

**Generational Values**

**Point of the Assignment:** To help you to identify how your generation shapes your values.

The values you have towards careers and work will usually impact how you make decisions about pursuing jobs and why you leave jobs. They are important to consider when making educational and career choices because it is stressful to work in a career (*or study a subject*) that is not consistent to what is personally important to you.

**Identify your generation based on the chart below. Generation:** \_\_\_\_\_

Review the descriptions listed about your generation.

**Highlight or underline those statements which you agree with, and note anything you do not.** (*Note: Individuals who grew up outside of the United States may not relate to some or most of the examples listed since most information provided reflects North American history.*)

	<b><u>Millennials</u></b> <i>(Born about 1977 – 2000)</i> 75 Million	<b><u>Generation X</u></b> <i>(Born about 1965 – 1977)</i> 41 Million	<b><u>Baby Boomers</u></b> <i>(Born about 1946 – 1964)</i> 76 Million	<b><u>Matures</u></b> <i>(Born Before 1945)</i> 34 Million
<b>Other Common Nicknames</b>  From: Sukiennik McIntosh	Generation Y Ritalin Generation Mosaics Net Generation Nexters	Busters Latch Key Kids	Yuppies	Stabilizers Strivers, Survivors “The Greatest Generation” Builders (born prior to 1946) can also include: • GIs (prior to 1925), • Silents (1926 – 1939) • War Babies (1940 – 1945)
<b>General Description</b>  From: Sukiennik	The newest members of the workforce. Large group – second only to the Baby Boomers. Have been raised with three other generations and are comfortable with them. They are multi-taskers who value flexibility	Represent one third of the work force, and will take over when the Baby Boomers retire. They are smaller in number, and will have multiple options. They are comfortable with job hopping. Bring a breadth of experience with strong	Forty-five percent of the workforce population, and the largest group. Focus is on personal goals and achievement. Willing to sacrifice for success and worthwhile causes, and often labeled workaholics whose	This generation built most of today’s institutions ( <i>education, business and church</i> ). Often called Traditionalists. They value history, work experience, company legacy, and a strong tradition based on

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	and freedom as much as money. They want a job on their own terms with the opportunity to make a difference, learn, grow, and have fun. They are well educated, globally aware, civic minded, polite, and tolerant of authority. Value and learn from peers and are more inclusive and group oriented than any other group. Because they are so technologically savvy and well connected, they also tend to be quick to publicly self-disclose.	independent spirit; they are unimpressed with authority and titles. They are loyal only as long as they get what they want from the job or company. They insist on a life and work balance and willing to leave a job to get it. Often reject the Baby Boomers value system since they experienced its consequences ( <i>divorce, career climbing, drug use, etc.</i> )	motto is “live to work.” Often referred to as the “Me” generation and sometimes view the younger generations as unwilling to “pay their dues” to succeed. Excel in teams and make decisions by consensus. They are beginning to retire. Were raised to believe that you keep your work and personal lives separate, and are often reluctant to share personal business at work or with co-workers.	loyalty, hard work, and conformity. Accept top-down authority. They are civic minded and help oriented. Sometimes perceived as authoritative and unwilling to accept new ideas or change. They want respect and the opportunity to continue to make a contribution. Keep personal problems private. Often frugal, savers and patriotic. May be less tolerant of diversity because most grew up with people like themselves.
<b>What the world was like during their formative years (birth to young adult):</b>				
<b>Events that shaped the world view of the times</b>  From: McIntosh Levine, etc	Postmodern Era, technology/Internet, September 11, terrorist attacks, MTV, Diversity, school shootings (Columbine). This generation grew up believing anything is possible.	Increased technology, video games, Challenger Disaster, the Cold War ended with the fall of the Berlin Wall, music, variable economy ( <i>parental affluence to weaker prospects</i> ), Desert Storm, AIDS, Oklahoma City Bombing, Clinton Administration, Y2K Scare. This generation grew up being conflicted by fear over world problems, but with a hope for a better future.	Cold war, media-oriented (TV and radio), economic affluence, education and technology, rock and roll, Civil Rights movement, Space Race, Assassinations, Vietnam War, Energy crisis, Watergate and Nixon resignation. This generation grew up distrusting authority.	World War I, Pearl Harbor, Black Tuesday, The Great Depression, World War II, Cold War began, GI Bill opened doors of opportunity ( <i>education &amp; home ownership, etc.</i> ) to many; Korean War. Rural lifestyle was still common. Life often revolved around family, school, and church. This generation grew up trusting authority.
<b>Institutions</b> (Government,	Many unions have lost their power due to increased two-	Computers increasingly continue to replace many	Computers and other technology begin to be used in	Bureaucratic with many levels of management and

