



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
**Life & Work
Connections**

Communicating Well on a Multi-Generational Campus

CALS - Arizona Cooperative Extension Conference

August 2017



Human Resources

Welcome! Communicating Well on a Multi-Generational Campus

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Session Purpose

1. Introduce basic terms and concepts:

- Work/life and generations on campus
- Communication strategies

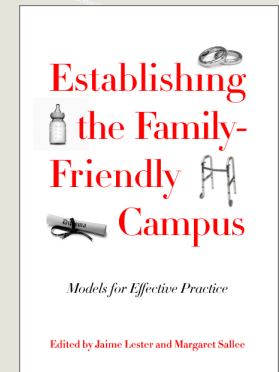
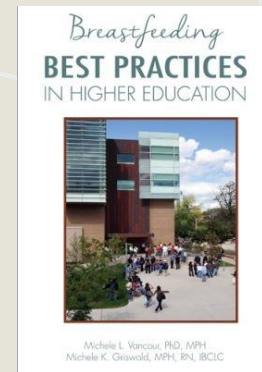
Session Purpose

2. Explore influential features and adaptable practices for:

- Recognizing distinctions with multiple generations
- Applying effective communication

Did You Know?

- **Life & Work Connections (LWC) Integrated Services**
- **Best Practices Model**
- **Internationally-Recognized Work/Life Program**





Childcare & Family Resources

Curious about childcare options?
Explore solutions with us.

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CHILD CARE ELDER CARE EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE EMPLOYEE WELLNESS WORK/LIFE INTEGRATION


CHILDCARE

Childcare and Family Resources provides UA employees and students with customized childcare services such as consultations, financial assistance, specialized sick and emergency care options, and lactation resources. They may include eligibility, contingent funding and other program features. Select your topic of interest to learn more.

New employee parents eligible for full benefits may be interested in **Human Resources Benefits**, including **Paid Parental Leave** and **Family and Medical Leave** information.

Click [here](#) regarding a community childcare scholarship opportunity in Arizona. Childcare quality rating information is [here](#).

Contact Caryn Jung, MS by [email](#) or call (520) 621-9870 to request information and explore family care options.




Elder Care Resources

Caring for an elder?
Connect to the right resource.

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[EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE](#)
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[WORK/LIFE INTEGRATION](#)

ELDER CARE

Elder Care & Life Cycle Resources provides UA employees and students with customized caregiving services such as consultations, and local and long distance resources.

Select your topic of interest to learn more. Contact Caryn Jung, MS by [email](#) or call (520) 621-9870 to request information and explore family care options.

I wanted to reach out and say "thank you" to Life & Work Connections' elder care program for all the support you gave to me over the years while working and trying to care for my father. Whenever I had a question or felt a little at the end of my rope, you had some advice that helped me through! It was a long, long process and without the help of a kind word or message from a lot of people, such as from your office, I would not have made it through! Thank you for being there!

-Julie, UA employee



Work Life Integration
Solutions to manage your life and work needs.

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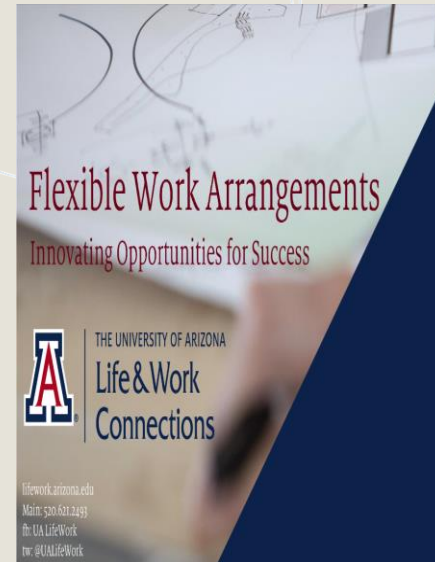
CHILD CARE ELDER CARE EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE EMPLOYEE WELLNESS WORK/LIFE INTEGRATION

WORK/LIFE INTEGRATION

Work/Life Integration provides consultations addressing work flexibility (referencing the University's Flexible Work Arrangement Guide), workplace trends and managing work and life responsibilities. Assisting individuals and departments, it serves as the University's designated resource on programs and strategies promoting:

- Effective practices regarding work, academic and family care commitments
- Recruitment and retention effort
- Campus engagement

Select your topic of interest to learn more. Contact [Caryn Jung](#) or [Darci Thompson](#) or call (520) 621-9870 to request information and explore work/life options.



