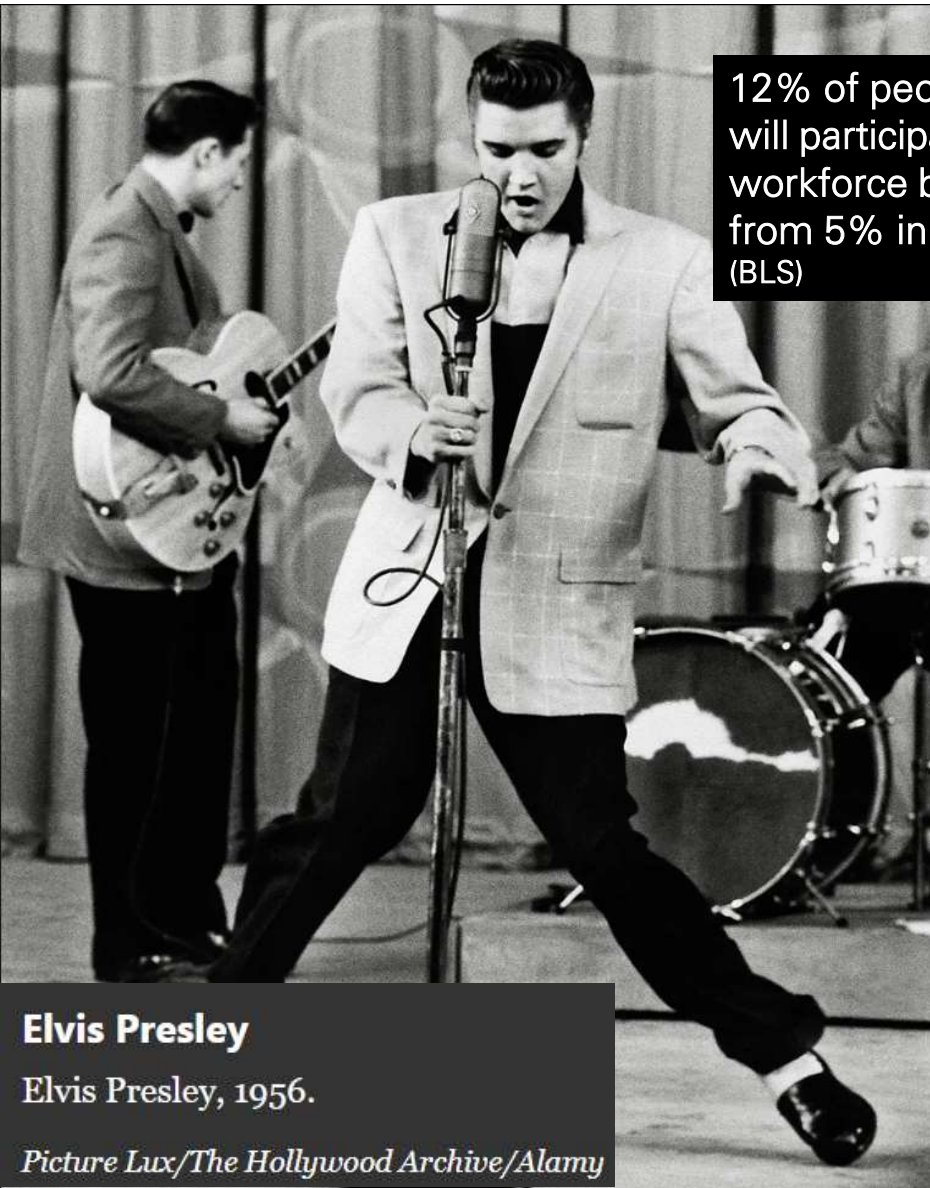


# 5 Generations at Work:



## Cracking the Intergenerational Leadership Code

Jennifer Heller  
*Gen-Exer*  
*Assistant Program Director*  
Concrete Industry Management  
South Dakota State University



12% of people over 75 will participate in workforce by 2030. (up from 5% in 2000. (BLS)

## The Silent Generation 1928-1945

- AKA The Traditionalists - Great Depression & WWII
- Core Values: Respect for authority/elders, cautious conformers, discipline, patriotism, teamwork, sacrifice, more w/less, task oriented, work to provide.
- Education: Dream
- Communication: Rotary phones, party lines, 1:1, written memo
- Finances: Save, pay cash
- Late 70's now, fewer retiring, working numbers are growing.
- PTO: Informality, lack of etiquette, lack of general respect (hold the door open!), and excessive cursing (F-bombs).

## **BABY BOOMERS 1955-1964**

- AKA the boomers
- Core Values: Optimism, involvement, community, make a living.
- Family: Disintegrating
- Education: Birthright
- Communication: Touch-tone phones, private lines, call me.
- Finances: Buy now, pay later
- PTO: Call them old, photos of food, digital message instead of calling, over-reliance on GPS, excessive use of "like" and "literally", use of slang, not being informed history/news, selfies viewed as self obsessed, vegan and GF diets, loud music at coffee shops,







## Gen Ex 1965-1980

- AKA the MTV Generation, the Latchkey Generation.
- Core Values: Skeptics, informal, independence, work hard, play hard, efficient, respect skills/competence, honesty.
- Family: Latch-Key kids, lack of relationship focus.
- Education: A way to get to their ideas of success in life.
- Communication: Cell phones, call me at only at work, email.
- Finances: Cautious, conservative, save-save-save
- PTO: Leave them out of the loop, waste their time with fluff (Written/spoken), get the job done WELL, to move on to the next assignment efficiently, don't acknowledge their value with appropriate pay, be formal and assert authority over them.



