

A large, ancient baobab tree stands prominently in the center of a savanna landscape. The tree has a thick, textured trunk and a dense canopy of green leaves. In the background, there are other smaller trees and a hazy horizon under a dramatic, cloudy sky. A vibrant rainbow arches across the sky, framing the top of the tree. The overall scene is serene and evokes a sense of timelessness and resilience.

**Creating the Workplace of the Future:
Building a winning EVP for a Multi-generational Workplace**

Written by William Peterson
CEO Peterson Consulting Group
Industrial Psychologist (PS0071773)

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1

Current Trends

(Creating opportunities & muddying the waters)

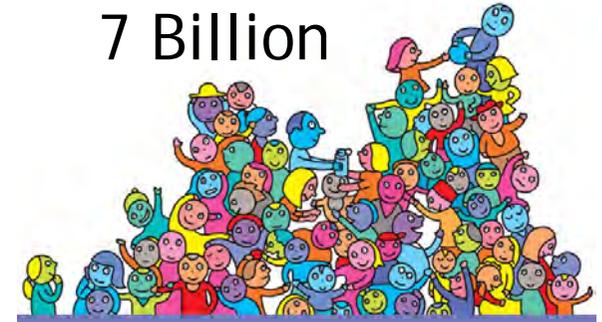
Global Talent Shortage

Our global population growth has now reached the unbelievable 7 billion person mark. One would assume from this reservoir of humanity that we are assured of a continuous flow and resourcing of skilled workers. However, the trend appears to be moving in quite the opposite direction. In countries such as Japan, China, Russia and Italy the availability of skilled workers, we are told, is on the decline. It is predicted that by the end of the decade (2020) they will have more people at retirement age compared to those entering the workforce.

The Talent Shortage Survey 2012 from the Manpower-Group, an international employment agency, reports that approximately 31% employers from across the world report finding it very difficult to fill vacancies because of a growing talent shortage within their markets. They also reported that up to 65% of the global companies and 80% of companies operating

in fast growth economies are struggling to find employees with the skills that they require.

7 Billion



In the US we are reliably informed that their birth rate is on a steady decline. By 2020 they will have a shortfall of 20 million skilled workers and 1 in 5 workers will be over the age of 55. The challenge facing these organisations is that they have to craft and package ingenious propositions to entice increasingly older workers to continue working and not retire. They after all have the knowledge, skills and organisational memory against a backdrop of scarce skills, world-wide.

Attraction and Retention Difficulties Vary Significantly by Region

		Global	China/ India	Other Asia/ Pacific	Iceland /Spain	Other Europe	Brazil	Canada	US
Critical-skill employees	Problems Attracting	65%	84%	78%	49%	62%	81%	61%	52%
	Problems Retaining	49%	81%	69%	29%	44%	65%	35%	31%

Percentage of respondents reporting great or very great difficulty attracting or retaining employees (*towerswatson.com, 2010*)

Another survey conducted by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors estimates that in 2010 India had just over 500 000 civil engineers when it needed nearly 4 million, and 45 000 architects when it needed 366 000. It predicts that by 2020 the accumulative shortfall of core professionals involved in the building trade could be in the tens of millions. (The Economist Sept 29 - Oct 5 2012, Special Report: India in search of a dream.)

Lack of Education and Skills Development

The consequence of this growing trend seems to suggest that the search for talent will become even more desperate especially in employment areas requiring high skill levels and higher education.

Global: Top 10 jobs Employers are having difficulty filling

1. Skilled Trades Workers
2. Engineers
3. Sales Representatives
4. Technicians
5. IT Staff
6. Accounting & Finance Staff
7. Drivers
8. Management / Executives
9. Labourers
10. Secretaries, PAs, Admin Assistants & Office Support Staff

It is dismaying to note that a few billion people still today don't even receive an education beyond their senior school year. We can see how this will hurt whole countries that need to ride this digital wave to escape their dire economic circumstances. Further, investors will be reluctant to invest in these countries because it lacks the educated and skilled workforce.

Place this reality against an unstoppable mobile, digital and technological revolution and the challenge for these countries becomes enormous.