Flexible Work Arrangements
Innovating Opportunities for Success

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
Life & Work Connections

lifework.arizona.edu
Main: 520.621.2499
toll: UA LifeWork
twt: @UALifeWork

What is Work/Life?

LEARNING ABOUT WORK/LIFE

What is Work/Life?

The term work/life reflects a growing research focus on how working and other aspects of life - family care, education, relationships and more - influence and affect each other. Work/life trends shaping how we plan for, and manage a dynamic, campus environment include:

- ▼ Workforce demographics
- ▼ Advances in technology
- ▼ Employed men and women with child and elder care issues
- ▼ An aging population



Visit the

University's [Flexible Work Arrangements Guide](#) to learn more about individual and departmental work/life options and contact LWC's [Work/Life Integration](#) to request a consultation. For questions on HR policy or advising, contact Human Resources Consulting at 621-8298.

Interested in considering the [Flexible Work Arrangements Guide](#) and travel reduction options together? Visit [Parking and Transportation Services' Travel Reductions Program](#) here.

[Click here](#) to learn how work/life supports UA employees and the institution.



Communicating Well on a Multi-Generational Campus



Many Generations = Multiple Approaches?



Definition



A generation is defined as “...a group of people who are programmed at the same time in history....A generation shares a common set of formative events and trends—headlines and heroes, music and mood, parenting style and education system.”

(“Leading a Multigenerational Workforce.” AARP, 2007)



Five Generations in the Workforce



Silents (born before 1945)

Baby Boomers (born between 1946-1964)

Generation X (born between 1965-1980)

**Generation Y
(Millennials)** (born between 1981-2000)

**Generation Z
(Nexters)** (born after 2000)



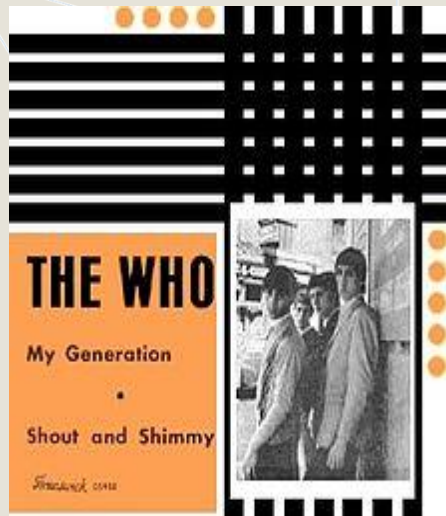
August 14, 1945, V-J Day

Times Square, New York City

Credit: Alfred Eisenstaedt, *Life Magazine*

Silents (born before 1945)

- Depression
- World War II
- Service...duty...right thing to do
- America circa 1960... "Mad Men"



Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964)

- Assassination of JFK, RFK and Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Vietnam War, civil and women's rights movement
- Watergate > cynicism, less trustful
- Reflects population fertility spike

Pew Research Center and Paul Taylor, "The Next America," <http://www.pewresearch.org>, April 2014

Pew Research Center 2010



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Generation X (born 1965-1980)

- Downsizing and layoffs
- Resilient & adaptable...cautious & skeptical
- More ethnically diverse
- Tech-savvy

Pew Research Center and Paul Taylor, "The Next America," <http://www.pewresearch.org>, April 2014

Pew Research Center 2010



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Generation Y (born between 1981-2000)

- Millennial,, Net Gen
- “E’s” – Education, electronics, entertainment, experience – are you social?
- Multi-task...flexibility...switch jobs frequently
- “Helicopter parents”

Pew Research Center and Paul Taylor, “The Next America,” <http://www.pewresearch.org>, April 2014

Pew Research Center 2010



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On the Horizon? Xennial: Micro-Generation Born Between 1977-1983

what is a xennial?

