# Generational Groups in America, 2022
Who They Are, How They Got Here, How They Interact in Today's Workplace

Figure 1: Generational Groups, by year of birth

Name Birth Date	Life Changing Events for the Generation (what happened when their oldest members were ~15-25 years old?)	Loyalty to the	Response to Authority	Career means	Themes	What they say to the "Other" Generations (note that many of these comments are similar to each other)
~~Silent~~ ~~1926-1946~~	Stock Market Crash, Great Depression, Bread Lines, Dust Bowl, Radio, Early TV, WW II, Korea, Cold War, FDR, Ike	Organization	Respect	Opportunity	Stability Simplicity Loyalty	Slow down. Rome wasn't built in a day. Respect your elders. Work is hard; get your hands dirty!
Boomer 1946-1964	Father Knows Best, Cuba, Berlin Wall, Viet Nam, Civil Rights, Assassinations, JFK, Green ($), Woodstock, Watergate/Nixon	Organization Team	Challenge	Self Worth	Hard Work Abundance Consumption	Stop texting and pay attention. I'll show you the right way. Pay your dues like I did.
Gen X 1960-1984	Aids, PCs, Challenger, Iran Hostage Crisis, Oil Dependence, Tech Bust, Berlin Wall falls, Reagan, Clinton	Manager	Unimpressed	Just one part of me	Individuality High Tech Balance	Relax, take a break, don't stress. Some technology can help you. Turnover's OK.
Millennial 1980-2004	9/11, School Violence, Reality TV, Y2K, Social Media, Iraq X2, Bush, Obama, Green (Sustainability), COVID 19	Colleagues	Respect if competent	Add Value Contribute	Friendship Networked Global	There's an easier way; I'll show you. Texting is efficient and it's not rude. I'm not ignoring you when I multiprocess
Zoomers? (to be named) 2000-2024	**CoronaVirus. Trumpism. Black Lives Matter. Enormous financial inequities** Russia/Ukraine, Social media, born with computers/technology, worldwide terrorism, volunteerism, America First, MeToo	Technology Organization	Will they respect those in authority?	Opportunity	Social Loyalty Connected	Let me do it my way. I understand it; why can't you understand? (note: it is too early to be completely clear about them; details will evolve over time)
2020-2040	The events that impact them will occur primarily in 2035-2045					

Figure 2: Generational Groups, by age/life cycle
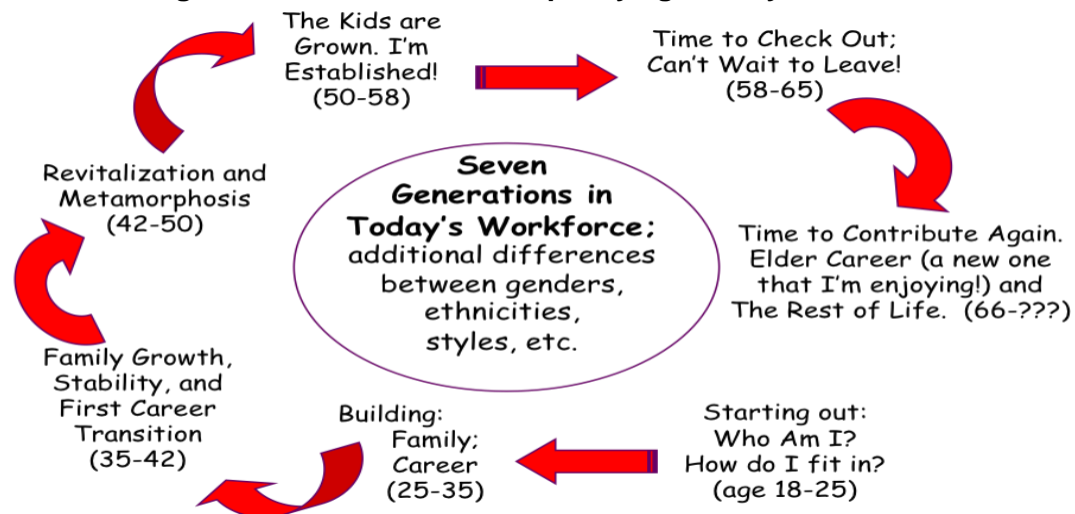
The above two models combine to present a more complete picture of any person than one model would. For example, 30 year old Boomers in 1990, 30 year old Gen Xers in 2005, 30 year old Millennials in 2020 all seek to establish themselves in family and career. Yet while the Boomer focused on individual self worth and hard work, the Gen Xer sought balance, and the Millennial seeks friendship. As they reach their 60s, these values and needs change and mature.

Leaders should lead each generation differently. Inspire and lead Boomers with loyalty and individual recognition; focus on results and cutting red tape for Xers; give Millennials collaboration, a voice in decisions, and access to cutting edge technology. And the Zooming Generation is here, we are yet to see what motivates them in the workplace.

Strauss and Howe (*The Fourth Turning*, 1997), after decades of research and anecdotal evidence, believe that these cycles repeat through history every fourth generation; thus those born between 2000 and 2024 are predicted to have characteristics similar to the Silent Generation. Will they?
Wikipedia summarizes the S&H research nicely.

Notes
- What we say about generations is simplification and stereotype, based on research and anecdotal evidence.
- Each generation has conservatives and liberals, rich and poor, urban and rural etc., all with significant differences between them. *e.g.,* millennials include Trump conservatives, radical socialists, and everything in between. In particular, access to technology and resources has always made a difference; in the twentyfirst century, rural vs. urban appears to be a key distinction.
- Personality and behavioral characteristics exacerbate generational differences.
- Birth date, generation, location, and general perspective of parents are all critical to an understanding of any person.
- There is significant overlap, and lack of agreement, in the beginning and ending dates for each generation; thus a young Gen Xer and an older Millennial, born around 1980 on the cusp between generations, may be virtually identical. Pew Research dates Millennials 1981-1996; Strauss and Howe use 1982-2004. Our preference is generally closer to Strauss and Howe, but to use round numbers, 1980, 2000, 2020, etc. Historically, new generations have come along about every twenty years; there is no evidence that this is changing.
- Many individuals take on the characteristics of generations close to their own.
- No generation is inherently "better" than any other; each has significant strengths, and with its weaker moments and members. Power and resources are usually concentrated in the eldest generation, while the youngest fights for what they consider to be their fair share.
- The "older" generation typically questions the work ethic and attitude of the "younger" generation.
- The "younger" generation typically believes that it can solve the company's (and the world's) problems, but that the "older" generation caused the current problems, resists change and stifles creativity.