

Chapter 3 Understanding Management

Module 16: Going from Peer to Manager

- So, you've been promoted to manager. Congratulations, this is a great opportunity, and if you're like most people you're simultaneously excited and nervous, I know I was. We've all experienced bad bosses, and I'm sure you want to do a good job and be someone your employee's trust and respect. In fact, that should be your goal. To build a relationship with them based on trust and respect.

In this chapter, we'll cover ways you can do that, but first, let's talk about how you transition from being a peer to a manager. If you're coming in from the outside and haven't worked alongside your reports it can be easier, because you don't have a previous relationship with them. You come into a role of authority. While they don't know you, they also don't have any preconceived notions about you. However, you'll have more work to do to help them get to know you and trust you. If you've been promoted to supervise your colleagues, they do know you, which means they have some beliefs about who you are and how you'll manage. These may or may not be accurate, so you may need to overcome not only their assumptions but your own.

Whether you're promoted from within or hired from the outside the following strategy should guide your actions the first few weeks and months.

First, **have patience with their nervousness**. You probably remember having a new boss yourself, because we've all lived with poor managers people are somewhat anxious to see what kind of manager you're going to be. This means that they'll simultaneously be putting on their best behavior for you, and also guarded about what they share with you. They'll also be trying to bend your ear about their priorities and concerns. That's good, you want to learn all you can so listen. Just don't promise anything early on until you've really had time to assess everything.

This is a great time to focus on **getting to know your people**, your second strategy. One of the best things any new manager can do is to make a point of meeting with each of your people to learn more about them. Here are some key questions to ask:

"Tell me about your role, I'd like to hear your perspective on what your priorities are and the challenges that you face."

"How I can support you in being successful?"

"How do you like to be supervised?"

"What motivates and engages you at work?"

And by thanking them for the information. At this point, don't make any promises about what you will or won't do. It's too early to commit to anything. I also think it's a good idea to meet with your colleagues in other departments, and also those above you. Ask them the first two questions, you'll learn a lot.

This is all part of the third strategy, which is to **take time and gather information**. This is certainly important if you're new to the organization, but it's even more so if you're already working there and here's why. As you move up you gain a whole new perspective about things. You'll be privy to all kinds of information that you didn't have before. You'll learn more about the people above you, the organization's goals and challenges, as well as confidential information about the budget and personnel files. Trust me when you move up, it's a whole new world. So, you want to take time to learn all that you can before you make any big decisions or implement new ideas. While you may be brimming with them, it's in your best interest to slow down, and thoroughly explore the real lay of the land.

Fourth, **be transparent with your values and philosophy.** While you may be waiting to design and implement changes, you can use this time to share your values and management philosophy. This is how you start building trust and establishing your integrity. Your employers are nervous, and they want and need to know who you're going to be. I recommend completing the *Values Assessment* in the Leadership 102 Exercise Guide.

Fifth, **take time to craft your overall strategy.** Once you've gathered information you want to think about how you can address and resolve some of the challenges while also maximizing strengths and opportunities. This all needs to work within the structures and resources you have. By crafting your overall plan, it will help you map out how you'll make changes over time. In addition, it will be the North Star that will guide your decision making in all kinds of situations. If you know you'll be implementing change, be sure to watch the course called, Leading Change.

Finally, **pace yourself.** I know you may be chomping at the bit to get started, but if you rush too quickly you may accidentally damage the relationships you're trying to build. Your effectiveness as a manager is completely dependent on your ability to build positive working relationships with people all over your organization. So, focus on that first, and the rest will follow.

