learning new skills; repaying student loans
- Percent of labor force in the 2020s: projected to grow from 17 percent at the start of the decade to 33 percent at its end



How to Create Synergy and Reduce Conflict in Cross-Generational Work

- Recognize what people of all generations have in common.
People of all ages
 - Want to be valued and treated with respect at work
 - Place a priority on family and their lives outside of work
 - Value ongoing learning
 - Appreciate constructive feedback to help them do better
- Ask, don't assume. To understand what motivates another person, how they prefer to communicate, and what special strengths they bring to the team, ask them. Don't fall into the trap of assuming younger workers want more flexibility and older workers don't, or that younger workers are technology whizzes and older workers can't learn new technical skills. That's stereotyping, and it hurts everyone.
- Make time to get to know your coworkers of all ages at a personal level. Talk about your lives outside of work, your lived experiences, what motivates you, and your hopes for the future. Find common ground. Appreciate how your differences can give you a broader perspective when you collaborate.
- Establish norms for working together. Discuss and decide on the best ways to communicate different kinds of information, from urgent alerts and quick questions to complex problems that may require extended discussion. That might mean adapting to other people's preferences as you work together.
- Be attentive to who gets which work assignments. Managers should take care not to show favoritism for people near their own age or assign work based on age-related stereotypes. They should make a point of giving assignments that stretch people's abilities in different directions, paying attention to individual goals and aspirations.
- Acknowledge and respect priorities related to life stages. Team members with young children have an obvious priority outside of work. So do employees who are caring for an older or infirm family member, employees who are single and dating, and employees with a personal passion to pursue in their time away from work—no matter what their age or generation.

- Learn from coworkers of different ages and generations. Show your respect and appreciation for everyone you work with: Make an effort to understand their strengths and special skills, and ask them to teach you. Older workers may have experience in driving organizational change, for example, or dealing with difficult personalities. Younger workers may have insights from their education or fresh perspectives that could open new opportunities. Mentorships have traditionally paired an older worker or executive as a mentor with a younger mentee. Mentorship can work in the other direction, too, with an older worker seeking insights and learning skills from a younger colleague.



For More Information

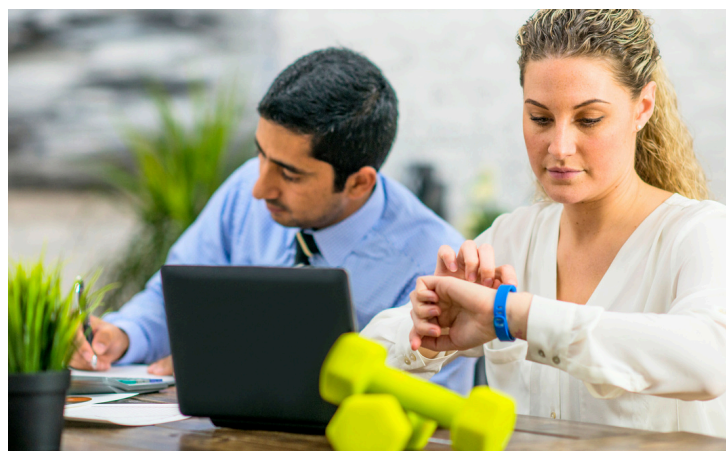
- Deal, J., & Levinson, A. (2016). *What millennials want from work: How to maximize engagement in today's workforce*. New York City: McGraw Hill.
- Hay Group. (2015). *Managing a multi-generational workforce: The myths vs. the realities*. Retrieved June 30, 2021, from https://info.haygroupupdate.com/GLOBAL-PDS-Leadership-NUR-2015-12-Multi-gen-paper-GLOBAL-MKT-LANG-EN-X3Y2_.html
- Hirsch, A. (2020, February 5). *How to manage intergenerational conflict in the workplace*. Retrieved June 30, 2021, from the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM): <https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/employee-relations/pages/how-to-manage-intergenerational-conflict-in-the-workplace.aspx>
- King, E., Finkelstein, L., Thomas, C., & Corrington, A. (2019, August 1). *Generational differences at work are small. Thinking they're big affects our behavior*. *Harvard Business Review*. Retrieved June 30, 2021, from <https://hbr.org/2019/08/generational-differences-at-work-are-small-thinking-theyre-big-affects-our-behavior>

MONITORING YOUR ENERGY TO BE THE BEST AT WORK

Work demands can drain your energy at times. You need to deal with work pressure, face change with an open mind, and be a supportive member of your team. You can only do all of that if you attend to your own physical and emotional needs. Here are some suggestions for monitoring your energy so that you can be your best at work.

