

Leveraging Strengths Across Generations



Harness diversity to drive innovation and results



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Let's Talk About it...

1ST GENERATION 1950s It started with a dream and a wrench.	A man in a white shirt and suspenders is working on a car engine in a garage. There are various tools and parts around him.	A purple classic car with a white roof rack, parked on a street.	A black classic car with a white roof rack, parked on a street.
2ND GENERATION 1970s More power. More style.	A man in a blue shirt is working on a car engine in a garage. There are various tools and parts around him.	A white classic car with a black roof rack, parked on a street.	An orange classic car with a black roof rack, parked on a street.
3RD GENERATION 1990s New tech. New tools.	A man in a purple shirt is working on a car engine in a garage. There are various tools and parts around him.	A blue classic car with a black roof rack, parked on a street.	A blue classic car with a black roof rack, parked on a street.
4TH GENERATION 2010s Performance meets innovation.	A man in a black shirt is working on a car engine in a garage. There are various tools and parts around him.	A white classic car with a black roof rack, parked on a street.	A white classic car with a black roof rack, parked on a street.
5TH GENERATION 2020s & BEYOND Building the future. Together.	A man in a black shirt is working on a car engine in a garage. There are various tools and parts around him.	A silver classic car with a black roof rack, parked on a street.	A group of five people (three men and two women) standing together and smiling.

DIFFERENT GENERATIONS. ONE PASSION. BUILT TOGETHER. ❤️

Imagine the generational process of the automobile industry...



What are some things other generations do differently than yours that you admire?

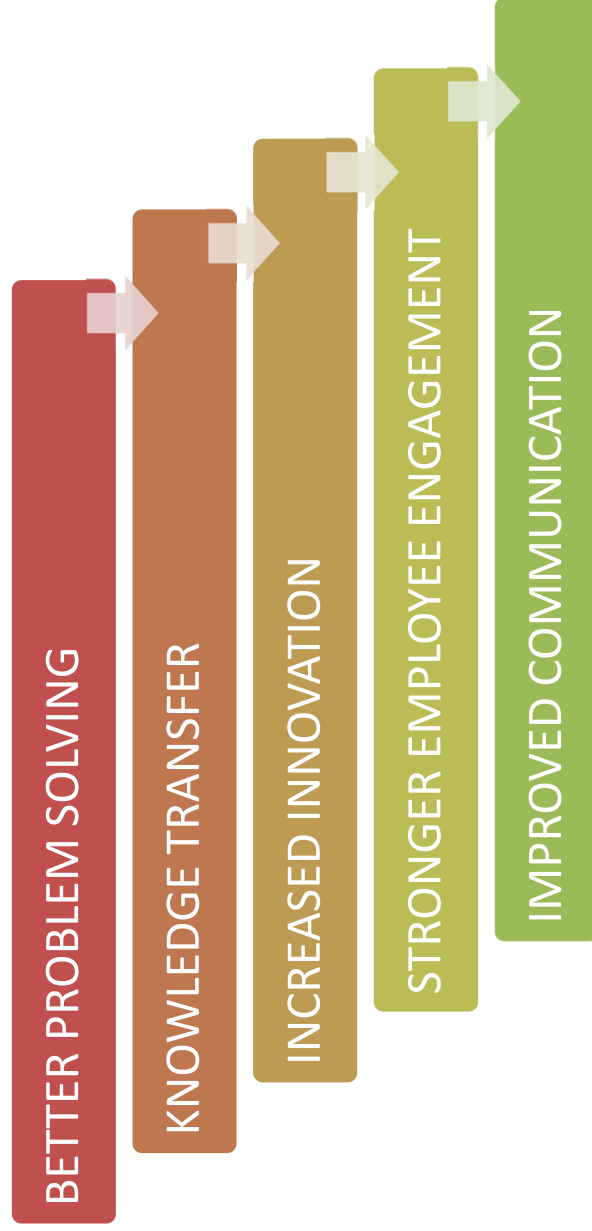
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slido