The Emerging Economies

Emerging economies such as India, China, Brazil, Mexico and South Africa etc. do have the advantage of a young labour force and it is expected they could benefit from this growing demographic downsizing elsewhere. However, I must hasten to add that to take full advantage they must provide their young people with the requisite quality education and economic opportunities to develop their skills. This would mean that labour, government, business and learning institutions must

collaborate and buy into a vision and a plan that would see them all work in concert to produce relevant, quality education and skills to match the emerging needs. It is my opinion that any government in power or one who canvasses to be in power must carry this mandate like a torch bearer. Any government who fails to articulate or deliver on this mandate must be replaced.

Some of the fastest growing occupations are in the knowledge based sector. To participate in this sector you need to have been developed by a solid, quality education and supported through ongoing education and training. We know especially in Africa that this has not been the case for many of our youth.

Africa's Educational Challenges



In Africa, despite valiant attempts by many governments, large swaths of our youth still remain excluded from education largely due to low quality of teaching. In 2007 we had 32 million children in sub-Saharan who remained un-enrolled. Integrating these statistics and rolling it across Africa then, a staggering 29 million children were not enrolled. Many young people also do not successfully progress through primary education; they either drop out or have to repeat their grades (grade repetition).

The benefit of education is significant, according to the African Child Policy Forum 'one additional year of education per person results, on average, in 6 per cent per capita GDP growth'. At the level of the individual, a single year of primary school increases wages earned later in life by 5 - 15 per cent. For each additional year of secondary school, a person's wages increases by 15 per cent.

Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) From 18 countries in sub-Saharan Africa

Year	No of pupils	% pupils per 100,000
2000	277	0.277%
2008	408	0.408%

We can assume from this information that many young people in Africa enter the workforce without adequate technical and vocational training.

I was at a family "breakfast party" celebrating the birthday of one of our elders. As is always the case in our circle we eventually enter into passionate discussions about the state of affairs of many things local and global.



One comment was that while Africa is indeed a wealthy continent with Trillions of dollars in commodities beneath the ground, we need to find ways to surface these riches to benefit the citizens and improve their lives. Then of course, there is the small matter of the African human capital worth immeasurably more and they live above ground. This needs urgent and immediate attention. We need more

passion and concern for this human potentiality and unleash Africa's hope.

Sadly, in this day and age with increased modernisation and huge excesses in the developed world, an estimated 66 million children attend school hungry, about 40 per cent of them are in Africa.

An inspirational story about corporate involvement in education is the one I had most recently heard in Nairobi while at dinner with Airtel's global HR Director. When I enquired about what inspired him most about the organisation he is working for, I was not prepared for the answer he gave me. What inspired him most was his CEO whom he said is a humble generous man. He said that as an organisation, as a result of his leadership, they understand the importance of genuinely investing into the markets in which they trade and derive their profits. They see this as a concrete expression of social responsibility and sincere caring. He stressed that his CEO inspires because he cares. To substantiate

this caring he explained to me that their organisation has committed to taking care of the educational needs of more than 40 000 students throughout India where they take responsibility for the entire school operation. They sponsor these schools and students from Grade R right through to completing their Secondary schooling. This includes making sure that every student has at least one meal a day. In Africa where they have a footprint in 17 countries they have identified 2 schools in each country and have taken it upon themselves to rebuild the infrastructure of these schools to make learning more conducive. This is an inspirational testament "in praise" of corporate responsibility.

"People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care"

John Maxwell



The Rise of the Digital Age

The unstoppable global trend is definitely towards a world which will be dominated by mobile communications, cloud computing, open software platforms and other major waves of innovation sparked by this new digital age. It is safe to say that over time these influences will completely alter the way we think about and do our work. Already people all over the world are working together in virtual spaces, engaging in new dynamic ways of collaborating when they are not even physically near the person they are working with.

I must hasten to add a caveat to what may appear to be my unbridled enthusiasm about “the future”. In parts of Asia, Africa and other developing regions in the world, this trend will make its impact but many people especially in the rural areas will be less likely materially affected because of the current lack of education and infrastructure development. So, we may

have to settle for a lag or arrested development in some of these regions for now.