Module 17: TRUST

- Building trust is an ongoing practice, something you do every day in your words and actions. As a manager, your success is dependent on creating an environment where you're seen as trustworthy, not only by your direct reports but also by your supervisors and your peers. ***Let's look at the key practices of building trust.***

1. **Have integrity with your words and actions.** This means that you do what you said you would. You follow through, meet deadlines, and keep your promises. This is not occasionally, but all the time. In the rare instances where you cannot deliver, you take responsibility, explain why, and even apologize when appropriate.
2. **Share your values.** People have to know what you stand for in order to assess if you have integrity or not. Study after study shows that people assess trustworthiness based on how well you live in alignment with your values. They can do this faster if they know what your values are. Interestingly, they don't have to like or approve your values for you to establish trust.
3. **Make ethical choices.** Ethics are another important aspect of integrity. How they differ is that each culture or society has its own laws and norms that determine what's considered ethical within that context. Acting ethically is about being in alignment with the agreed-upon standards of that community. Certainly, the workplace has some agreed-upon standards, like not discriminating against people. Sometimes, an industry has a code of ethics like medicine's Hippocratic Oath of *do no harm*, and many organizations have their code of ethics that they outline in shared values or specific policies and practices.
4. **Sincerely listen to others.** When you listen to others without judgment, it makes it easier for them to open up in the future. You want to be a place where people can bring their honest concerns, needs, priorities, and hopes and know that you'll listen. This doesn't mean that you have to give them everything they want. In fact, you often won't be able to. But, if you listen and respond with respect, you'll build trust with every conversation.
5. **Be accountable for your actions.** Part of managing is taking risks and making decisions. Sometimes you'll be successful, and sometimes you won't. If you blame others or make excuses, you'll damage trust. And if you take credit for other people's work, you harm trust too. So, be accountable for your actions, both good and bad. Admit your mistakes and be proud of your wins.
6. **Be honest in your communication.** Your word has to mean something. This is not only following through on promises but also that you can be honest about anything. Sometimes honesty is hard. It means that you offer realistic assessments, frank critiques, and clear opinions. That can be challenging if you know the other person won't like what you have to say or may be hurt by it. But trust is also built on people knowing that you'll be honest. Find ways to communicate honestly and clearly, but also with kindness and empathy. It will make it easier to hear what you have to say.

- Respond to feedback.** You'll be the recipient of feedback, and how you handle it is part of building trust. If you get defensive or shoot the messenger, you're going to harm trust. As a manager, you have power in the relationship. So, you need to intentionally seek feedback and then make changes. Remember, people leave a boss, not a company. Before they leave, they'll try once or twice to give you feedback. If you don't change, they'll start disengaging as they get ready to leave. So, take feedback very seriously. In fact, intentionally seek it out. Don't just wait for people to bring you feedback or complaints. Actively seek out their opinions, both good and bad, about how things are going and reward honesty. When someone has the courage to tell you challenging news, sincerely thank them. They've actually shown you a great sign of respect.
- Making it safe to take risks.** The last and most important practice, one of the worst things that can happen in the work setting is if there's a culture of fear. When people are afraid, they're obviously not in trust. And even worse, you've shut down the pathway to creativity and innovation, something that all organizations need to be successful. As a manager, you need to create a culture where it's safe to take risks. Be open to hearing feedback or ideas that are different from yours. Also, don't allow your employees to treat each other poorly. And don't tolerate behavior that undermines safety for anyone in the organization. Be clear about how performance issues are handled. People feel safer if they trust that the process will be fair. If you consistently focus on building trust, you'll be able to do so. But the work doesn't stop there. While it takes time to build trust, it can be destroyed overnight. One violation on your part can undo months of hard work. So, make establishing trust one of your top and ongoing priorities. It should be built on a set of these practices that you use every day.

Module 18: Motivating and Engaging Others

- As a manager, you have a responsibility to build others up. Obviously, there's a business case for doing so. Helping others achieve their potential yields all kinds of measurable outcomes that affect the bottom line, like productivity, innovation, and customer satisfaction. I think it's important to remember that building others up also reflects well on you. One sign that top executives look for is whose team is thriving and excelling. They know that this indicates a manager that has high potential for future opportunities. As a manager, you want to intentionally motivate and engage your team. Recent research has clearly demonstrated key factors that inspire people.

Let's first look at **MOTIVATION**. Studies in psychology and human potential show us that all humans are motivated by 3 driving forces, in ranking order.