 The Slido app must be installed on every computer you're presenting from

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Benefits of leveraging generational strengths:



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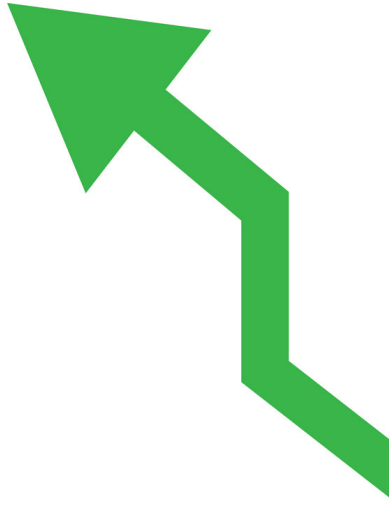
Benefits of leveraging generational strengths:



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Organizations without age diversity are leaving value on the table

35% Performance boost
30% More innovative



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**"We honor those who walked
so we could run. We must
run so our children soar."**



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***The experience of yesterday,
the innovation of today,
and the potential of tomorrow
are strongest when we work together.***

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Defining the Generations



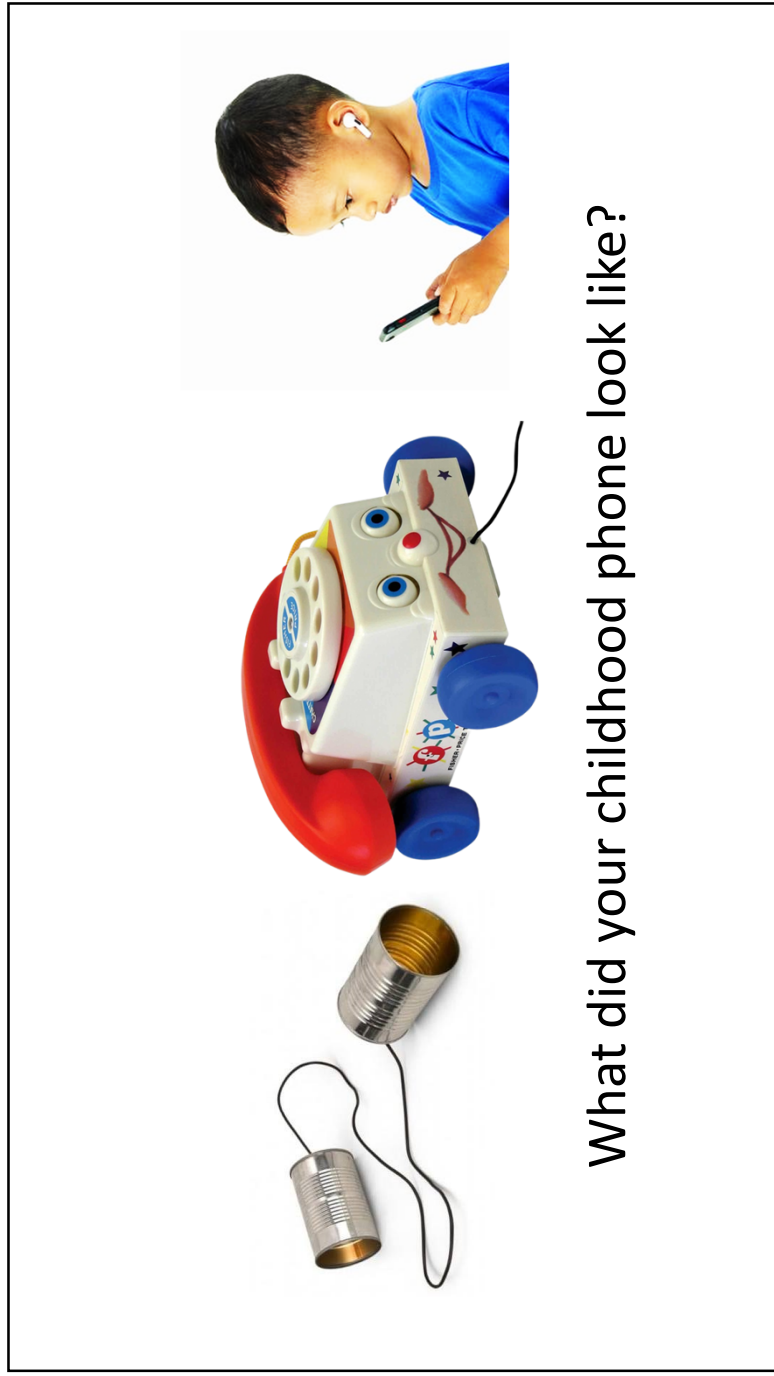
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Activity #2