- a micro generation born during the cusp years of Gen Xers and Millennials
- i.e. between 1977 - 1983 (or when the original Star Wars trilogy was released)
- Xennials experienced an analogue childhood and a digital adulthood
- Possess both Gen X cynicism and Millennial optimism and drive

Age Span



Possible 50-year (+) age difference at work and in class between:

- **Faculty & staff**
- **UA employee workforce & student body**
- **Your department or college, and your service populations**

Generational Influences in the Workforce



Silents

World War II

Baby Boomers

Vietnam War

Generation X

Apple Computer® launches its Macintosh computer in 1984

Generation Y

***Time Magazine* announces Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg is its 2010 Person of the Year**

Generation Z

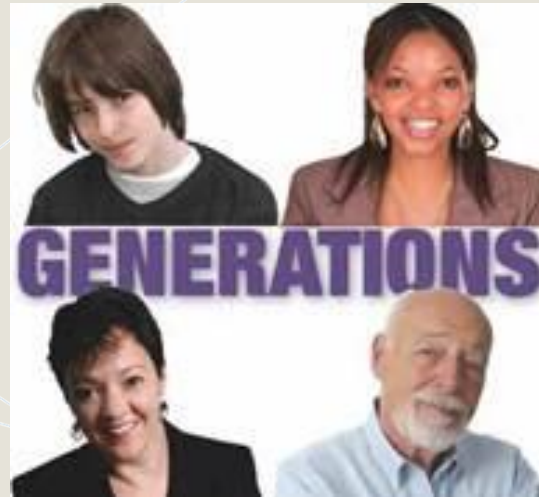
Smart Phones

Census Bureau, <https://www.census.gov/history>



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Differences & Similarities in the Workplace: Conflict...Cooperation...Contrived?



Attitudes and Values

“Text Me”

“See or Write Me”

“See Me”

“Call Me”

“Email Me”



Attitudes and Values

When asked to complete the phrase

“Social _____”

a member of the Silents or Baby Boomers is
likely to respond...