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<i>Education, Business, Religion)</i>	way communication between management and employees. Technology has replaced many functions. Communication is instant, and change is rapid with an unpredictable future.	human functions ( <i>this process is accelerated by Y2K</i> ), demand to keep up with globalization, and free trade competition force organizations start to “flatten”, restructure, and/or eliminate many employers. Formalized structure is loosened. Many mid-skilled, mid-management, and factory jobs are eliminated or sent out of the country.	many institutions and slowly start to replace many routine operational functions that were once done by humans. Unions still held power and prestige.	supervision in large organizations. Business processes are slow. Communication flow is slow; and between management and lowest-level employees, is almost always “top down” only; or mediated through unions.
<b>Technology Available during formative years</b>  From: Murray and Rutledge	“Digital Natives” grew up using technology, including hundreds of TV cable channels, the Internet and cell phones. Social Networking provides a way to connect instantly with peers and becomes the norm. Most use multi-function mobile phones. Many newspapers either go digital or out of business.	PCs become popular, and connect via Local Area Networks (LAN). Cable TV grew in popularity. Video games invented. MTV revolutionized the music industry, making it more visual. With advances in visual media and constantly-changing visual stimulation, newspaper readership declines and its survival is threatened.	“Digital Immigrants” grew up without access to technology. Mass Media: Color TV ( <i>few channels</i> ), Radio, magazines, newspapers, and books. Computers generally did not exist, except in large institutions, and most Baby Boomers were first introduced to computers through “dumb terminals”. Typing was restricted to typewriters, and they probably learned how to type on non-electric typewriters. Landline telephones common in most households.	Many inventions during this time take hold and become accessible to the middle class ( <i>cars more popular, Radio, TV, etc.</i> ). Magazines and newspapers, landline telephones become more available to the middle class. Much communication was through letter writing ( <i>by hand</i> ). The first computers were introduced in the 1940s and 1950s. They were few, and were limited to business use due to their size, expense and limited capability.
<b>Rate of Change during formative</b>	Change was a constant. This generation grew up with change and is consequently much more adaptable than	Rate of change increases and this generation is generally more adaptable than prior generations.	Rate of change was slower than younger generations, but faster than the older generations. This generation is	World was slower and did not change as fast. Many inventions during their formative years. This

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<b>years</b>  From: Murray and Rutledge	prior generations.		the “transition” generation, which grew up doing everything manually, but is generally willing and able to somewhat convert to doing things through technology	generation mostly learned to do things manually; and may likely resist converting to doing things through technology. <i>(Except for a few ‘data processing’ professionals responsible for generating the Y2K dilemma.)</i>
<b>Typical career options available upon H.S. graduation</b>	Demographic variables do not necessarily limit individuals’ options. Many employers are not willing to invest in employees by providing on-the-job training; instead look for employees already qualified through formal education. Many jobs are available for “knowledge workers” who produce and work with information instead of products. Access to education provides multitude of choices. Individuals maybe paralyzed by an infinite amount of choice.	Technology-based jobs were growing in demand. DOT-Com Boom encouraged young entrepreneurs. Telecommunications industry and jobs were growing. Many factory and labor jobs started to disappear due to free trade. Job security diminishes.	The Civil Rights opened doors to some populations giving more career opportunities to more people. Unions were still powerful and offered good prospects for the working class. Individuals were often still expected to follow in their parents’ career path. Many good jobs were available through on-the-job training, thus less formal education was necessary. Often were told, “just get a good job and you will be set for life.” Or, “if you have a certain education, skill, or employer, you will always be guaranteed a job.” Those in the “mid-skill” range are forced to retrain for new jobs during their career years. Eventual mid-life layoffs often are traumatic and hard to take.	Options were often limited by demographic variables <i>(socio-economic status, race and gender)</i> . Individuals were usually expected to follow in their parents’ career path. Women (if they worked at all, were usually expected to become house keepers, nurses, secretaries or elementary school teachers. If they went to college, it may have been to find a good husband. For many the skilled trades <i>(plumber, electrician, construction, and factory jobs)</i> and other professions supported by strong unions provided a good living for the working class. Most business and jobs revolve around producing “goods” <i>(tangible objects such as</i>