Colonial Hangover and Poor Governance

Our arrested development particularly in large parts of Africa can be attributed to colonialism, political instability, poverty, lack of education, poor infrastructure and a whole host of other social ills. The colonial legacy in Africa and elsewhere has been deep, divisive and brutal. In many respects Africans continue to live with its scars and feel it in their “collective” emotional pain body, consciously or unconsciously. That they should move on, is an absolute imperative for their survival. That they should forget, is to minimize its significance and trivialise their complex struggle to align all to an African renaissance vision and strategy.

Much of the world’s hard manual and physical labour will still be done from these developing regions of the world. Many IT systems are not likely to immediately transform many of the enterprises and types of labour. So we continue to face a

harsh reality in these regions and therefore with sensitivity and determination must do everything we can to change this reality. There are signs of hope and growth. We must ensure that it is deepened, made real and sustainable based on a practice of economic justice for all.

The Home Coming Revolution (Trickling in)

I have mentioned there are signs of hope and growth and we are witnessing a dramatic growth of emerging market countries. This according to the World Economic Forum is exerting an influence on the migration patterns of economic migrants. They report that we are beginning to see what they refer to as an increase in “reverse migration”. This means that highly skilled workers are returning to their home countries to ply their trade. At the moment however, developed markets are still a top choice for these economic migrants.



War for Talent

Due to the global skill shortage and the growth of the emerging markets, the war for talent has just gotten more desperate. This means that companies are open to accept a more diverse pool of employees' especially older employees and women into senior roles traditionally occupied by men.



It is said that never before has the workplace witnessed all 4 generations working together side by side in one team, department, division or organisation.

Organisations of the future are compelled to recognise, appreciate and understand the diverse needs of its multi-generational workforce if it is to get the best out of them and retain them.

Employee Priorities and Preferences

When the pendulum swings in favour of the employee because their skills and capabilities will be in growing short supply then their priorities and preferences will most certainly influence working conditions and arrangements. Organisations will have to review its current employee value proposition to ensure that its retention strategy is strong and attractive enough to prevent any leakage of its top talent.

2

The Workplace of the Future

The Current Workplace

Before we describe the workplace of the future which has many commentators and researchers expressing varying and sometimes contradicting views, let's reflect upon the current state of the workplace. Recent research presents the current workplace as:

- extremely challenging
- fast changing
- stressful

The way work is organised is mainly still dominated through the structure of the organisation. This is largely still based on the command and control design with steep hierarchies. The work environment remains in a state of flux.

The Future Desired Workplace

The workplace of the future to my mind would have to be premised on employee commitment. Here is a story to illustrate.

Christopher Wren was commissioned to build St Paul's Cathedral in London after a historic fire had raised most of the city in 1666. During the rebuilding process, Wren, we are told observed 3 bricklayers.

Wren asked each bricklayer the same question: "What are you doing?"

The first bricklayer he approached responded with "I am working."

The second said, "I am building a wall."

The response from the third bricklayer was however different. "I am building a Cathedral to the Almighty" he said.

This story illustrates that all organisations of the future must develop the capacity and culture to inspire their employees. I will illustrate later in this article why inspiring employees will become crucial.

Key Features of the Future Workplace

Digital

There is no doubt that the workplace of the future is seen as high tech, virtual, global and diverse. Staff will be operating autonomously. They will be organising their own work patterns to fit their varying generational desired lifestyles.

Reinvent

Organisations of the future will be forced to develop the agility to reinvent themselves to keep pace with the continuous changes brought about by the digital and technological revolution.

People First

While the external customer remains crucial, organisations will have to find immediate and practical expression to the mantra “charity begins at home”. In other words they would have to live an inverted pyramid where they genuinely put their employees first and their customers second. A workplace where the CEO practices the art of being the “servant

among servants” and a place where every leader follows this example. Put another way, a workplace where every level sees the next level as their customers and becomes a servant to the next level and as a result the external customer receives brilliant service at every interface.

“Motivation and inspiration energise people, not by pushing them in the right direction as control mechanisms do but by satisfying basic human needs for achievement, a sense of belonging, recognition, self-esteem, a feeling of control over one's life, and the ability to live up to one's ideals. Such feelings touch us deeply and elicit a powerful response.”

John P. Kotter



Finger on the Pulse

Organisations of the future will constantly poll their staff for information to surface their needs and understand how best they can create value for all their employees. This will become a strategic imperative to ensure that the right people in the organisation stay and continue to add value.

