

# GENERATIONS WORKING BETTER TOGETHER

## SESSION NOTES FROM GARRISON WYNN

**This document contains an overview of Garrison's presentation and is designed for people who have attended the session.**

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### FOCUS ON SOLUTIONS

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#### **The research**

- 5,000 top-performing people of influence in multiple industries

#### **Know-it-all experts**

- Praise their ability
- Paraphrase and listen to what they say
- Focus on the solution

#### **Being right!**

- If you criticize others' ideas, they will almost never listen to yours, no matter how good your ideas are!
- If you make people feel important, what you offer is more important to them.
- People don't choose what's best; they choose what they are the most comfortable with. It doesn't matter if it's the best.

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### THE TRUTH ABOUT TRUST

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#### **We are judgment machines.**

- You've known people for five years who still don't trust you, and you've known people for five minutes who do. Most information on trust stresses that it takes time. But actually looking at research from 1916 to the present reveals the truth about trust.
- People you can't stand: Are you willing to own 5% of their problems to gain more influence? Are you willing to look at the role you play in their behavior or reaction?
- People you don't understand: We let others' "odd" behavior take up a lot of our thoughts. We believe everyone has a different agenda. But every person basically wants sincerity, value, and prestige.

## Sincerity

- Does your sincerity match the situation? Are you seen as real?
- If you aren't sincere enough, people see you as cold. But if you're overly sincere, they see you as fake. Young people are not influenced by fake!

## Money/Value

- Multiple solutions for a single problem – If you tell people there is only one way to do something, you have no influence. People under age 35 were raised to believe there are multiple ways of doing everything. Finding those avenues makes them feel valuable. **What to say:** “There are other ways to do this, but this is the way most people agree works best.”

## Prestige

- Will working with you make them look good to others? Can you make them look good in front of the people they want to impress?
- Can you make them look smart?
- If people know you are being real, you have more than one way to solve their problems, and you can make them look good to others, they will listen to everything you say *every time you speak*. That's the foundation of influence.

## Believability

- Some things may be true but not believable. The issue: Some people believe a thing so strongly that they just look for reasons to prove what they already believe is true.
- Believability gives you credibility as a leader.
- The key to influence is to make sure people feel valued. People don't want to change if they feel a new way reduces their value or expertise. No one wants to be a senior beginner.
- Similarities first: Show how what you offer is similar to what they're used to, and then show the benefits of what you offer – how it's better than what they're used to.
- Feeling valued is what people value the most. People of older generations will perform better when they feel valued; people under 30 will simply leave if they do *not* feel valued. Younger and older people sometimes are too caught up in their differences to show or express how much they need each other.

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## WHAT THE TOP INTERGENERATIONAL LEADERS HAVE IN COMMON

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### **They know the impact of clarity.**

- Are you using your intelligence against yourself? It doesn't matter how smart you are if no one knows what you're talking about.
- If you are intelligent, you may lack tolerance for those who don't understand things as well as you. If that is the case, you may be labeled a poor communicator, which robs you of influence. You are now the smartest person in the room with the least amount of influence. Congratulations!
- Clarity is the foundation of influence. Young people buy into what they can understand quickly. If your ideas are easy to understand, you'll have more influence.

- A clear example: If your goal is to get everybody on the same page, you should at least make that page a lot easier to read. Does everyone agree on what success looks like? Getting people of all ages to do what you want them to do requires a higher level of clarity.
  - Younger workers (under 30) need to feel informed and valued. Don't just give them the steps; specifically define the outcome. Tell them what the finished job looks like – and why we do it that way.
  - Workers between 30 and 40 were taught not to trust things that are too simple; people over 50 don't trust things that are too complicated.
- **Good ideas are not good enough. Clarity of value is key.** Some people out there have less value to offer than you do; they're just better at explaining it. Having value, it seems, is not as valuable as explaining it well.
- People in their 50s and 60s believe that if you can't simplify something, you don't understand it very well yourself! Clarity is proof that you know your stuff.

### **They know how to hold people accountable.**

- To hold other people of *any* generation accountable, you must first hold yourself accountable.

### **They know the perfect team is not perfect.**

- People of all ages form a great team. The definition of a team is people playing different positions to achieve a common goal. Our collaborative tactics create success.
- The foundation of agreement is disagreement. The leader of a diverse team can forge innovative team performance that you can't get with people who say yes to your face and no behind your back.
- A realistic view: Many people under age 25 see work as just 10% of what's important. They value their personal time so highly that they might never work consistently.

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## UNDERSTANDING GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES

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### **Same agenda but different approaches**

- Differences in work ethic: Those over 40 believe long hours on the job is a sign of dedication -- the dues to be paid for advancement. Those under 30 think spending long hours on the job is a sign of disorganization and obsolete tools and processes. "Mr. Wynn, your computer keeps crashing simply because you're OLD."
- People of older generations tend to identify themselves by their work. Younger generations don't live to work; they work to pay for their lifestyle.

