



# WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY



# Generational Diversity

*National Association of County Collectors, Treasurers  
& Finance Officers*



*Provided by WSU – Executive & Professional Development*

The 2025 Award  
for  
Achievement in  
Recruiting and  
Retention



What was the Biggest Obstacle You had to Overcome to Make Your County's Transformation Possible?

Directions: Enact tableaux that illustrate the obstacles to achieving your goals.





# How can Age Diversity be an Asset in Making Changes?



# Agenda

- What is Generational Diversity?
  - Why is it Important?
  - Why it Matters



# Learning Objectives

- At the end of today's session, you will be able to:
  - Describe the characteristics and preferences of five generations: Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Gen X, Millennials, and Gen Z.
  - Explain the benefits and challenges behind addressing generational diversity in the workplace.
  - Identify how you can be more age-inclusive while solving workplace issues.



# What is Generational Diversity?



- The concept of having a wide range of generations in the workplace.



# Social Generations

Groups of individuals of similar ages whose members have experienced a noteworthy historical event while young.



As a result of this experience, they develop a social consciousness or perspective that contributes to social change.



Within every generation are differing forms of response to historical situation, creating many “units” within a generation.



# Generational Diversity Chart

	<b>Traditionalists</b> 1925-1942 47 million U.S. Births	<b>Baby Boomers</b> 1943-1964 76 million U.S. Births	<b>Gen X</b> 1965-1979 55 million U.S. Births	<b>Millennials</b> 1980-2000 62 million U.S. Births	<b>Gen Z</b> 2001-2013 72 million U.S. Births
<b>Technology Acquired</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Television</li> <li>• Scotch tape</li> <li>• Red &amp; green traffic lights</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sputnik 1</li> <li>• Microwave</li> <li>• Mr. Potato Head</li> <li>• Liquid paper</li> <li>• Colored kitchen appliances</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Floppy disk</li> <li>• Portable cassette player</li> <li>• Cell phone</li> <li>• VCR</li> <li>• 1st video game: Pong</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal computer</li> <li>• Internet</li> <li>• CD Player</li> <li>• Nintendo</li> <li>• Camcorder</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phones that text</li> <li>• Computers in high school</li> <li>• Snapchat/Instagram/YouTube</li> </ul>
<b>Core Values</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adhere to rules</li> <li>• Family focus</li> <li>• Patriotism</li> <li>• Savers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Optimism</li> <li>• Equal rights/opportunities</li> <li>• Pay your dues</li> <li>• Spend now, worry later</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Independent</li> <li>• Informality</li> <li>• Think globally</li> <li>• Life balance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teamwork</li> <li>• Confidence</li> <li>• Civic duty</li> <li>• Achievement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frugality</li> <li>• Social equality</li> <li>• Security</li> <li>• Making a difference</li> </ul>