- Need for physical survival and safety.** This includes the most basic necessities, from air, food, and water to our more modern versions of being able to buy a home, afford health care, and have job security. When this level is tended to, we can focus more energy on the second level.
- Need to belong.** This includes our social needs of having friends and loved ones and being able to spend quality time with them. In addition, this level includes our sense of achievement and competence in professional settings. When this level is tended to, we can then focus on the highest level.
- Need to achieve our full potential.** Humans are drawn to becoming the best they can be. This not only includes personal excellence but also expressing and appreciating creativity, as well as making a difference in the lives of others. In fact, compelling research has shown that, when the other levels are met, humans are most motivated by having autonomy, developing mastery, and contributing to a meaningful purpose.

Now let's look at **ENGAGEMENT**. Engagement is the level of positive attachment employees feel toward their job and the organization, which serves as a profound motivator for productivity and growth.

Studies show that the top causes of employee disengagement are:

- *feeling invisible because efforts are not measured or recognized;*
- *the job or workplace is not as expected;*
- *there's little to no feedback or coaching and there's no access to professional development;*
- *they're overworked and stressed out;*
- *there's a lack of trust or confidence in the senior leaders.*

So engaging employees obviously involves tending to these issues. It's not just a one-shot deal; it's how they're treated on a daily basis. **This includes:**

- *hiring people into the right positions,*
- *making sure job descriptions match real work expectations,*
- *providing training and development,*
- *having a performance management process that accurately measures contributions.*

But the true spirit of engaging employees lives in the relationships managers build with their people.

Here are some **Specific Strategies** to use for building a culture of employee engagement through individual relationships:

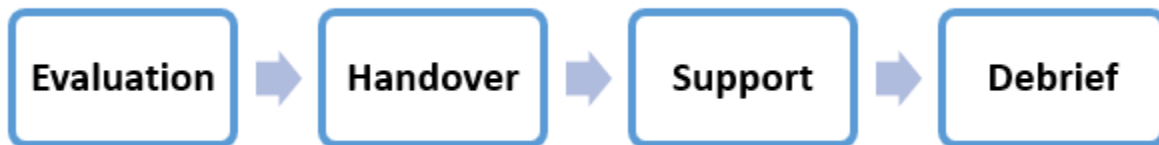
- Get to **know your people individually**. Focus on the whole person and not just their work life. Learn more about their strengths, skills, and their styles for work, communication, conflict, and leadership. Learn more about who they are as people through your observations, interactions, and discussions. Consider what you know about their values, experiences, needs, and priorities.
- Second, use your **one-on-one meetings** to not only discuss performance but actively support their professional development plans. Make sure that their interests and ultimate career goals are a regular part of your check-ins. Regularly provide coaching and training to enhance their skills and keep an eye out for relevant opportunities, like being assigned to a project or committee.
- Third, **use appreciative inquiry to bring out their best**. Appreciative inquiry is based on the idea that, instead of focusing on our flaws or weaknesses, you want to focus on people's strengths and successes. To use appreciative inquiry, you ask a person or a team about their successes, times when they've really excelled at something or had a peak performance. Then you explore what set that apart. The goal is to find ways to translate that success to other performances.
- Finally, **celebrate successes**, both large and small. Do this with individuals and with the group. People are most motivated when they're moving towards something and have a sense of their progress, rather than having their failings highlighted. When employees feel respected and empowered, they can face challenges with a collaborative spirit and a positive attitude. As a manager, consider how you can use these ideas to motivate and engage your people. The benefits to your organization are numerous.