Refer to them as Millennials or Gen Y, Unwilling to work, Narcissistic, entitled.

## Millennials

- AKA: Gen Y or the ME ME ME Generation.
- Core Values: Want to be fulfilled by their work, not just get it done, unwilling to settle,
- Family: Merged families
- Education: Incredible expense
- Communication: Internet, smartphone, email.
- Finances: Earn to spend it
- PTO – Jokes about them living at home, force generational “failed” politics on them, call their music “crappy”, lump them all together...

## GEN ZERS 1996-2010

- AKA Zoomers, iGeneration, post-millennials, the global generation, the lonliest generation
- Core Values: Diversity, the most diverse generation (last generation majority white at 51%), purchasing decisions are expression of their values.
- Family: Strive for independence, somewhat reliant.
- Education: Trending toward becoming more educated than older generations but feel least prepared/optimistic.
- Communication: Digital Natives (vs Millennials digital pioneers), social media, text, don't call me. Most Gen Zers prefer in-person (*Stanford*)
- Finances: Pragmatic and financially minded as parents took huge hits in the recession
- PTO: Disrespect their work/life balance, disregard workplace culture, break ethical boundaries or ask them to do so (at work), take access to phone away.

PEW RESEARCH & [AECF.ORG](http://AECF.ORG) & [FORTUNE.COM](http://FORTUNE.COM)

Fortune.com: Most likely to quit (35% of Gen Zers), to struggle with mental health, to have lower incomes.







## Alpha Generation

What's next...AKA: Gen A, Generation glass, iPad Kids

- Core Values: Trust, transparency, security, passionate about mental health.
- Family: Reliant
- Education: Best educated generation + well traveled at an early age.
- Communication: Digital natives prefer text/messaging via APPs, don't call me, prefer visual content, socially aware and vocal.
- Finances: Substantial buying power, poised for education, high income tech sector jobs, entrepreneurialism – Side gigs at an early age.
- PTO: Expect them to concentrate for long periods of time on one thing, expect their social skills to be more developed than they are, disregard their need to understand the WHY behind things, be secretive, disregard or minimize mental health.

# Delegation System



Clear Communication Works  
with ALL Ages.



## **LEADERSHIP CULTURE COMMUNICATION = TRUST**

- **A – An SOP assignment. Follow the documented process.**
- **B – Be responsible for accurate research. I need to be responsible for the final decision.**
- **C – Connect when the research is completed, and you've formulated your recommendation.**
- **D – Do the right thing. Let me know when it's done.**



# AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Check out the Generations multimedia experiences.

1922-1954



1955 -1964



1965-1980



1981-1996 (Pew)



1997-2012



The Silent Generation

Baby Boomers

Generation X

Millennials

Generation Z

WTF

**TO:**
**FROM:**

☐ Were you thinking?

☐ Is up?

☐ Is wrong with you?

☐ Were they thinking?

☐ Just happened?

☐ Is wrong with me?

☐ Did you say?

☐ Did you think would happen?

☐ Was in that drink last night?

☐ Did you mean by that?

☐ Should I do?

☐ Seriously—WTF?!

☐ Is going on?

☐ Was that?

☐ \_\_\_\_\_

**SOURCE OF BEWILDERMENT:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CAN YOU HELP ME OUT HERE AND:**

☐ Stop it
 ☐ Explain
 ☐ Intervene
 ☐ Try harder
 ☐ Call the cops
 ☐ Advise
 ☐ Save me
 ☐ Give me a break
 ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ FYI
 ☐ FML
 ☐ OMG
 ☐ LOL

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Before the internet these people would take your order, write down an address and deliver a pizza to your home in less than 30 minutes by using a paper map like some sort of mystical land pirate.

## Older Gen Z bingo

	Loving Panic! At The Disco at some point		Currently starting college or filling out applications	
No gender roles here		<b>Irony</b> memes		Hating BuzzFeed
	Witnessing the demise of Kids React	<b>Free</b>	Addicted to quoting vines	
Doesn't watch actual TV	Growing up w/ Shane	Older people constantly shitting on your generation		Actually caring about mental health
	The WORST pressure to do well in school		Always thought you were a millennial	

## What we have in common...

- We were either raised by them or are raising them – In one way or another we're connected.
- Remember when you were in their shoes – Consider their frame of reference.
- We're all in this together – What happens to one, really happens to all.
- No one wants to be unhappy, feel disrespected, be taken for granted, get paid less than is fair, be lorded over, or to be treated like a mushroom.







## Thank you



*All we have is the knowledge passed on to us by our elders, experiences we inculcate and hardly negate. But to bridge the generation gap, one needs to adapt to the new while retaining the goodness of the old.*

*Sonali Bendre - Gen-Exer, Indian Actress*

### Additional Resources:

[Beresford Research](#) dates/age groups

[Bureau of Labor Statistics \(BLS\)](#) Traditionalist employment