### **How the gap formed: Different times in history create different people.**

- Older generations often think younger generations have an inflated sense of entitlement, but we forget who planted that idea in their heads.
- Younger workers are the product of:
  1. Changes in the elementary school system – Multiple curriculums, tailored to diverse aptitudes and interests so no child fails, every child wins.
  2. The most affluent society the world has ever known – They grew up with an endless supply of everything.
  3. Different parenting – Most people under 30 grew up in households where the parents were divorced or both parents worked. Many parents overcompensated. Guilty parents raise narcissistic children.
- We did this; now we must deal with it!

### **The worst leadership strategy you can have is wishing all people were more like you!**

#### **Certain management tactics work very well with younger generations.**

- Most younger workers value family, friends, and interests as more important than being tied to work. To them, jobs are stepping stones to be held for about three years before moving on. To keep them longer, you must show them the value of staying. How does this job lead to being the boss?
- In a poll of younger workers, nearly 65% said they would turn down a promotion and higher pay if it meant working longer hours. They'll take on more responsibility but not an extended workday. We might not like this mindset, but it's an inevitability. Don't try to wait these young people out. If you can't manage the future, you don't have a future.
- Younger generations do not have the same sense of urgency. Emphasize to them that "now" means *now!*
- Bug-zapper management – Younger workers also need some well-defined guidelines (e.g., "Here are the 5 things that will get you fired") and a lot of leeway in between those guidelines.
- Because many younger workers lack a sense of urgency, they might tend to show up late. Emphasize that being punctual is just as important as the job itself. "We have to be here when the job needs to be done." Also effective: "This job could go to someone who is less skilled than you but who shows up on time!"
- We can't pass our knowledge on to them if we can't influence them. The key to this kind of influence is the attention and praise you give them. To manage younger workers well, praise them along the way to the goal, not just when they've reached it.
  - The No. 1 reason that people in their 30s will leave their jobs these days is that they're not getting enough feedback. You almost need to act like their coach... On exit interviews, we often see comments like "My boss isn't talking to me" or "I've gotten no feedback" or "I feel isolated."
  - Young people want mentors. They want people who are interested in their success. (Don't 'friend' them on Facebook unless it's clear they're interested or unless they 'friend' you. They might not want their mentor to be operating in their buddy circle.)
- Each generation streamlines its processes. Make sure your policies and practices make sense to the younger generation. If you place a demand on younger workers that seems illogical or arbitrary, they begin to question the rest of your motives.
- Trust each other and believe that every problem comes with its own set of solutions. In fact, younger generations solve problems faster and are more tolerant than older generations.
- People of younger generations need good technology at work – otherwise, they think they have a horrible job. Examples: (1) If you're not texting them, you're not communicating. (2) They think social media (Facebook, LinkedIn) is important to business.

#### **Maybe social media is not your thing, but if you work with people from Gen Y, realize it's theirs. Let them use it to your company's advantage.**

- Sometimes young people are reluctant to take a job if it doesn't allow them to use social media. In general, they're used to multitasking and want to handle things as quickly as they can. They view social media as a useful vehicle for this. It gives them a shorter, more direct way of communicating than phone conversations or e-mail.
- How to make constructive use of their social media skills:
  - If you make it easy for young people to spread the message about your product or service, they will. Social media is an easy, almost natural channel for them to do so.
  - If you know your customers or target audience, you can find them on Facebook. If you have an existing website or product offering, you can contact your customers on Facebook and direct them to your site. Your Gen Y workers may be just the people to handle this!

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## THINKING LIKE A TOP PERFORMER

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### Believe in change

- You can't lead by example if you're a bad example. If your work frustrations are apparent to your younger colleagues, they soon won't want to work for or with you.
- Leadership defined: People following someone because they want to, not because they have to.
- We have to be innovative to succeed.

### Innovative thinking

- **The big question** – Can you do things differently? You can't tread water forever; you have to move forward. Treading water is controlled drowning. If you do what you've always done, you'll get the same results.
- **Action and adaptability** – Change is not the problem; resistance to change is the problem. The tool of the day is influence.
- **We have a choice** – Success lives in you. **The best way to stay motivated is to motivate each other.**
- **Change is not an idea; it's an action** – With change, you don't really think your way into action; you have to act your way into thinking. Heroes and cowards feel the same fear. The thing that separates them is their willingness to take action even while afraid! Do it a few times and you'll develop courage.
- **Your value** –If you understand and believe in your own value, it's much easier to show it to others. People of all ages need to understand how valuable they are because of the unique contributions they make. Without younger people, there is no future. Without older people, we don't have the experience to create a future.
- **Quality of life** – Circumstances do not create your quality of life. You do. To be effective with another generation, you have to position yourself up front with influence and put the effort behind that.

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