The Three Types of Energy

- Physical energy activates the body's movements and actions. The amount of physical energy is dictated by one's health, diet, and physical activity.
- Mental energy activates the brain to perform cognitive functions. The brain, while only accounting for 2 percent of the body's mass, demands 20 percent of the body's total energy budget. Mental energy is required for decision-making, analyzing, focus, and problem-solving.
- Emotional energy is what fuels human emotions. Emotions can be categorized as high energy or low energy. Not only do high-energy, negative emotions affect energy resources, but positive, high-energy emotions, like excitement and elation, do as well.



Energy Gains and Drains

The key to managing your energy is identifying your energy gains and drains. Energy gains are those activities that you do for yourself that recharge your batteries. The interesting thing is that not everyone shares the same energy gains and drains. For example, socializing may boost your energy level, but completely diminish someone else's.

Examples of potential energy-gaining activities include:

- Spending time with a friend
- Working on a hobby
- Being in nature
- Exercising
- Meditating

Energy drains are the opposite of energy gains. It's those activities that require a high amount of mental or emotional energy. Some examples of potential energy-draining activities include:

- Dealing with conflict
- A difficult commute
- Working with a difficult person
- Completing projects at the last minute
- Responding to other people's emotions

Once you identify those actions that give you an energy boost, prioritize some of them as part of your weekly routine. Often, when people get busy or overwhelmed, they start canceling things they consider low priority. However, activities that restore energy levels should not be considered low priority. If you want to be at your best, they are essential.



Ways to Recharge Your Energy

- Attend to your health. Exercise regularly. Eat a healthy diet. Get the sleep you need.
- Pay attention to your emotions. Recognize the physical signs of stress before they reveal themselves in unhelpful behavior. Know the triggers that provoke you to anger or withdrawal. Don't allow yourself to become stuck in anger or negative rumination. Instead, practice positive reframing, looking for opportunities in obstacles and setbacks.
- Take breaks to recharge. Take short breaks during the workday to pause and relax, and breaks before or after work to calm yourself. Listen to soothing music. Meditate or use breathing techniques. Take a walk or go to the gym to release energy and regain focus.
- Use your vacation time to get away from work and recharge.
- Make time for the people and activities you care about outside of work. Carve out both "me" and "we" time—time by yourself to recharge, and time with friends and family to connect and share.
- Practice mindfulness. Mindfulness is a powerful tool to help restore energy and manage stress. Check with your employee support program to get more information about mindfulness.

RECHARGE YOURSELF

- Reach out to your manager when you are feeling overwhelmed. Talk with your manager when your list of priorities gets overwhelming. Together, figure out which are most critical, which can wait, and whether there's another way to get them done.
- Cultivate friendships at work with energizing and uplifting colleagues and with people you can be yourself with. In a good relationship, providing and accepting support is energizing, not draining. Good friends can make you laugh and see the bright side of a challenging situation.
- Seek variety and learning opportunities in your work. Variety is energizing. Try new ways of doing your work. Talk with your manager about options to learn new skills and take on new tasks.

This was adapted from the article "Leaders: Managing Your Energy Level" and from the chapter "Monitoring Your Energy to Manage" (pp. 9–10) in A Manager's Guide to the Employee Support Program.

PARENTS: MAKE TIME FOR YOU



Before a baby is born, parents may have an image of the kind of parents they will be. As your child grows, you need opportunities to set realistic expectations for yourself and your child. New parents and babies are forming attachments to each other, and it is this time of physical and emotional closeness that sets the stage for future development. As the relationship grows in the toddler years, parents may discover their own parenting style—somewhere between laid-back and firm.

Regardless of your style, routine and structure are important to your child. Parents play the primary role of helping their children understand the world around them during the preschool and school-age years. Parents continue to provide guidance and support as children become preadolescents, while respecting their emerging independence and keeping the channels of communication open. The role of parenting can make you feel great joy and humility. Giving yourself permission to focus on your own needs will allow you to bring your best energy and thinking to the exciting, rewarding, and challenging role of parenting.