Courageous Transparency

Organisations of the future will also take their employees into their confidence and honestly share important information with them regarding the true state of the organisation. Through this act of confidence and display of courageous transparency they will deepen the trust relationship and deepen the commitment of their employees to assist the organisation out of any dilemma/difficulty they may find themselves in.

Distributive Power

Leadership will be less around the Alpha Male model, i.e. all powers concentrated in the CEO role and his elect Executive Team. It will be more distributed and employees will see their critical role through demonstrating personal leadership in whatever and wherever they are representing the organisation. I am not suggesting the demise of positional leadership roles or authority, rather I am supporting the idea that when this power is dispersed and accepted among more of the employees then we have the “Spartacus effect” which means that employees have internalised and owned their responsibility to lead and live the vision with their leader present or not.

“A leader is best when people barely know he exists, not so good when people obey and acclaim him, worse when they despise him. But of a good leader who talks little when his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say, we did it ourselves.”

Lao Tzu



Continuous Step Wise Change

Organisations of the future will also be less inclined to go for massive organisational wide change interventions and will rather encourage leaders and their teams to undertake multiple smaller change initiatives on a far more regular and continuous basis. Practise continuous improvement.

EQ Leadership

Leaders in this future workplace would have to demonstrate exceptional interpersonal skills and their technical competence will be taken for granted as a threshold requirement to their roles. In other words, EQ will be a key differentiator between effective and inspirational leaders and mediocre leaders.

To qualify the profile of leaders with sufficient EQ, I would like to substantiate it with the following key competences.

- Walk your Talk (*Model the way with integrity and ethics*)

- Call your staff to a Shared Vision (*Be a Visionary and Vision-taker*)
- Be open to continuously improve your processes (*Be an Innovator and Risk taker*)
- Empower your staff to Act (*Teach, coach, mentor*)
- Affirm, Recognise and Celebrate
- Servant-centred leadership principles
- Value and appreciate diversity

Ethical and Trustworthy

Ethics is predicted to become more important as part of the leadership competence as employees seek to commit only to those who inspire them and whom they can trust implicitly. (This is a natural reaction when one considers how governments, institutions and corporations have let their “followers” down, broken their trust so spectacularly at every level especially over the last two decades.)

3

Understanding the Multi- Generational phenomenon

We are told by Researchers, Sociologists and Psychologists that the workforce of today is probably the most diverse it has ever been in terms of race, gender ethnicity etc. For the first time in history they add that we have 4 generations working together cheek by jowl. We are also reminded that each of these “discrete” groups are defined and driven by their values, attitudes, collective experience as well as their needs and wants regarding their work expectations.

(Zemke, et al., 2000)

A generation is essentially a group of people defined by a particular age boundary. They are typically born during a specific era and share similar experiences while growing up. They also therefore share similar cultural, social characteristics and attitudes. *(Adapted from: Recognition Management Institute, 2000)*. So based on their shared experiences during their formative years, their values and attitudes about the work

place and their preferences about it tend to be similar. Researchers, sociologists and psychologists have all reported seeing distinctive differences between these generations particularly in the manner in which they approach:

- Work
- Work-Life Balance
- Employee Loyalty
- Authority
- Etc.

However, not all differences can be attributed to the generational gap. Differences can also be attributed to the individual's uniqueness, levels of experience, and levels of financial commitment, political awareness, and emotional maturity etc.

Not being aware, sensitive and responsive to these multi- generational differences can have negative impact for organisations in a world where top talent is in short supply.

Caveat: I would caution against making these multi-generational observations generalisable across all countries. With respect, this is largely an American and western world view and experience. There are parts of the world where the experience has been different and have produced different cultural, social characteristics and attitudes. Organisations would do well to recognise, understand and appreciate these as they grow their global footprint.