Attitudes and Values

When asked to complete the phrase

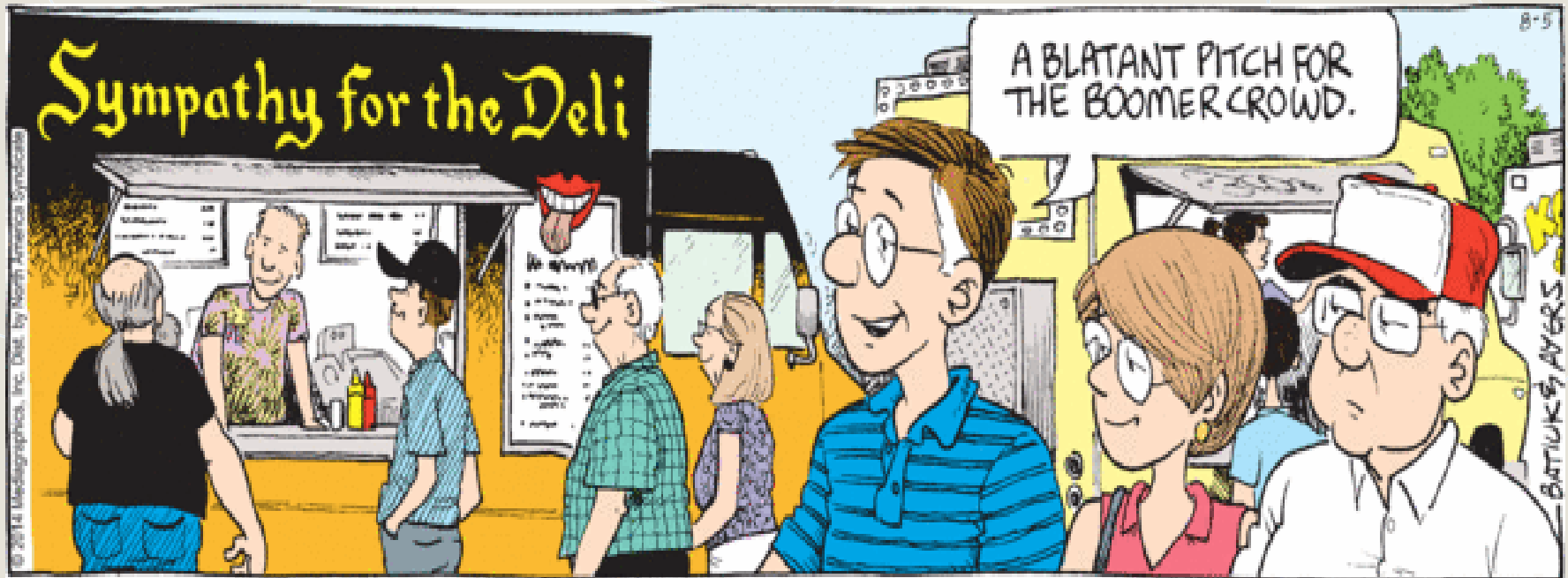
“Social _____”

a member of Gen X or Gen Y
is likely to respond...

Attitudes and Values



Attitudes and Values

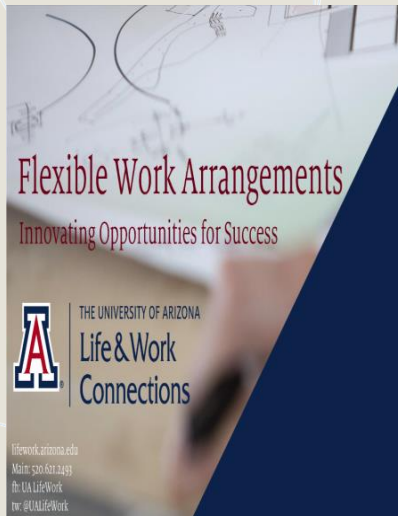




Spotlight on Generations and Communication Styles

- **Recruit and retain talented, capable employees**
- **Increase individual and team productivity**
- **Address individual work & personal life effectiveness, and organizational effectiveness**
- **Increase employee morale**
- **Strengthen membership and affiliation**

How Generations Serve as Drivers for Flexible Work



- Workforce demographics
- Advances in technology
- Employed individuals with child and elder care issues...interests, relevancy
- An aging population

Generational Features: At a Glance Handout



- Working side by side
- Model variability with names, birth years and influences
- Benefits...Concerns

Leading a Multigenerational Workforce." AARP, 2007. "What's in a Name?" Pew Research Center, 2010.

"Rethinking Generation Gaps in the Workplace: Focus on Shared Values." Kenan Flagler Business School, Executive Development Program at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 2011.



Themes for Communicating Well Across the Generations



- **Meaningful and challenging projects**
- **Competitive compensation**
- **Opportunities for advancement**
- **Treated fairly**
- **Work/life formula...context for you and your area?**

Ben Rosen, Ph.D., Professor of Organizational Behavior for the Kenan Flagler Business School, Executive Development Program at the UNC, Chapel Hill.



How Do Different Generations Define These Terms?

- **“Meaningful”**
- **“Challenging”**
- **“Advancement”**
- **“Work & Personal Life Balance”**
- **“Normal”**

Inter-Generational Workplace Problems

- **Personality vs. Generational characteristics**
- **What kinds of problems occur?**

How Serious Is This, Really?