List five traits that come to mind for each generation.



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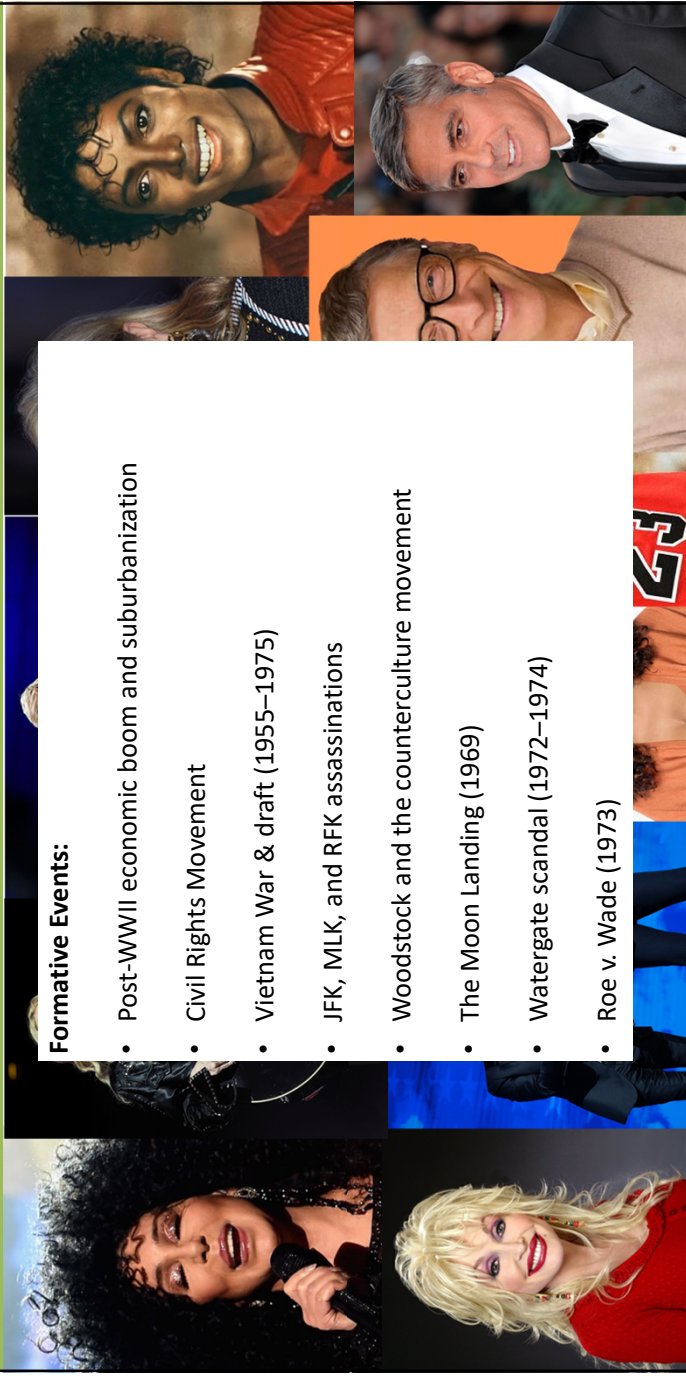