Understanding the Multi-Generational Workplace

TRADITIONALISTS



Date Born

- 1925 - 1945

Current Age

- Over age 65

Major Shaping Events

- Great Depression - Sacrifice and hardship
- World War II
- Industrialisation
- Korean War

Values and Strengths

- Hard working
- Dedication and sacrifice
- Honours and respects authority
- Respect for rules
- Duty before pleasure
- Conformity
- Loyalty
- "Waste not, want not"

Technological Shapers

- Radio and telephone

Traditionalists in the Workplace

“Hold on to them”



Descriptors	Characteristics
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Work First”• Deep experience• Dedicated• Perseverance• Stable• Polite• Respectful• Obedient• Realistic• Pragmatic
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reluctant to challenge the system or the process - conformers• Struggle with change• Struggle with diversity, Black or White - no space for grey
How to lead them	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be clear• Be direct• Spell out clear job expectations• Be logical and structured• Set long-term goals• Be fair and consistent• Be respectful

Traditionalists in the Workplace

“Hold on to them”

Descriptors	Descriptors
How not to lead them	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be too emotional - “soft and fluffy”• Indecisive• Unable to take a stand• Using bad language and jargon• Using untested and untried methods and approaches• Being disorganised
Motivational Triggers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Show them the big picture and answer the why question• value their experience• appreciate their dedication• communicate one-on-one• learn the corporate history• value the legacy they built
Reward preferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rewards must be tangible• symbolic e.g. certificates, plaques and pay increases
How to communicate with them	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Write to them in memo or letter style and the more personal the note the better
Retention Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Let them know their experience is viewed as an asset• Capitalise on their experience• Engage them in mentoring relationships with younger employees

BABY BOOMERS

Date Born	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1946 - 1964
Current Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ± 48 - 65
Major Shaping Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Civil Rights Movement• Vietnam War• Man on the Moon• Rock 'n Roll• Birth Control• Women's Liberation Movement• Chinese Cultural Revolution
Values and Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Optimistic• Hard working• Team orientation• Personal growth• Responsible and dedicated• Loyal• Driven and competitive
Technological Shapers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Television



Baby Boomers in the Workplace

“Keep them on board for as long as you can”

Descriptors

Characteristics

Strengths

- “Live to Work”
- Service orientated
- Dedicated
- Driven to do a good job
- Team players
- Experienced and knowledgeable
- Consensus building leadership style
- Idealistic

Weaknesses

- Reluctant to disagree or challenge peers
- Tendency to overcompensate on consensus and process
- Uncomfortable with conflict

How to lead them

- Be consensual and treat them as equals
- Show respect
- Be democratic in your approach
- Co-create the vision
- Show empathy
- Give them your full attention
- Value and recognise their contribution



Baby Boomers in the Workplace

“Keep them on board for as long as you can”



Descriptors	Descriptors
How not to lead them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being undemocratic and not favouring consensus based leadership • Being overly bureaucratic, authoritarian, aloof, uncaring and abrasive
Motivational Triggers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involvement • Value their contribution • Ask for their opinion • Let them know that their talent and skill is needed
Reward preferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show personal appreciation • Offer promotion • Give regular recognition when appropriate and deserving
How to communicate with them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phone calls • Personal interaction
Retention Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility in work arrangements • Time off to deal with family matters • Provide career growth and learning opportunities • Encourage work-life balance • Be creative around retirement exit programmes