Activities to Help Take Care of You

- Spend time doing activities that you enjoy and that make you feel good.
- Find a few tasks or activities that you can easily "let go" to make life less busy.
- Talk with other parents about parenting for joint problem-solving, laughter, and insight.
- When you take out library books with your children, take out a book for you, too.
- Make time to get outdoors—finding a safe place to take a 20-minute walk can change your outlook on the day.
- If life events feel overwhelming, contact a friend, family member, or professional for support. Everyone has these moments.
- Listen to audio books while you commute to work or travel to run errands.
- Take advantage of free events in your community—lectures, musical events or conferences.
- Allow yourself to dream—write down your goals and priorities.



BOOST YOUR SELF-ESTEEM AND SELF-CONFIDENCE

Do you want to feel better about yourself? You can learn how to build self-esteem and raise your self-confidence. Try these tips:

- Check out new activities. You'll feel proud for stretching your wings. Does trying something new on your own seem too intimidating? Maybe see if a friend will go along.
- Be your own BFF. Make a list of things you love about you. Are you friendly, funny, creative or hard-working, for example?
- Celebrate your successes. Try to really enjoy your achievements. Record them in a journal, tell your friends, or hang up pictures or other reminders.
- Tell your inner critic to be quiet. If you have a mean thought about yourself, see if you can change it to something positive instead. For example, if you think, "I'm dumb," try remembering a time you did something smart.
- Practice being assertive. Try to express your thoughts, opinions and needs. It feels great to know you can speak up for yourself! (Of course, you want to do this without stomping on other people's feelings.)



- Find ways to feel like you're contributing. It feels great to help. You might do chores at home or volunteer in your community.
- Set realistic goals. Aim for a goal that you think you can reach. Then make a plan for how to get there. If you pick something very hard, you may get frustrated and quit.
- Forgive yourself when you fail. Nobody is perfect. The important thing is to learn from your mistakes. It's good to know you can pick yourself up and keep going!
- Find true friends. Hang out with people who make you feel good about yourself. Real friends like you for you.



If you try working on your self-esteem for a while and still don't feel good about yourself, reach out for help. Talk to a trusted friend or family member, doctor or counselor, or another person in whom you can confide. Also, sometimes low self-esteem can increase your risk for depression and other emotional problems. Speaking to someone you trust is the first step to getting support, and that person may be able to help you get treatment if you need it.



Employee Advisory Service

UPCOMING WEBINARS EMPLOYEES

Supervisors / Managers

How to Effectively Supervise a Remote Team

Date / Time

- August 22, 2024
- 11:00 – 12:00 PM

About this webinar:

Supervisors who are responsible for managing remote workers face several unique challenges. This important session reviews the core management and leadership skills necessary to ensure that remote employees are engaged and productive. Areas to be discussed include methods for keeping remote workers connected, the importance of establishing a communications rhythm, and strategies for effectively coaching and managing remote worker performance.



Employees

How to Thrive in a Multi-Generational Workplace Environment

Date / Time

- August 22, 2024
- 2:00 – 3:00 PM

About this webinar:


This session discusses the differences between the five generations in today's workplace and provides tools to help the participants to better understand and collaborate with colleagues from each.



Employee Advisory Service (EAS)
Support - Empowerment - Growth

Your privacy is important to us. Your confidentiality is protected by state and federal law and regulations. All of the services offered are guided by professional and ethical standards. Contact us to learn more.

 EAS_Help@csc.nj.gov

 866- 327-9133

 <https://nj.gov/csc/employees/advisory/>





Employee Advisory Service

Support - Empowerment - Growth



DID YOU KNOW?



THE EMPLOYEE ADVISORY SERVICE (EAS) CAN HELP STRENGTHEN YOUR RELATIONSHIPS.

Good relationships don't necessarily just happen. Developing and maintaining healthy partnerships with your spouse, family, friends and colleagues takes time, effort and understanding.

From improving communication skills, learning to give and take, and respecting one another to making time for yourself, problem-solving, having fun together, and more, EAS can provide guidance and helpful support. Call the Helpline today for confidential assistance.

Available Features

- 24/7 in-the-moment telephonic support
- Individual, marital and family counseling
- Information on pre-marital and marital counseling
- Referrals to local resources



**Contact EAS Today for
Confidential 24-hour Support**



Helpline: (866) 327-9133



Email: EAS_Help@csc.nj.gov



<https://nj.gov/csc/employees/advisory/>