Module 19: Delegating Responsibilities

- To be successful as a manager, you must learn the art of delegating. It really is an art because when done right, it requires some thoughtful analysis and intentional choices on your part. Delegation is a very important interaction that lies at the intersection of three things. The delegator, you. The delegate, the person you're handing a task to and the organization that the interaction is housed within. **Delegation is the process of asking another person to do a task, while still maintaining responsibility for that task.** It can range from giving someone a simple everyday task to appointing someone as the leader of a complex project. Appointments can be short-term, from minutes to a couple of weeks or long term, from a few weeks to months. But delegation is not just about handing off tasks. It's actually a great opportunity to further motivate and engage your employees by creating opportunities for their professional development. As the manager, you're in the role of the delegator and you're instrumental in making the process go smoothly. Most people think that there's only one phase. You ask the employee to do a task and they do it. Actually,

successful delegation is more complex than that and requires you to be savvy with both project management as well as people skills.

When I consult with organizations, I teach my **Four-Phase Model of Delegation**. The 4 phases are:



The phases are linear. Meaning that you need to complete one before you go on to the next.

The first phase is called **Evaluation**. In this phase, you assess aspects of the organization, your workload, and your employees. This will help you determine what can and should be delegated, and to whom various projects should be given. The goal here is to match up your employee's strength and opportunities for growth with the project that will help them further develop. Unfortunately, evaluation is the phase that most managers skip because they feel pressed for time. This can set up a pattern where managers try to do too many things themselves and then when the workload gets to be too much, dump tasks on others at the last minute. This not only affects the success of the tasks being done well but it can also harm the relationship between the manager and employees. So, take the time to do this phase because it will you set you and your team up for success.

The second phase is called the **Handover**. In this phase, the focus is to communicate clear expectations about the goals of the tasks, resources that will be provided, and the timeline. You also determine how much autonomy you're going to give them. A crucial part of this phase is determining and communicating how much freedom you're assigning. Did you know that there's actually eight levels of autonomy? These levels cover who gathers the information, who makes the decision and who takes the action. By far and away, the biggest source of problems in delegation is lack of clarity about which level of autonomy is being given.

The third phase is called **Support**. In this phase, you deliver any resources or support promised in phase two. This includes granting access to authority, providing resources, and coaching your employee as needed. Delivering what you promised builds trust and respect with your employees and again, contributes to the successful completion of the task. During the support phase, you also monitor the progress of the employee and the ways you agreed upon during the handover.

The final phase in the delegation process is called the **Debrief**. This phase occurs once the task is completed. Thus, ending the delegation. You and the employee meet to discuss the outcome of the task as well as the process of delegation. You discuss things like what issues arose, lessons learned and ideas for improvement for the future. If you want to learn more about how to delegate effectively, watch my course called, "Delegating Tasks to Your Team," where I go into more detail about all of the phases. As you delegate more proficiently, your team will become more effective and efficient in completing tasks. You also gain the benefit of moving some things off your plate which frees you up to focus time and energy on the projects that require your knowledge and experience.

Module 20: Avoiding Micromanagement

- **Micromanagement** is actually what happens when delegation goes badly, and it's usually due to one of three causes.

The first cause is an **incomplete evaluation**. As I mentioned earlier, the evaluation phase is the phase that most people skip because they're often delegating under pressure. They're in a hurry to offload something during a stressful time, and that never ends well.

The second cause is a **lack of clarity about the level of autonomy**. When an employee feels micromanaged, it's because they thought they were getting a higher level of autonomy than they are. It's the manager's responsibility to make the level clear. When you communicate the level you're giving to the delegate, you eliminate any confusion or mistaken assumptions that either of you may have had. Over time, as employees are successful, you should be granting higher levels of autonomy. This demonstrates that you trust your employees, which will contribute to their motivation and engagement.

The third cause of micromanagement is the **manager violating the agreed upon level of autonomy**. When it's unnecessary, it will feel like micromanagement to the delegate. In other words, the delegate was capable of completing the task successfully, but the manager stepped in. This not only frustrates the delegate but short-changes their opportunity to learn and grow. Sometimes it's not even conscious. The manager truly believes that they're just helping out and doesn't see the bigger ramifications of what's happening. Most often, when managers violate the agreed upon level of autonomy, it's related to the manager's discomfort with letting go. While the manager may have had good intentions to honor the level of autonomy, they're not able to control their personal reaction to the letting go process. There are a few common sources that I want to highlight for you. See if any of these are concerns that you struggle with.

