ProActive ReSolutions builds respectful workplaces through prevention programs and incident management.

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ACTIVE VOICE

australia | canada | united states

Top municipalities, government agencies, and businesses share a common ingredient in their recipe for success - great people. Engaging these talented employees means learning to effectively communicate across gender, ethnic, and generational boundaries.

This Issue

Communicating Across Generations

A recent Global Workforce Study conducted by Towers Perrin found there was one common element that enables an organization to advance through the challenges of today's economy and ever-changing work environment: great people.

More than ever employers are realizing people are their sustainable, competitive advantage. It becomes difficult then to understand how to attract and retain top staff when gender, age, tenure, education, and factors such as experience and lifestyle influence each employee's individual needs and expectations.

This edition of Active Voice focuses on the different generations in the workplace and looks at the top drivers of attraction, retention and engagement for the Traditional, Baby Boomer, X and Y generations.

Managing the diversity of expectations in the workplace will never be easy, but the more an organization works to understand what's important to their people – the more successful they will be.

Judy Brooks, Managing Director
ProActive ReSoutions

IN THE MEDIA

Chapter 290 - Local Government Management Assocation Newsletter
"Election Season: How are you preparing for your new council?"
- By Judy Brooks, September 2008

ProActive ReSolutions' managing director, Judy Brooks offers tips on how municipalities can prepare for a new council. Brooks talks about creating a common language in the workplace and training all employees to have difficult conversations in a respectful manner. She stresses the importance of exercising clear, respectful communication to benefit from the diversity of viewpoints each councillor and staff member has to offer. Visit www.lgma.ca to read the article.

WORDS OF WISDOM
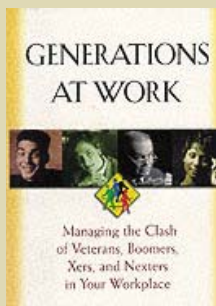
GENERATIONS AT WORK : Managing the Clash of Veterans, Boomers, Xers, and Nexters in Your Workplace
- By Ron Zemeke, Claire Raines, and Bob Filipczak

Written by a team of distinguished cross-generational authors, this groundbreaking book supplies fresh, provocative insights and practical solutions for understanding differences, resolving conflict and managing effectively in today's age-diverse workplace. It's for anyone struggling to manage people who just don't see work (or life) the same way. This book helps you understand the gulf that separates the generations and offers practical guidelines for building a harmonious workforce where people rally together for the organization, not against each other.

FEATURED PRODUCT
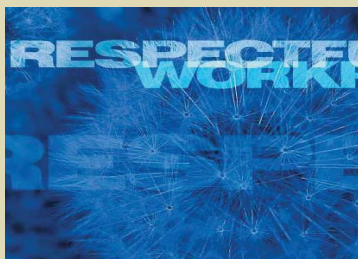
RESPECTFUL WORKPLACE FUNDAMENTALS

Respectful Workplace training teaches participants how to initiate and receive difficult conversations to eliminate pent up feelings and encourage robust dialogue. Our experts examine how the written and "unwritten" rules of a workplace affect employee satisfaction and productivity levels. Participants leave with the knowledge and skills they need to improve the overall culture of their work environment.

This training is most effective when bundled with Emotions at Work and Workplace Violence Prevention training programs. For more information on ProActive ReSolutions products visit: www.proactive-resolutions.com. Click on Take The Test for an analysis of your current environment.

Talking 'Bout My Generation

GENERATION GAP - Employees' needs and expectations vary based on many factors, not the least of which is their generation. Taking the time to understand generational differences can improve employee productivity and job satisfaction.

Human resources professionals have many theories on what employees want. The truth is it's different for everyone. What's important to a Baby Boomer will likely differ from what is important to an employee from Generation X or Y. There are of course, some commonalities, but each generation has had different influences, which have impacted their perspectives on life, work and society.

In the first part of our two part series on the topic, we'll take a broad look at each generation and the major influences that shape their view of the working world.

1.Traditional Generation (1925-1944)
Major Influences: Great Depression, First and Second World War

This generation entered the labour force early. Less emphasis is put on post secondary education. The majority held linear careers with a small number of organizations and are considered to be loyal to their respective companies.

2. Baby Boomers (1945-64)
Major Influences: TV, Vietnam, human rights movements

Baby Boomers grew up in a healthy, postwar economy. They are known for being idealists, and having a strong work ethic. Many have chosen to continue to work into their retirement.

3. Generation X (1965-1980)
Major Influences: Both parents working, corporate layoffs, '90s technology boom

Generation X is the first generation where it's common to experience both parents working. As a result of significant technological advancement and an influx of workers from the baby boomer generation, they also experienced corporate downsizing. As a result, Generation X is viewed as self-reliant, adaptive to change and as having less loyalty to organizations.

4. Generation Y (1981-2000)
Major Influences: Technology, instant communication, high divorce rates

Despite rising costs, Generation Y places great importance on post-secondary education. They're likely to change jobs often and are viewed as tech-savvy. Instant communication has increased their expectation for employer feedback.

How to communicate across generations
The next edition of Active Voice will focus on how to communicate across generations using a method called Straight Talk™. This six-step tool allows employees to engage in dialogue even when topics are sensitive.

For more information on Straight Talk visit: www.proactive-resolutions.com

Integrating New Councillors into the Workplace

Municipal elections are fast-approaching in many states and provinces and in just a couple weeks many local governments are going to be faced with a changing work environment.

Employees often resist change, but if proactive measures are taken to integrate new people and policies into the workplace, it can be a very positive experience.

One of the best ways to set existing management staff and new councillors up for success is to implement an off-site retreat in the first few weeks of working together. Working with a trained facilitator, both existing and new staff are given the opportunity to discuss the written and "unwritten" rules, of the workplace.

Written rules are simply the relevant laws and policies that each employee is expected to adhere to.

Unwritten rules define the culture of a workplace and include everything from how an organization celebrates birthdays to how employees interact and communicate with each other. If unwritten rules aren't discussed, they are often determined by dominating personalities who are not representative of the organization as a whole. It is good practice to have everyone's input on what they deem essential for creating a respectful workplace.

Municipalities that function efficiently create vibrant communities. Opening up the channels for robust communication ensures a positive work culture that delivers great results to the public.