



Gen Y:

Ready or Not, They're Here to Stay

It's not unusual to find yourself working side-by-side to a Gen Y'er. This segment of the population is rolling onto the corporate scene with a different set of priorities and expectations.

Generation Y, or the portion of the workforce who are under 30, represents about 70 million workers. But how do people who are not used to working with members of that generation get used to them? Many companies now have staffs where 60-year-olds work side-by-side with 20-year-olds. Some generalize by saying that Generation Y workers are difficult, brash, and have strange habits and wardrobes.

However, others say this generation is full of sharp new ideas and has the smarts to turn them into a reality, a desirable skill-set particularly within the technology profession. Though they may require some adjustment, learning to work with these spunky newcomers can provide a big payoff.

1. High Expectations:

Generation Y workers have high expectations of both themselves and their companies. They tend to be competitive and aim to work faster and better than other workers. They also expect employers to be fair and highly engaged in their professional development.

IT workers are no longer attracted by financial packages alone. Lucrative employment for these Gen Y techies must include the ability to work on innovative and creative initiatives. Increasing their skills and career portfolio is the lifeblood for technology workers. According to the Emerging Workforce® Study, 93 percent of young technology workers agreed with the statement "I prefer a job where I am expected to think of new and better ways of doing things."

Employers that provide unique, creative environments that let new ideas excel could have an edge over the competition.

2. Work/Life Balance is a Priority:

Most Gen Y workers have a high priority on their careers, but personal development and finding jobs that accommodate their family and personal lives is a big plus. Flexibility, telecommuting, and having the option to switch to part-time to have children is highly valued, so offering these options will keep this generation motivated.

In fact, the Emerging Workforce study found that Gen Y workers are the second most likely group of employees to take advantage of work/life balance options.

3. Change is Okay. In fact, Change is the Norm:

This generation likes to multitask, and they don't expect to stay in a job or on a single assignment for long. They're more than comfortable with technology and juggling several gadgets at once.



Cruising facebook online, answering Blackberry e-mails and talking on a cell phone at the same time are no problem. These workers like to get new assignments frequently and do lots of things at once.

It's not that these Gen Y technology workers are hard-wired to job hop. In fact, 69 percent said job security is extremely or very important to them currently in their career. However, these workers now believe that destiny is in their own hands when it comes to their career, and if any given employment situation fails to be mutually beneficial, leaving is certainly not out of the question.

4. Frequent Feedback is a Must:

Workers from this generation like lots of feedback and input on their individual job performance. Older generations are more used to annual reviews, but Generation Y members tend to thrive on frequent feedback and encouragement or they may feel dejected and dissatisfied.

Generation Y workers certainly take a fresh approach to both their career outlook and the way they handle assignments. However, this group is generally smart, savvy, and worth the transitional adjustment.

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