- Number one: Thinking that it's easier or faster to do it yourself. This one is tricky because it usually is easier or faster to do it yourself. You may be tempted to take over the task and just get it done, but remember, a large part of being a good manager is about developing your people. You need to give them the opportunity to learn, which takes time.
- The second cause is worrying that your staff are already overburdened and cannot take on anything more. I've struggled with this myself, but it has helped to remember that employees are most satisfied and motivated when they get opportunities to grow. Talk with them and brainstorm together about how to shift things around, or even eliminate unnecessary tasks to make room for new opportunities.
- The third reason people struggle with micromanagement is fear of losing control or importance. Delegation involves the loss of direct control and this may cause some managers great discomfort. This is the great thing about delegation. It pushes everyone to grow a little, even you. Remember, you can build in progress checks and coaching discussions to create a safety net that allows you to keep an eye on things. This also allows your employees space to develop new skills. I also find it helpful to remember that there are many paths to an outcome. If you know your employee can produce the work, be more flexible with how they get there.

So, try these strategies to help you overcome the temptation of micromanagement. If you find that you continue to struggle with letting go, don't hesitate to seek the support of a career coach or a personal counselor. Part of how you're assessed as a manager is how your team grows and develops, so it's an investment in your career, as well. Remember that the growth of your team depends on your ability to let them try.

Module 21: Resolving Conflict

- How do you feel about conflict? It's interesting, but a lot of people think that conflict is a bad thing. Something to be avoided or de-escalated as quickly as possible. But conflict is actually a natural byproduct of both group development

and diversity. Much of conflict is healthy and contributes to the growth of the individual and the organization. As a manager, you'll find that dealing with conflict is a normal part of your responsibilities.

One model that's very helpful to know, is **Tuckman's five stages of group development**. Tuckman did research on groups, and his findings have stood the test of time. This model is still taught in today's business schools.

The first stage is called **forming**. This is the time when the members are introduced to the group, and they get acquainted.

The second stage is called **storming** because it's when conflict arises. The group is sorting out their differences as they try to organize their goals and ideas.

The third stage is called **norming**, and this is when group cohesion gets established. Members find effective ways to share ideas and suggestions.

Performing is the fourth stage, and the group achieves interdependence. Members are self-directed and productive. Groups can hang out in this fourth stage for quite a while, but eventually, they move into

The last stage, **adjourning**. This is when the project or group is wrapped up. Members finish up the task, organize reports and documents, and they celebrate their successes.

As a manager, you need to expect conflict and be comfortable handling it. The goal is to know the difference between **healthy conflict** and **toxic conflict** that can do harm. You can identify toxic conflict by the following, people openly use insulting or demeaning words and actions, like name-calling, shaming and sneering, or people sabotage or undermine the efforts of another, usually behind their back. Both of these methods are destructive. They not only kill trust, but they also undermine the efforts and goals of the group and organization. You should have a zero-tolerance policy for these kinds of conflict behaviors. However, toxic conflict is actually rare and only shows up when people cannot resolve their differences through more open and healthy means. To this end, you want to create an environment where healthy conflict can be embraced.

Let's see how Adriana demonstrates the following strategies.

First, she designs regular opportunities where people can have open discussions about issues. Adriana encourages debate by asking for alternative ideas and solutions. She makes the devil's advocate a regular member of her meetings by intentionally exploring the other side of issues and she makes it clear that it's okay to disagree with her.

Second, Adriana regularly role models on how to have a healthy debate, and what respectful disagreement looks like. We don't see many examples of this in our society and you'd be surprised how effective a little modeling can be.

Third, when conflict does arise, Adriana gives it a little space and time to let her team handle it on their own. You want to avoid stepping in too early. As long as you don't see anything toxic, you can afford to see what happens.