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Boomers (currently 61 – 79 years old)

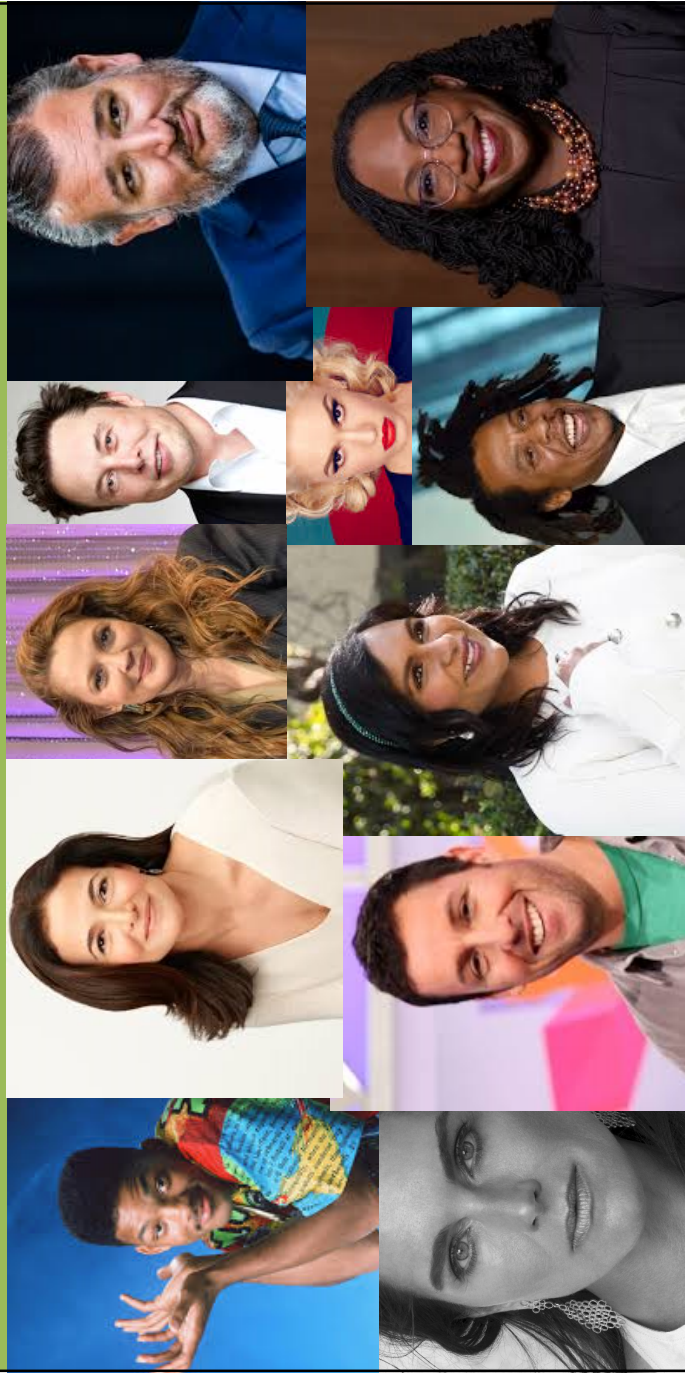
Formative Events:

- Post-WWII economic boom and suburbanization
- Civil Rights Movement
- Vietnam War & draft (1955–1975)
- JFK, MLK, and RFK assassinations
- Woodstock and the counterculture movement
- The Moon Landing (1969)
- Watergate scandal (1972–1974)
- Roe v. Wade (1973)