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				<i>cars, TVs, vacuums, etc.)</i>
<b>Trends in Higher Education</b>  From: Cohen	Higher education is accessible to anyone. Educational systems are slowly changing from teacher-centered to student learning-centered.	Students began to enter college under-prepared due to grade inflation. Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) was enacted, forcing schools to accommodate students with disabilities. Greater access to higher education due to financial aid.	The Civil Rights era opened up access to higher education to under-represented groups ( <i>women, older, ethnic minorities, disabled, etc.</i> ). People who previously would not have access to education were now able to attend college. State-supported institutions of higher education grow in numbers and popularity. College attendance up 500%.	Opportunities for higher education were limited to those who had the means to pay for it and the “intelligence” to handle the academic rigor. Concept that education provided “upward mobility” grew. GI Bill opened up higher education to veterans returning from WWII other groups followed suit. Many state-supported institutions of higher education are started during this time.
<b>Educational Philosophy</b>	Education is necessary in order to support a family in today’s society. Everyone should have access to an education. Lifelong Learning becomes a necessary survival skill.	Changes in the workplace are forcing business, education and adults to embrace “Lifelong Learning” as a value, but some still resist.	Education will provide a ticket to a better way of life. Those who are educated earn more money in the long run and have more options.	A high school education was usually sufficient preparation for a good-paying job. Education was only for “certain people”. Those who were “smart” or “rich” enough.
<b>“Typical” family during formative years</b>  From: McIntosh	“Traditional families” ( <i>biological father, mother and children</i> ) no longer the norm. Now, typical families also include single-parent households, blended families, multi-racial, multi-generational and same-sex partner-parent families.	Legalized abortion and increased access to birth control reduced the numbers of births for this generation. Divorces are increasing, but emphasis on developing family ties not previously available.	Women’s Liberation movement led many women out of the house and into the work world. Divorce becomes more common. Sexual Revolution encouraged exploration. Out of wedlock births increased. Baby Boomers often grew up in an era where eating dinner	“Traditional” family: ( <i>biological father, mother and children</i> ). Dad worked, mom stayed home and cared for children. Mom cooked dinners and family ate at the dinner table together. Children were to be “seen and not heard.” Mixed-race couples were unusual.

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			together at the table was to provide a time for family members to talk and share their lives together.	Divorces were rare; because marriage meant “...Till death do us part – regardless of life’s circumstances.”
<b>Their Generational Values</b>				
<b>Work Philosophy</b>  From: Sukiennik	Optimistic and tolerant; they value diversity, challenge, and creativity. Self confident, technological wizards, multi-taskers, and they value fun and team-oriented work environment.	Do not value loyalty, but instead want to know “What’s in it for me.” They are independent, self-reliant, flexible and technologically confident, informal, quick paced, and often irreverent. They have high performance expectations and want to be rewarded for merit alone. Unwilling to sacrifice life balance for work.	Value achievement, accomplishment, hard work, the traditional work ethic, and a democratic work environment where anything is possible given enough effort expended.	Disciplined, responsible, conservative and loyal, and willing to sacrifice. They value security, history, tradition, and a clearly defined set of rules and hierarchy.

Identify whether you disagree with anything listed about your generation as a whole? If so, why? \_\_\_\_\_

How much does this information reflect you as an individual? (In other words, how much does this describe [or not] you personally?) Explain your response. \_\_\_\_\_

Notice which generation is largely responsible for **creating and shaping** many of today’s institutions. What do they value? How is their value system and world **different from (or like)** your own value system? \_\_\_\_\_

Which generations do you see are **currently** running the institutions of which you are a part? What do they value? How is their value system and world different from (or like) your own? \_\_\_\_\_

## Generational Values

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Think of a teacher you have had whose teaching style did not match your preferred learning style. What was that teacher's generation? Review what the information says about his/her generational values. How do you think this could impact his/her teaching?

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Do you have a job? If not have you had a job before? If so, what is your bosses' generation? Review what the information says about his/her generational values. How do you think this could impact his/her leadership style? *(If you have never had a job, then write "N/A")*

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Identify a significant person in your life (parent, child, etc.) who is of a different generation from you. According to this chart, how are his/her values different from yours? How do these differing values affect your relationship with that person? How does this affect their ability to be a "support system" as you pursue your education and career goals?

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What information does this reveal to you about what is important regarding education and career choices you should be making?

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### **Test your understanding:**

**What is the main point of this assignment?**

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**Why were you expected to do this exercise?**

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**What type of person would need to do this exercise?**

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**How well do you fit the profile of the person for whom this assignment was created?**

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**Reflection:** *(Write down your response after completing this assignment.)*

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