Fourth, when people come to Adriana, she supports them in working it out. She empowers them to take responsibility for the situation. She has set the expectation that they need to first attempt to resolve the conflict. And if they come to her, they must share what steps they've already taken. If you need to step in, do so as a coach, using clarity and skill coaching to help the people involved move to resolution. Here are some great questions to ask.

"Can you identify what the source of conflict is for you"?

"What are your needs, concerns, and goals in this situation"?

"Are there any hidden agendas, vested interests or emotional attachments at play"?

"How would you summarize the other person's perspective"?

"Where are your places of agreement? "Can you build on those and identify some possible solutions that would close the gap between your differences"?"

I strongly encourage you to watch the course called Conflict Resolution Fundamentals, it will give you many more specific strategies to use. Remember, the goal is not to prevent conflict, but embrace it as a way to help your group grow and thrive.

Module 22: HAVING PRODUCTIVE MEETINGS

It's important to remember that meetings are still part of the bigger picture of how you manage people, projects, and performance. So, they should align with your philosophy and style of management. Consider meetings as the time and place where you motivate and engage people with opportunities for autonomy, mastery, and purpose.

Here are the Four P's of great meetings.

1. PURPOSE: It's important to know what you hope to achieve. By getting clear on the outcome, you'll avoid scheduling unnecessary meetings. Consider these questions to help you get clear about the purpose.

- *Is this session interactive, or one-way communication?*
- *Is the goal to disseminate information to a group of people, or have people share information with each other?*
- *Do you need to work together to identify the source of a problem and brainstorm solutions?*
- *Will you be engaging in decision-making, and do you need to gain commitment for a course of action?*

2. PEOPLE: Only invite the people that need to be there to accomplish the purpose. Not everyone needs to be in every meeting, so be thoughtful about who you invite. In order to prepare, you'll want to think about these issues:

- *Will the participants know each other?*
- *What are their personalities?*
- *Are they likely to be competitive or collaborative?*
- *What will they need to know in order to fully participate?*

3. PREPARE: If you scheduled the meeting, you're responsible for getting everything ready. This includes several pieces:

- *Pick day, time, and place that's most conducive to accomplishing your goal.*
- *Create an agenda. It allows you to outline what the meeting will cover, and how information will flow. It's best to use action verbs, like approve and decide.*
- *If people will be leading or speaking at various parts of the agenda, indicate their names, if time is an issue, indicate how many minutes are allotted.*
- *Distribute your agenda to people in advance, allowing ample time if they need to prepare something.*

4. PROCESS: The process for facilitating the meeting should align with the outcome you hope to achieve, and the needs of the participants you've invited. For some of you, your meetings will be governed by Robert's Rules of Order, a formal system often used in government or board meetings. But if not, here are some general guidelines to consider:

- *Start and end on time. Shows respect for participants.*
- *Begin the meeting by reviewing the agenda and doing introductions*
- *Use tools to keep the discussion on track. (1) **bounce-back**. If people go off-topic, acknowledge it and say, "That's a great topic for us to address at another time," but let's refocus on the current discussion." (2) **parking lot**, where you place topics and suggestions to visit later. (3) **Talking clock**, where you say things like, "Lisa will give her report in the next three minutes," or, "We have two minutes left "to discuss this agenda item."*
- *If you have decisions to make, consider how you'll vote on them. Will you use majority wins, weighted scoring? And will votes be public or private?*
- *The most important part of your role is to foster constructive group participation. How can you get people engaged in the process?*
- *Ask open-ended questions, use the Clarity Coaching model from Module 11.*
- *Throughout the meeting, summarize main points and identify the action steps.*
- *Conclude the meeting by having a closing round for comments and follow up by sending out notes or minutes directly to members or posting online in an appropriate place.*

Meetings are a necessary part of the work world, but by using the **Four P's, Purpose, People, Preparation and Process**, you can create meetings that are both productive and engaging. See the Exercise file to review the Four P's of Productive Meetings Chart.