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Gen X



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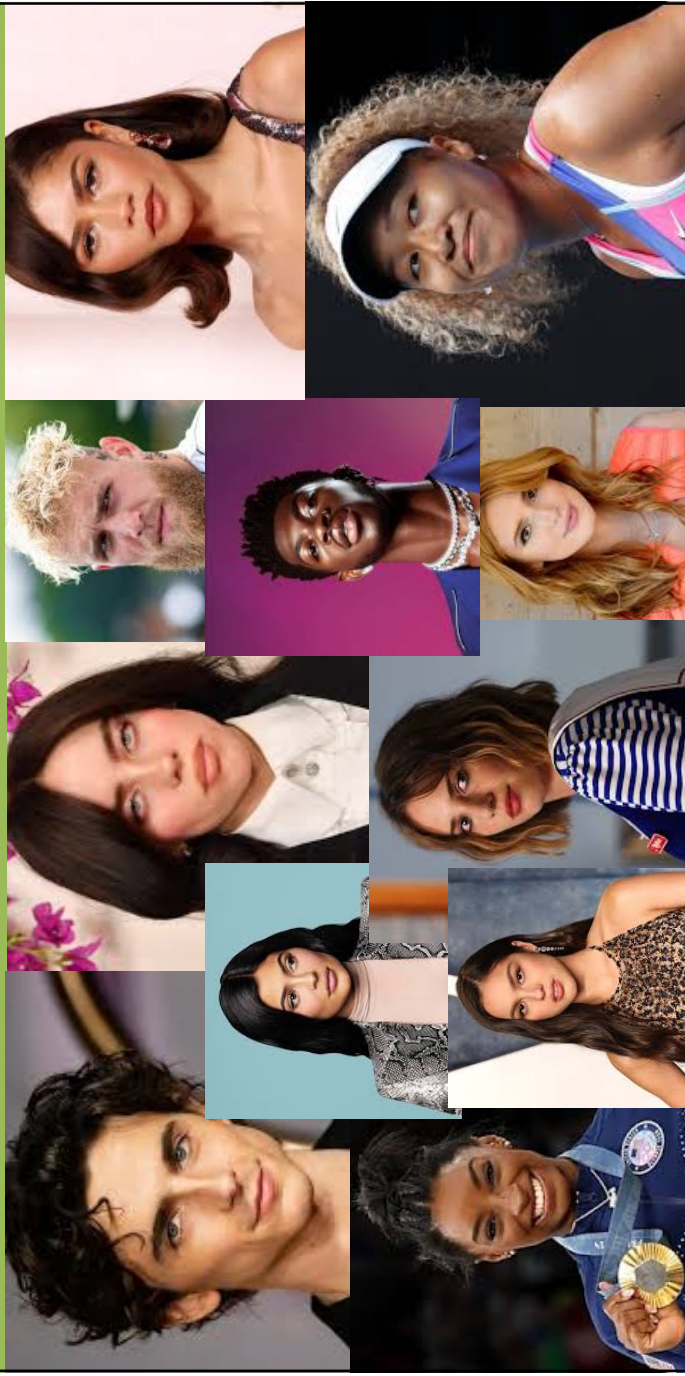
Millennials (currently 29 – 44 years old)

Formative Events:

- 9/11 terrorist attacks (2001)
- War on Terror (Afghanistan and Iraq wars)
- Great Recession (2007–2009)
- Columbine and rise of school shootings
- Growth of the internet, smartphones, and social media
- Election of Barack Obama (2008)
- Climate change awareness and activism
- Rise of reality TV and digital influencers

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Gen Z



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Gen Z (currently 13 – 28 years old)

Formative Events:

- COVID-19 pandemic (2020–2022) with remote/hybrid learning experience
- Global climate strikes and Greta Thunberg movement
- George Floyd protests / BLM resurgence (2020)
- #MeToo movement
- Mass shootings and lockdown drills
- Ubiquitous social media (TikTok, Instagram)
- Increased focus on mental health and neurodiversity
- Political polarization and misinformation online

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Activity #3

Step 1 (independent):

Review the scenario and answer the questions.

