From Traditionalists to Gen Y: Addressing Generation Gaps in Today’s Law Firms

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Today’s Generation X Speakers

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Access to Justice Committee Chairperson
Agenda

- Today’s Emerging Law Firm
- Generation Characteristics and Perceptions
- Firms Adjusting to Generation Gaps
  - Human Resources
  - Technology
  - Marketing
Today’s Emerging Law Firm

- The Emerging AMLAW 100 – Multi-Billion Dollar Firms
  - Mergers & Acquisitions
  - Firms Operating Like Large Companies- CEO/ CFO/ CMO
- Global Practice
- Competing for Institutional Clients
- Changing In-House Counsel Requirements
- Communication and Technology Changes
- Multi-Generational Workplace
Generation Breakdown: Traditionalists

- 64 year old - 5% of Firms Today

**Characteristics and Values**
- Traditional Family Values - One Wage Earner
- Loyal to Firm - “Employers for Life” – Big Blue
- Strong Work Ethic

**Legal Practice**
- Not Technology Savvy - E-Mail Box
- Phone vs. E-mail
- Traditional Legal Practice - Value of Relationships

**Value to the Firm**
- Loyal Clients
- Relationships in Community/Area of Practice
- Mentoring

**Myths/Perceptions: Generations Looking at Traditionalists**
“Trust me Mort—no electronic-communications superhighway, no matter how vast and sophisticated, will ever replace the art of the schmooze.”
Generation Breakdown: Baby Boomers

- Late 40’s-Early 60’s – 80 Million Strong – 70% Law Firm Partners

- Characteristics and Values
  - Dual Wage Earners
  - “Work Your Way Up” Mentality
  - Affluent- “Me Generation”

- Legal Practice
  - Loyal Clients
  - Traditional Legal Practice but Embrace Change Dictated by Clients

- Value to the Firm
  - Management
  - Transition from Traditional Practice
  - Value Technology But Not As Savvy as Younger Employees

- Perceptions- Other Generations Looking at Baby Boomers
  - “Boomers think they understand Gen Y and Gen X” Halleland Thoughts
"As precedent your Honor I offer the entire legal history of western civilization on CD ROM."
Generation Breakdown: Generation X

30 Something's- Early 40s – 40/30 Million Strong

Characteristics and Values
- Grew up in 50% Divorce Rate
- 7-8 Career Changes
- “Free Agency” *Quotes re: Gen X Job Seekers*

Legal Practice
- Traditional Legal Training- Research and Writing
- Question Traditional Firm Policies
- First Generation To Adopt Technology Advances - *Westlaw & Lexis*

Value to the Firm
- Money Makers
- Control Day to Day Relationship with Client
- Embrace Technology

Perceptions Of Gen X from Other Generations
“Hi. My name is Barry, and I check my E-mail two to three hundred times a day.”
Generation Breakdown: Generation Y

- Late 20s – Diverse – 80-60 Million Strong

- Characteristics and Values
  - Return to Family Values
  - Quality of Life
  - Technology Upbringing - School, Internet Social Networks
  - Shorter Attention Spans

- Legal Practice
  - Technology as Backbone of Practice
  - Diversity
  - Few Strong Client Relationships
  - Pressure to Bill Hours

- Value to Firm
  - Resourceful and Adaptable
  - Teaching Boomers and Traditionalists
  - Access to Information - Findlaw, etc.

- Perceptions of Gen Y from Other Generations
## Identifying Generation Gaps: Human Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Traditionalists</th>
<th>Boomers</th>
<th>Gen X</th>
<th>Gen Y</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attire</strong></td>
<td>Formal – Bow Tie</td>
<td>Business Cas – high end (sport coat)</td>
<td>Business Cas - low end (golf shirt)</td>
<td>Whatever feels comfortable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Work Environment</strong></td>
<td>Office only – modified traditional schedule</td>
<td>7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. in the office only</td>
<td>Office, home, desires flexible schedule</td>
<td>Office, home, desires flexible schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Motivating Factor</strong></td>
<td>Self-worth/legacy</td>
<td>Salary</td>
<td>Security</td>
<td>Maintain personal life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mentoring/Training</strong></td>
<td>Been there done that</td>
<td>No news is good news</td>
<td>Mentors good/feedback not necessary</td>
<td>Mentors and constant feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Retention Key</strong></td>
<td>Loyalty</td>
<td>Salary</td>
<td>Security</td>
<td>Personal relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Traditionalists</td>
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<td>Gen Y</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Client Communications</strong></td>
<td>Face to Face</td>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>E-mail</td>
<td>E-mail/ IM/ Text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legal Documents</strong></td>
<td>Dictate</td>
<td>Prepared by associates</td>
<td>Create on own</td>
<td>Create on own/ “help desk”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legal Research</strong></td>
<td>Library</td>
<td>Associate Memos</td>
<td>On-line</td>
<td>On-line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reviewing E-mail</strong></td>
<td>Only at office</td>
<td>Primarily at office/mobile device when not at office</td>
<td>Mobile device/ Laptops</td>
<td>Mobile device/laptops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use of Cell Phone</strong></td>
<td>Only in emergencies</td>
<td>Turned off at the office</td>
<td>Turned off at the office Settlement Conf.</td>
<td>On at all times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use of Web</strong></td>
<td>Internet jokes and reviewing pictures of grandchildren</td>
<td>“The Google” and news-related sites</td>
<td>Research, document retention and review, news and marketing</td>
<td>Research, document review, and social networking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Firms Adjusting To Generation Gaps

Bridging The Generation Gaps

- HR
- Technology
- Marketing
Bridging Generations

Human Resource Changes

• Benefits vs. Salary
  - Office Life- Google vs. New York Law Firm  Regional Firm Relocation
  - “Quality of Life” Committee Move to Stadium Example
  - Telecommuting

• Feedback
  - Feedback that Matches Generation Needs
  - Firm Evaluations
  - Mentoring  Regional Firm Associate Flight  Example

• Responding to Younger Employee’s Desire for Challenges
  - “Meaningful Work”- Government Partnerships/ Halleland Video
  - Pro Bono Opportunities
Bridging Generations

Technology

Education and Training

- Training Up and Down
- Promoting New Technology
  - Wikis, Web Hosting, Webinars, Virtual Conferences
  - Video

Technology Committee

- Involving End Users in Technology Decision Making
- Comparing Technology with Corporate Clients

Assessments
Marketing

- Developing the Firm “Brand”
- Advertising
- Consultants/ Outsourcing
- Use of Technology
  - Web Design—*Stage One to Stage Five*
  - Non Traditional Advertising- Blogs, Etc.
- Joint Ventures/ Alliances- *Lex Mundi Association*
Why Assess and Bridge Generation Gaps?

- Profitability
- Client Demand
- Retention
- Sustainability

For additional info...