GENERATION X

Date Born

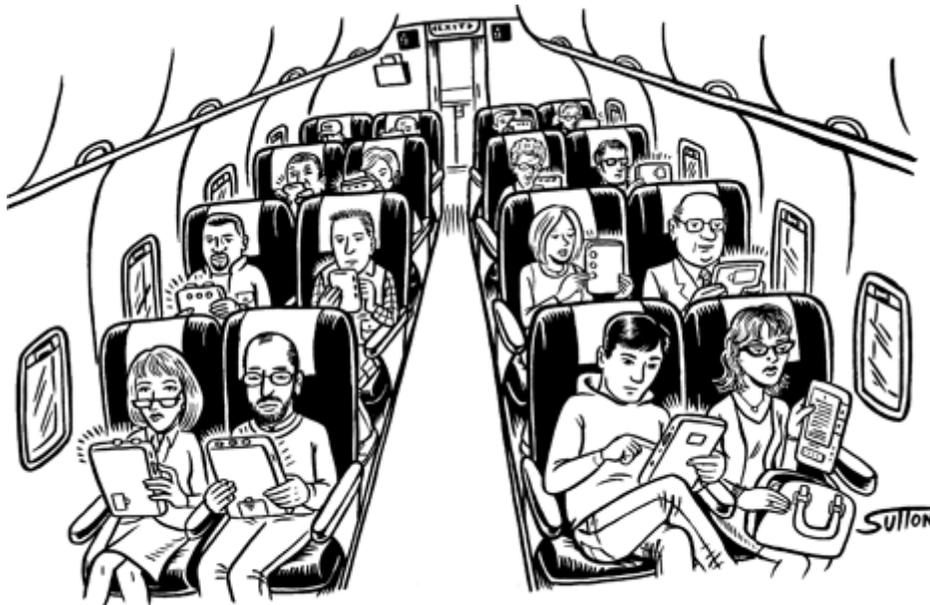
- 1965 - 1981

Current Age

- ± 31 - 47

Major Shaping Events

- HIV & AIDS
- Personal Computer
- Latchkey upbringing
- The Space Race
- Collapse of Communism
- Fall of Berlin Wall
- IRAQ War
- Single parent home on the increase
- Chernobyl Disaster
- Corporate invincibility questioned
 - 1987 Stock Market collapse
 - Energy Crisis



"In preparation for landing, please turn off your books."

GENERATION X

Values and Strengths

- Adaptable to change
- Techno-literate
- Self-reliant
- Diversity minded
- Fun and informality
- Pragmatic and realistic
- Results orientated
- Challenge the process and system
- Individualistic
- Resourceful
- Balance in home and work

Technological Shapers

- Personal Computer

Generation X in the Workplace

“Start developing them into leaders now for tomorrow”

<i>Descriptors</i>	<i>Characteristics</i>
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Work to Live”• Work life balance• Adaptable and techno-literate• Value diversity• Initiative takers• Willingness to challenge the system• Innovators
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sceptical• Reluctant to commit• Unimpressed and distrustful of authority

Generation X in the Workplace

“Start developing them into leaders now for tomorrow”

Descriptors

Descriptors

How to lead them

- Be competent
- Be direct i.e. get to the point
- Don't micromanage them
- Lighten up
- Avoid jargon and buzz words
- Give them space to be creative and achieve
- Be results orientated
- Be flexible
- Use email
- Only call face-to-face meetings when absolutely necessary

How not to lead them

- Do not police them
- Practice what you preach
- Focus too much on process and too little on outcome
- Overly charismatic
- Do not be bureaucratic
- Don't try to smooth talk them



Generation X in the Workplace

“Start developing them into leaders now for tomorrow”

<i>Descriptors</i>	<i>Descriptors</i>
Motivational Triggers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Give them autonomy i.e. let them run with it,• Be a barrier buster on their behalf i.e. clear the way for them• Make sure that they are adequately resourced
Reward preferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• They value personal time• Offer opportunities for career development• Understand they are not interested in job security but career security
How to communicate with them	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Voicemail• Email
Retention Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Give them meaningful work• Give them quality managers who know how to inspire through<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Walking their talk○ Co-creating a shared vision○ Being open to process improvement○ Empowering them to act○ Affirming, recognising and celebrating their successes with them

MILLENNIALS

Date Born	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1982 - 2000
Current Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ± 12 - 30
Major Shaping Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Internet• Mobile Telecommunications• 9/11• IRAQ and Afghanistan Wars• Social Networking• Economic Meltdown• Corporate Scandals• End of Apartheid• Renewable energy
Values and Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Technological Savvy• Entrepreneurial• Respect for Diversity• Social Consciousness• Convenience• Confident• Tenacious• Collaborative and achievement orientated• Ability to multi-task
Technological Shapers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Internet

Millennials in the Workplace

“Train and nurture them”



Descriptors	Characteristics
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Live, then work”• Determined to do a good job• Readiness to collaborate• Optimistic• Ability to multi-task through multimedia• Task orientated
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Need for supervision and structure
How to lead them	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• They want options and choices• They expect feedback• They expect attention• Lighten up
How not to lead them	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Don’t be cynical and sarcastic• Don’t undermine their value• Don’t be threatened by their techno savvy• Don’t speak down to them• Don’t be inconsistent and disorganised

Millennials in the Workplace

“Train and nurture them”