Module 23: Managing Multiple Generations

- Let's take a look at some of the key traits of each generation. Generational dynamics play out every day. And as a manager, it will serve you to know more. **A generation is a society-wide peer group who collectively possess shared values, attitudes, world views, and even behaviors.**

Generations are shaped by a series of forces like family life, education, media, and world events. Generations occur in every country and culture but are unique to that cultural context. In this course, I'm going to focus on the generations in the U.S. and Canada.

Follow along on the handout in the exercise guide. Let me issue a warning about generational research, it's broad brush strokes about a group of people, but not necessarily true about each individual in that generation. I want you to take this all with a very large grain of salt.

Baby boomers were shaped by the civil rights movement, the Vietnam War, and the advent of television and credit cards. Some of their key traits are being hardworking, focusing on accomplishments, and questioning the status quo. At work, they're motivated by making an impact, being involved in decision making, having challenging goals, and rewards based on results. The rewards they value include money, security, recognition and time off.

Gen-Xers were shaped by working parents and being latch-key children. The threat of nuclear war, and the advent of the personal computer. Some of their key traits include being fiercely independent, being informed, and taking the initiative. At work, they're motivated by having room to challenge the status quo, freedom and autonomy, opportunities for development, and rewards for independent thinking. Rewards they value are freedom, flexibility, training, and time off.

Millennials were shaped by attachment parenting, earning rewards for effort, the greatest economic boom in history sharply turning into a recession, and the advent of the internet and social media. Their key traits include being technologically savvy, globally aware, and collaborative. At work, they're motivated by making a difference, clear expectations, intellectual challenges, access to technology and rewards for competence. Rewards they value are meaningful work, choices, mentoring, and recognition.

The generations also differ on several key aspects of professional work, including the type of feedback they prefer.

- **Boomers** enjoy a little feedback, provided occasionally and in person.
- **Xers** like lots of feedback at regular intervals.
- **Millennials** want continuous feedback, preferably online so they can access it at any time.

Another way they differ is how they earn rewards. In broad terms,

- **Boomers** believe that if you put in long hours, work hard and pay your dues, you'll earn rewards.
- **Xers** believe rewards are unreliable, so you need to create your own path and keep your options open.
- **Millennials** believe that if you do what's expected, rewards will come quickly.

They also communicate and use media very differently.

- **Boomers** prefer face-to-face communication,
- **Xers** use computers for communication and they also like to maintain boundaries between their work hours and personal lives.
- **Millennials** grew up with the internet and social media, so they have very few boundaries between work and personal communication. Known as digital natives, they're very comfortable with technology, especially smartphones.

Each generation brings wonderful things to the workplace. **Managing the generations effectively is all about maximizing their strengths to support the success of the organization.** Since the next video will cover Millennials, let me focus on Boomers and Gen-Xers.

Boomers are experienced and knowledgeable. Tap into their wealth of expertise by giving them leadership opportunities. They're future-oriented, optimistic and committed to customer service. So, they can play a key role in helping your organization maximize its current and future opportunities. They're hardworking, dedicated, great team players and make excellent mentors to others.

Gen-Xers are independent and adaptable, making them comfortable with change. Their willingness to question the status quo often have them at the core of creativity and innovation. Because they had to develop their technological literacy, they're very good at helping organizations take advantage of the benefits of technology.

Ultimately, managing the generations is really a continuation of our earlier conversations. You want to find ways to motivate and engage your people, in meaningful ways. To do this, use the following strategies.

- First, understand and appreciate generational differences and strengths. This course gives you a good overview but continue your learning by reading some of the books I recommend in the exercise files.
- Second, focus on engaging each individual. While knowing trends can be helpful, it can also lead to inaccurate assumptions. Get to know your people and what matters to them.
- Third, be flexible. Generation is only one aspect of your people's identities. Their values, cultures and life experiences also play key roles. There's no one way of managing that works in every setting, so embrace all that diversity brings.
- Fourth, tend to natural tensions. As you learn about generational differences, you can see where conflict may arise. This will help you know how and when to smooth out potential miscommunications or misunderstandings.