# Generational Diversity Chart (cont.)

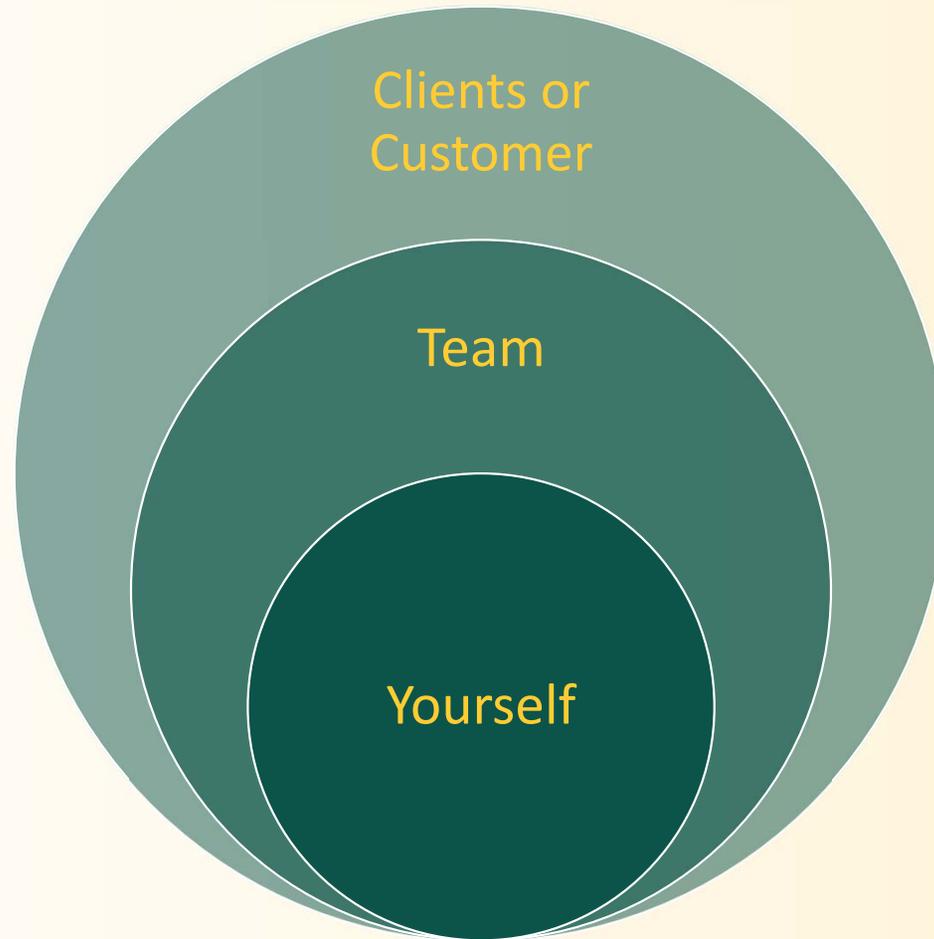
	<b>Traditionalists</b> 1925-1942 47 million U.S. Births	<b>Baby Boomers</b> 1943-1964 76 million U.S. Births	<b>Gen X</b> 1965-1979 55 million U.S. Births	<b>Millennials</b> 1980-2000 62 million U.S. Births	<b>Gen Z</b> 2001-2013 72 million U.S. Births
<b>Work Ethic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pay your dues</li> <li>• Work hard</li> <li>• Age = seniority</li> <li>• Company first</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Driven</li> <li>• Workaholic</li> <li>• Quality</li> <li>• Work ethic = worth</li> <li>• Efficient</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work smarter and with greater output, not longer hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ambitious</li> <li>• What's next?</li> <li>• Multitasking</li> <li>• Tenacity</li> <li>• Entrepreneurial</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entrepreneurial</li> <li>• Realistic approach</li> <li>• Tech savvy</li> <li>• "Always on"</li> </ul>
<b>Preferred Work Environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conservative</li> <li>• Hierarchal</li> <li>• Clear chain of command</li> <li>• Top-down management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flat hierarchy</li> <li>• Democratic</li> <li>• Equal opportunity</li> <li>• Friendly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive/fun</li> <li>• Fast paced</li> <li>• Flexible</li> <li>• Informal</li> <li>• Access to leadership &amp; information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborative</li> <li>• Creative</li> <li>• Diverse</li> <li>• Fun/flexible</li> <li>• Achievement oriented</li> <li>• Positive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competitive</li> <li>• Independent</li> <li>• Face-to-face communication</li> <li>• Continued skill development</li> </ul>



# Generational Diversity Chart (cont.)

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<b>Desired Job Traits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognition/respect for their experience</li> <li>• Clearly defined rules/policies</li> <li>• Job security &amp; stability</li> <li>• Value placed on history/traditions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to “shine/be a star”</li> <li>• Team approach</li> <li>• Clear &amp; concise expectations</li> <li>• Make a contribution</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forward thinking</li> <li>• Cutting edge technology</li> <li>• Flexibility</li> <li>• Input evaluated on merit, not age/seniority</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenge</li> <li>• Strong, ethical leaders</li> <li>• Ability to make a difference</li> <li>• Respect despite age</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognition for their efforts</li> <li>• Own technology</li> <li>• Flexibility</li> <li>• Growth opportunities</li> </ul>