Descriptors	Descriptors
Motivational Triggers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Need flexibility to balance activities• Tell them how their tasks will advance their personal and career goals• Give them meaningful work• Ask them for their opinion• Help them find a mentor
Reward preferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide them with tangible evidence of credibility e.g. certificates, awards etc.
How to communicate with them	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SMS• E-mails• Blogs
Retention Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Flexibility• Get them involved in volunteer efforts that are meaningful• Help them learn interpersonal skills• Use their capability to access and share information quickly

4

Why your Top Talent is exiting

Why your Top Talent is Exiting

In a recent survey conducted by Deloitte April 2011, they reported that only 35% of employees whom they surveyed said that they expect to remain with their current employers. This marks a significant decrease (10%) compared to the same survey done a year before. Alarming, 65% of the respondents surveyed indicated that they are either passively or actively looking to exit their organisation. As an organisation, you might do well to test whether these reasons are also true for you.

The reason Baby Boomers say they are exiting is because they do not trust leadership enough. Reasons cited for exiting by Generation X and Millennial is: their organisations do not have good career development programmes.

4 out of 10 respondents who were surveyed refer to their organisation's talent programmes and efforts as either fair or poor. Those who did describe their

organisation's talent programmes as effective are nearly twice as committed to remain with their organisations.

Common reasons that top talent are leaving their organisations are the following:



- Career paths and career development are fair to poor
- Leadership development are also fair to poor
- Lack of trust in leadership to inspire confidence and
- Ineffective training and development programmes.

It is also interesting to note that most commentators who have written about the Multi-Generational workforce indicate that this group shares some common wants and needs for example:

- They all generally thrive when their contributions and experience is valued.

When they are working in an environment that is supportive, appreciative and offers appropriate and timely recognition, they feel inspired and their commitment to the organisation is deepened.

- If the organisation has a good career progression and development plan and offers them a variety of learning opportunities to grow and develop then they are more likely to stay.
- If the organisation offers them sufficient flexibility and autonomy to deliver their outputs then they also are extremely committed to stay.

5

Employee Value Proposition (EVP)

“An employee value proposition is the experience offered by an employer in exchange for the productivity and performance of an employee.” Anon

To develop the most effective EVP you must understand what your organisation’s business strategy is. This understanding will help guide you to select and develop the talent needed to support your organisation’s goals and objectives. The EVP must describe how it will *attract, engage and retain* your organisation’s top talent.

From an employee’s perspective the EVP must answer the (WIFM) question; WIFM means “what’s in it for me”. In return the employer responds with a promise through its EVP.

This “promise” ought to be well designed and structured to help the organisation differentiate itself from its competition.

You basically have to spell out clearly why the overall work experience at your company is far more superior to that of your competitors. It must not fail to outline your unique employee policies, various career and development programs, compensation and rewards programme. It must give the current employee compelling reasons as to why they should stay. Equally, for the prospective employee, why they should join.

Benefits of having a well-structured and relevant EVP:

- It helps you to attract and retain the right talent.
- It helps you to cater for different groups of your employees.
- It gives HR a clear mandate.
- It makes you the best place to work for.

Key components contained within an EVP Include:



Key components contained within an EVP include:

Compensation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Salary• Incentives• Cash• Recognition• Pay Process
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Healthcare• Retirement• Insurances• Recognition Programs
Affiliation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work Environment• Trust• Transparency• Organisational Commitment
Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advancement Opportunities• Personal Growth and Development• Training• Job Security
Work Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Challenge• Autonomy• Meaningfulness• Variety

6

EVP: For a Multi- Generational Workplace

Employee Value Proposition : For a Multi-Generational Workplace

Operating Principles

1. Ask yourself what it is that your organisation needs from your employees to be successful.
2. Ask yourself what your employees (classes of employees) want.
3. Ensure that there is a link between the value proposition and the organisational strategic objectives, values and principles.
4. When thinking about their needs, it must be from their point of view.

Key Focus Areas

to consider in your EVP

- *Organisational Culture*
 - Create opportunities in your organisation to have courageous

conversations around diversity and give the “age diversity differential” equal airtime.

- Ensure all of your people managers are given thorough and ample opportunity to develop their competence to effectively lead their multi-generational teams.
- Ensure that the working environment genuinely creates an environment for all opinions to be surfaced and heard with safety.