Scenario: It is noon and you are slammed. You are trying to finish two agenda bills and exhibits for high priority budget items before the clerk's 2pm deadline. Your boss sends you an email and asks for an update of the waterfront project – ASAP. How would you respond to your boss?

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Activity #3

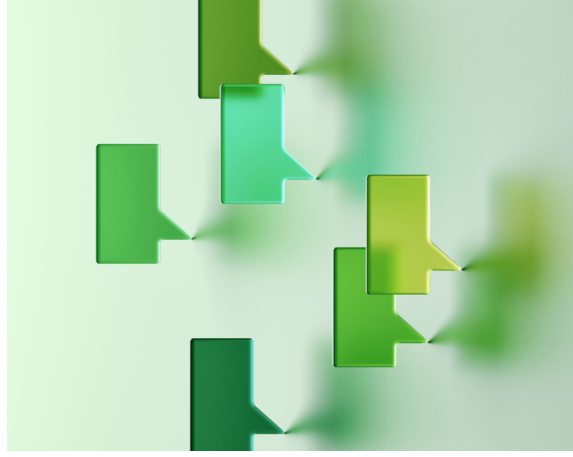
Step 2 (with a partner):

Discuss your responses.

- What was similar?
- Different?
- Any questions you are convinced have one right answer?
- What matters more – your generation or the generation of your manager?

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Why Communication Differences Matter



Generational Communication Gaps

Different generations interpret tone, urgency, and professionalism uniquely, leading to workplace misunderstandings.

Impact on Team Dynamics

Communication differences affect trust, respect, project timelines, and overall team morale significantly.

Importance of Clarity and Respect

Leaders must clarify expectations and respect diverse communication styles to ensure alignment and inclusion.

Inclusive Work Environment

Understanding communication differences fosters collaboration and makes employees feel valued and understood.

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Generational Interpretations



ASAP Interpretation Differences

Baby Boomers view 'ASAP' as urgent, while Millennial & Gen Z generations see it as soon without critical urgency.

Quality Work Expectations

Baby Boomers & Gen X expect polished deliverables; Millennial & Gen Z accept drafts anticipating collaboration and refinement.

Formality of Shorthand Terms

'OOO' feels informal to Boomers but is widely accepted by Millennials and Gen Z in workplace communication.

Impact on Team Effectiveness

Leaders adapting to generational nuances reduce confusion and improve overall team productivity and communication.

Defining Professionalism



Traditional Professionalism

Professionalism traditionally involves formal tone, structured writing, and exclusion of expressive elements.

Modern Communication Styles

Modern workplaces accept casual, conversational language and expressive cues like emojis to enhance clarity.

Adapting to Audience Expectations

Effective communication aligns style with audience, organizational norms, and purpose for professionalism.

Leadership in Communication

Leaders model adaptable communication balancing clarity, warmth, and structure respecting style differences.

Deciding Between Email, Chat, Phone, or In-Person



Email for Formal Communication

Email is best for detailed, formal messages, documentation, and communications needing a permanent record.

Chat for Quick Coordination

Chat platforms support quick questions, informal updates, and real-time team coordination efficiently.