**Can we learn anything from history,
from business and industry?**

(Yes, or I wouldn't have asked, right?)



Gen X

Cynical

Distant Father

Early 90's Recession

Dysfunction as Badge

Uncomfortable Consumers

Bohemian tinged

Sub cultural



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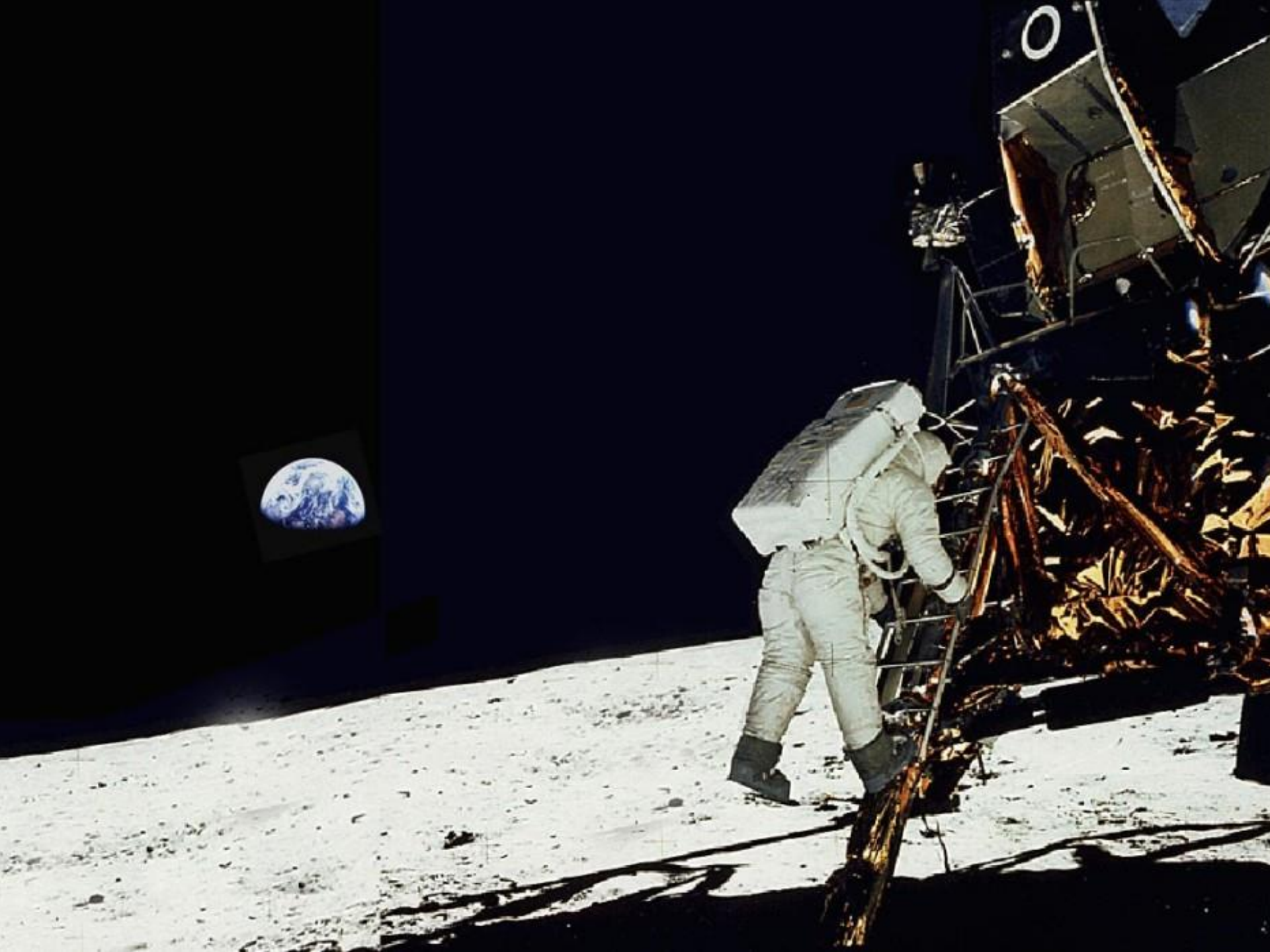


So What?