# Values Shared by Every Generation

*Society for Human Resource Management – Survey Results*

RESPECT

COMPETENCE

CONNECTION

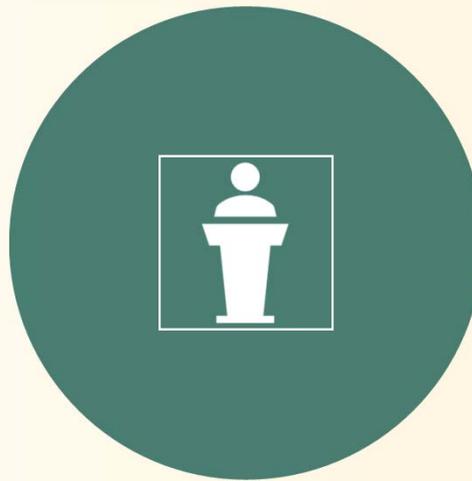
AUTONOMY



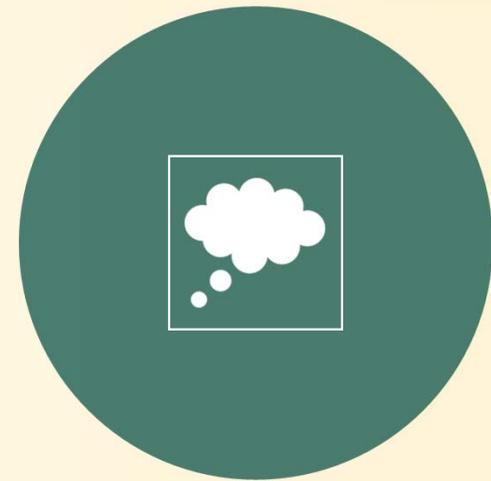
# Benefits of Generational Diversity



KNOWLEDGE  
SHARING



LEADERSHIP  
DEVELOPMENT



CREATIVITY &  
INNOVATION



# Consequences of not having Generational Diversity



It is hard to hire, engage, keep talent because youth like diversity.



It can be hard to find someone with prior knowledge to learn from.



# Why is Generational Diversity a Challenge?

- Generational Shaming
- Age Biases
- Value Perceptions
- Knowledge Relevance



A word cloud on a black background containing various generational stereotypes and terms. The words are arranged in a roughly circular pattern and include: Karen (green), Entitled (white), Whiners (orange), Boomer (yellow), Self-Centered (blue), Slacker (white), Fogies (orange), Stubborn (white), Outdated (white), Hipsters (green), OK (yellow), and Snowflake (blue).



# How do we Overcome Generational Diversity Challenges?

Build  
Gentelligence®

- 1) Learn the Differences in History and Communication Styles for Each Generation
- 2) Resist Assumptions
- 3) Adjust the Lens
- 4) Strengthen Trust
- 5) Expand the Pie



*Gentelligence® is the intellectual property of The Gerhardt Group, LLC.*

# Talent Questions and Gentelligent Answers

Key Talent Questions	Gentelligent Answers	
<b>Who will your talent be?</b>	Older and Returning Workers	New Category Workers
<b>What will they need to stay committed?</b>	Continuing Learning and Career Development Opportunities	Retraining and Upskilling
<b>When and where will they work?</b>	Flexible Work Schedules	Time Agnostic
<b>Why will they work?</b>	Employees Seek Purpose	Employees Seek Purpose Brand Resonance and Employee Pride
<b>How will they work?</b>	Embrace Multiple Views on Work-life Integration	Understand the Socioemotional Needs of Employees



# Remix Exercise

1. With your small group, complete the chart on the Remix Exercise handout by answering the questions at the top:
  - What would this generation (or generation grouping) say are the positive aspects or practices that work well regarding recruiting and retention of employees?
  - What would this generation (or generation grouping) say are the areas that need improvement regarding recruiting and retention of employees?
2. Under the Analysis & Recommendations section, answer the question listed:
  - Based on your analysis of the responses above, what recommendations would you make for a County Tax Collector Office to improve their recruiting and retention practices that *all generations* will be able to support?
3. Prepare to share a summary of your thoughts to the whole group.



Every generation has something to teach and something to learn.

*Promote Co-mentoring*



How will you become more age  
inclusive?



# Learning Objectives Review

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Thank you!  
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