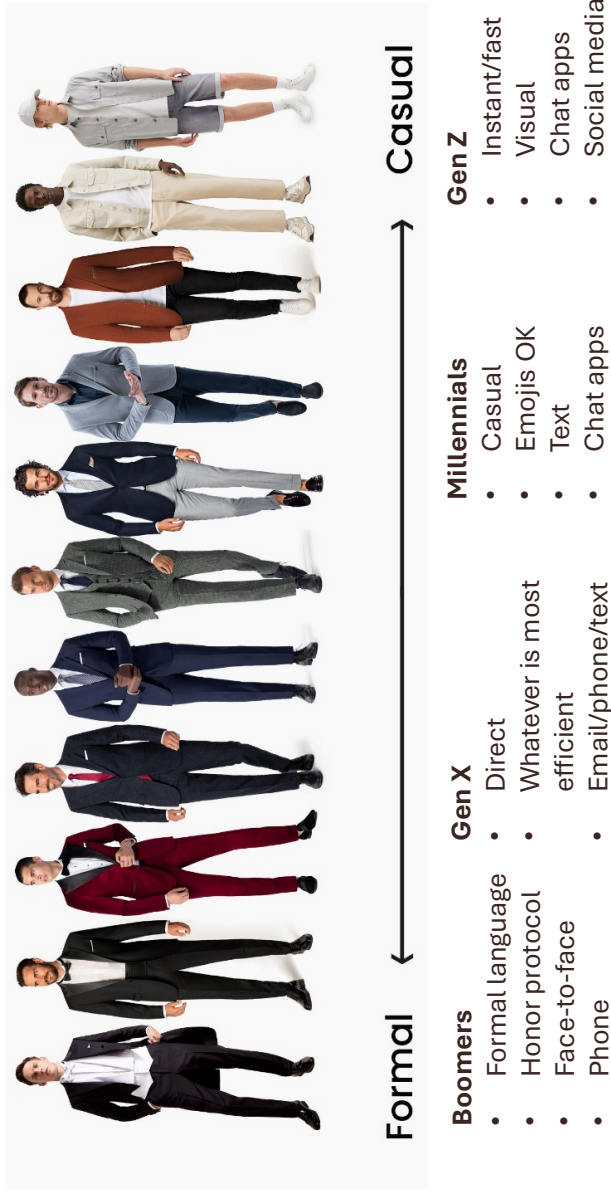
Phone and In-Person for Complex Talks

Phone calls and face-to-face meetings suit complex discussions, conflict resolution, and relationship-building.

Communication Strategy and Norms

Clear norms on when to escalate communication reduce frustration and align diverse work styles.

How Generations Prefer to Communicate





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Leading Across Generations

Get the Best from Everyone



Lead Up



Lead Forward



Lead Fairly

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Activity #4

Table Talk

Scenario: A 27-year-old supervisor has been promoted and now manages a 62-year-old employee who has worked for the city for 30 years. The employee is respectful but frequently says, "We've always done it this way."

Questions:

What's the supervisor's biggest challenge?

What should the supervisor avoid?

What would you coach the supervisor to do?

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Lead Up- Leading Generations Before

- Respect experience and perspective
- Communicate authentically and confidently
- Include them as mentors, not just reports
- Create inclusive teams
- Foster a psychologically safe culture



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Activity #5

Table Talk

Scenario: A newly hired employee in their early 20s has been with the city for six months. They're bright, eager to learn, and produce good work, but they're asking for additional responsibilities and professional development opportunities much sooner than their supervisor is used to seeing. Some senior staff have commented, "They just need to be patient."

Questions:

What do you think is motivating this employee?

How would you encourage the supervisor to respond to their employee? How about responding to other senior staff?

How could a supervisor balance encouraging the employee's ambition while setting realistic expectations?

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Lead Forward – Leading Generations After

- Provide structured support & growth opportunities
- Meet them where they are
- Leverage tech strengths
- Foster two-way learning



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Activity #6

Table Talk

Think of someone on your team who is from a different generation than you that may be a challenge to manage. Don't say their name—just picture them.

Questions:

What is one strength they bring that makes your team better?

What's one thing you've had to adjust in your leadership style to help them succeed?

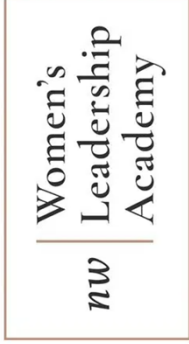
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Lead Fairly– Giving What They Need

- Offer what matters, not what's assumed
- Tailor communication styles
- Flexible policies benefit all



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Thank You

Questions?