When both are in the workplace, what could possibly go wrong?



Flash Back 17 years... Baby Boomers as young adults



How Did We Get to the Moon?

- Space flight was new
- Most of NASA's engineers in the 1960s were fresh out of college - Boomers.
- Older engineers (Silents) were cautious about “acceptable risk” on their careers

How Did Boomers Make Decisions?

- **Thrived on creativity**
- **Whole group arguments**
- **Leaders were flexible, but in charge**
- **They were all from the same generation**

Intergenerational Communication

What happened in the generation between Apollo and the Challenger tragedy?

- Cutbacks
- Morale plummeted, people left
- Workplace turned cold

How Was Challenger's Launch Decision Made?

- Chain of Command Compartmentalization
- Business: “better, faster, cheaper”
- Administrative decision was made
 - Not an engineering/safety decision
- What did Gen Xers learn?
 - Don't make waves...
 - → **Communication breakdown**



Generation X (born 1965-1980)

- Downsizing and layoffs
- Resilient & adaptable...cautious & skeptical
- More ethnically diverse
- Tech-savvy

-Pew Research Center and Paul Taylor, "The Next America," <http://www.pewresearch.org>, April 2014

-Pew Research Center 2010



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Intergenerational Communication

SO WHAT?

What Can We Learn From This?

Intergenerational Cultural Factors

- **More than vocabulary:**
 - Different Work Styles
 - Different Communication Styles
 - Different World View
 - Personal Issues*

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/zY1raLxyaKM>



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Assumptions

- Everyone uses a blend of communication styles.
- Most people have a dominant style.
- Styles are reflected in behavior and are observable and identifiable.

Hartman J. & McCambridge, J. (2011)



Assumptions

- Most people are quick to respond to communication that is similar to their dominant style.
- It is possible to alter one's individual style to adapt to others' styles.
- There is not one best style.

Hartman J. & McCambridge, J. (2011)

What Do These LOOK Like? (Exercise)

- **Engagement**
- **Feedback**
- **Loyalty**
- **Ideal Workplace**
- **Career**

What Do These LOOK Like?

- **Policies**
- **Expectations**
- **Supervision**
- **Accountability**

*Personal Issues

- Do feedback or discussion of your ideas make you frustrated or angry?
- How difficult is it for you to be flexible with an older/younger co-worker? Supervisor? Subordinate?
- “My way or the highway”

***Personal Issues**

- How open are you to feedback about your style from someone half your age?
- How often does your ego impede progress towards a workplace goal?

Exercise for Later

- How would you describe your work style?
- How would you describe your communication style?

Exercise for Later

- How do people you work with react to challenges or struggles?
- Do you know what your people you work with expectations are of you?
- How much detail do your people you work with know of your expectations of them?

Steps You Can Take

1. Stop or slow the conversation down;
2. Put the “topic” on hold for a moment;
3. Ask for definitions
 - a. (“What do you mean by...?”)
4. Converse to get on the “same page”;
5. Gain mutual understanding;
6. Move forward

Communication Tips

- Interact with other generations with a desire to understand, rather than with the aim of criticizing how they are different.
- Assess what the workplace requires and then align employees' characteristics with those requirements.

Much, K. et al., (2014)



Communication Tips

- Seek to understand each generational cohort and accommodate generational differences in attitudes, values, and behaviors.
- Develop the ability to flex a communication style to accommodate generational differences.

Much, K. et al., (2014)

Communication Tips

- Promote the resolution of generational conflict so as to build effective work teams.
- Capitalize on generational differences, using these differences to enhance the work of the entire team.

Much, K. et al., (2014)

Welcome!

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Questions?

Thank You!

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