- Finally, harness and maximize strengths by providing training and coaching. If you focus on helping each person maximize their potential, you'll naturally bring out the best in everyone. Also, consider how you can create mentoring partnerships so that your people will use their own strengths to help each other grow.

Module 24: Managing Millennials

- Managing millennials is a hot topic in today's organizations. Millennials are the largest generation, and as they move through their life, they're changing all of the major institutions. A lot of research has been done on millennials, more than any previous generation. This is both a good thing and a bad thing. All of this attention has certainly helped us learn more about the different generations, which is useful as we shift to models of management based on engaging and motivating people, but it also brings a false sense of attention to natural workplace dynamics. For example, is it a millennial thing to want work flexibility, or is that more a function of chronological age and life stage? Sure, millennials have been shaped by technology and the internet, but is that really much different than when the phone replaced letter writing, or cars replaced horses?

Today millennials make up **25 percent of the workplace**, and this will continue to expand. The front edge are approaching mid-career, while the back end of the cohort is entering high school. There's actually quite a bit of diversity within the millennial generation. The front edge knew both the greatest economic growth in history, the tragedy of September 11th, and the recession that has made this the largest number of young adults who are unemployed and moving back in with their parents. While the youngest millennials have always known the US to be at war, that communicating around the globe only takes a few seconds, and that women and people of all races are viable candidates to be the President.

Neil Howe and William Strauss, authors of *Millennials Rising*, conducted extensive research on how this generation was socialized largely by parents who are baby boomers. In an attempt to raise children who are confident, had high self-esteem and bright futures, boomers were actively involved in everything from parenting to school life to extracurricular activities. Remember, boomers were shaped by the civil rights movement, women's liberation, and the Vietnam War. As a result, they have a strong commitment to equality, coupled with a lack of trust in authority or institutions. They've been more actively involved than any previous parents in history. Perhaps you've heard the phrase helicopter parents? This phrase was coined for the most assertive parents who hovered and swooped in to save their kids from any level of discomfort. They did this behavior when their children were in school, and they've continued to be involved as millennials have entered the workforce.

This has led to some challenges for millennials.

- Many of them have found that college and the work world did not align with their expectations from home.
- Rewards are fewer and farther between.
- Authority figures are not always interested in what they have to say.

However, millennials are known for many positive traits:

- Optimism
- Ability to multitask
- Focus on achieving goals
- Raised on technology
- Easily learn new devices
- Social media outlets.

- Because of the power of the internet, they have a global world view
- Commitment to equality.
- Care deeply about making a difference and serving their communities.

We will also see more and more millennials step into **leadership roles**, in fact, they're already there. Millennials hold a quarter to one-half of managerial positions in the US, and many have become entrepreneurs. There are a few famous millennials who are CEOs of today's most successful companies. Millennials differ in their leadership style from boomers and Gen-Xers. Again, follow along on the handout. (*Exercise File*)

- Millennials set broad and challenging targets related to a meaningful purpose.
- They prefer flat reporting structures and allow a lot of individual freedom.
- They build workplaces that are creative and inclusive,
- They actively engage and motivate their people.

To maximize the contributions that millennials can make to your organization consider using the following strategies.

1. **Focus on how they can make a difference.** Make sure you communicate the meaningful purpose your organization serves, and how their role contributes to its success.
2. **Team millennials up with other bright creative people,** this transcends age. Millennials love working collaboratively and excel in cross-functional relationships, they also enjoy being mentored.
3. **Give millennials opportunities to visualize the role they could play.** They're motivated by having a sense of their potential career path, so you can engage them through professional development opportunities.
4. **Harness their focus on goal achievement.** They thrive in outcome-based environments where they can set clear goals and measure progress.
5. **Have millennials mentor others on technology, social media, and diversity.** They really shine in these areas and can help everyone on your team.

If you make the right management choices millennials will help you maximize a wide range of opportunities that will benefit your organization.