Ensure that as you appreciate and capitalise on the internal multi-generational diversity you do the same appreciation toward your external customer base by ensuring that your staff develop the appropriate awareness's and sensitivity.

Key Focus Areas in your EVP

Talent Retention

- Ensure that your reward system clearly values and rewards your people leaders for looking after and retaining your top talent.
- Ensure that you are able to offer various opportunities for your staff to be promoted, progress and grow i.e. horizontal movement, job rotation, placement on meaningful and interesting projects etc.
- Ensure you can offer your employees retirement options that meets with their needs e.g. phased retirement
- Offer flexible work options understanding that across your multi-generational categories employees are keen on establishing a better work life balance for themselves.
- Review your incentives and consider adjustments in your flexi time

arrangements even where appropriate allow them to work from home etc.

- Really be creative and innovative around the way you structure your benefits. Make it appealing. In this regard always consider at which stage of the multi-generational life cycle your employees are and what they at this stage would find most meaningful. If you can manage it, try not to have a one size fits all approach.
- *Pay*
 - Always reward output i.e. performance and productivity.
 - Don't throw away service award programmes, the gold watch and the plaques just yet, remember your Traditionalists and Baby Boomers still find this tangible expression important.

- *Learning and Development*
 - Offer your leaders learning opportunities on how best to lead their multi-generational teams.
 - Similarly, offer your staff training on how to communicate while being a team member in a multi-generational team, department, organisation and external client base.
 - Ensure all your important decision making forums within your organisation are well represented across the multi-generational categories. This suggestion is premised on the assumption that the same principle is applied to other diversity differentials e.g. race, gender, caste etc.

Traditionalists and Baby Boomers etc., they also can learn from the Millennials, for as we have seen, are techno-savvy and connected 24/7.

Offer mentoring programmes as well as reversed mentoring programmes remembering that as much as your Millennials can learn from your

7

HR's Kairos Moment

This is a unique opportunity for Human Resource practitioners and professionals to step into the cauldron of their profession and to take up their rightful place as part of the business leadership. I would go so far as to call this HR's Kairos moment.

The opportunity has arisen for HR to stop feeling and behaving like poor second cousins always having to justify their existence. They should not be intimidated by others who through their ignorance try to relegate the role of HR to a meaningless, non-contributing function. The unfortunate positioning of HR as "those in the soft skills arena" is silly and highly unintelligent within the context of serious business thinking. This dualistic thinking of separating and dividing things out as opposed to integrating and seeing things as a systemic whole has been a western disease for hundreds of years and it seems to have infiltrated in the way we think about people in business. This dualistic thinking of hard and soft skills

and then giving it a value has damaged business' capability of addressing some of its key organisational challenges.

The role of Marketing, Accounting and Finance, Operations, Legal, Sales, IT etc. are not functions more superior to HR. HR shares an equal space of importance and value, both in recognition, status and remuneration. Remember, in a good orchestra all instruments are important.

HR would however have to own responsibility for the false perceptions that some business leaders have of their value and function. To change this perception HR must make every effort to return to the strategic essence of its role. To be a respected business partner HR must move out of the role of a mere "order-taker".

They must step into their role as:

- **Businesses partners** and align their HR Interventions with the business strategy and set their HR priorities to best serve the business.

- **Procedural/administrative experts**, HR must make a contribution toward cost consciousness, admin and process efficiency through improved design and delivery of their systems.
- **Employee engagement**, while the manager is ultimately responsible for creating the appropriate conditions for employee engagement, HR must play a pivotal support role to ensure that nothing gets in the way of the employee giving of their best. Ensuring that employees have the capability and competence to do the job, in other words, are “able and willing”.
- **Transition facilitators**, they must help to ready, guide and navigate the business for change and transition.

HR must demonstrate the following competences:

- Understand and diagnose their business’s needs.

- Help and improve their business’s processes.
- Create credible forums and platforms where the voices of employees are heard and action is taken.
- Deliver, execute and solicit feedback about the impact of their interventions.

Even within HR teams no role must be seen to be more important (sexier) as this will only serve to divide the team and cripple its ability to deliver an integrated service to the business. They must deliver value to the business and their delivery must be specific and necessary for business success. They must see their role alongside the business leaders creating shared understanding and commitment.



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