Unlocking Success: Maximizing the Power of Generationally Diverse Teams

Lyn Telford, MSN, RN, CPHQ

Learning Outcomes

✔ Outline the differences between generations.

✔ Identify how diversity can impact teamwork and communication.

✔ Recognize the benefits of diverse teams.

Meet the presenter

Lyn Telford, MSN, RN, CPHQ

Lyn Telford serves as the Quality Director at Sanford Health, the largest rural health system in the United States, headquartered in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. She has worked with many different teams, all which have been generationally diverse. After observing and experiencing incivility in her career, she developed an interest in studying generational diversity and its impact on team dynamics.

MULTIGENERATIONAL PERCEPTIONS OF THE ACADEMIC WORK ENVIRONMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES

"GENERATIONS" AND TOMORROW'S GEN Z ACADEMIC WORKFORCE

THE HIGHER ED GENERATION GAP

GENERATIONAL DIVIDES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

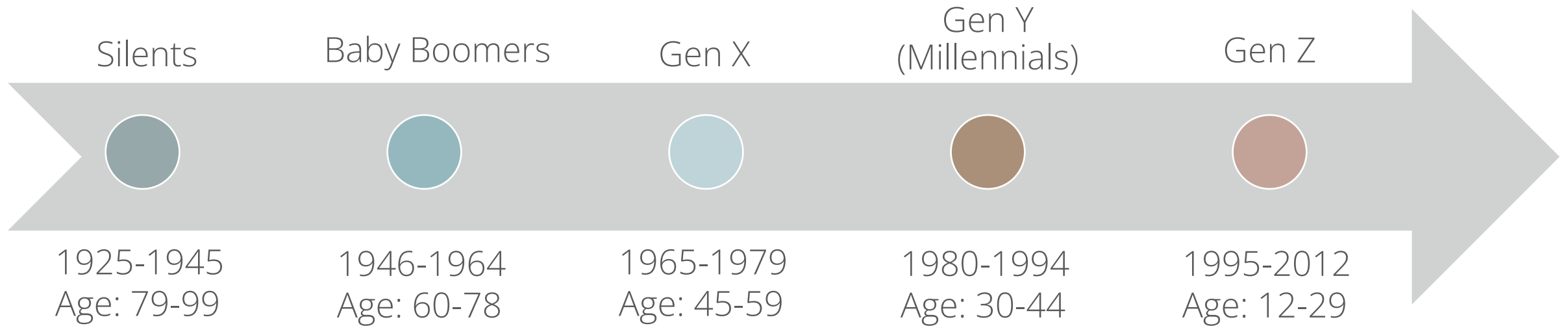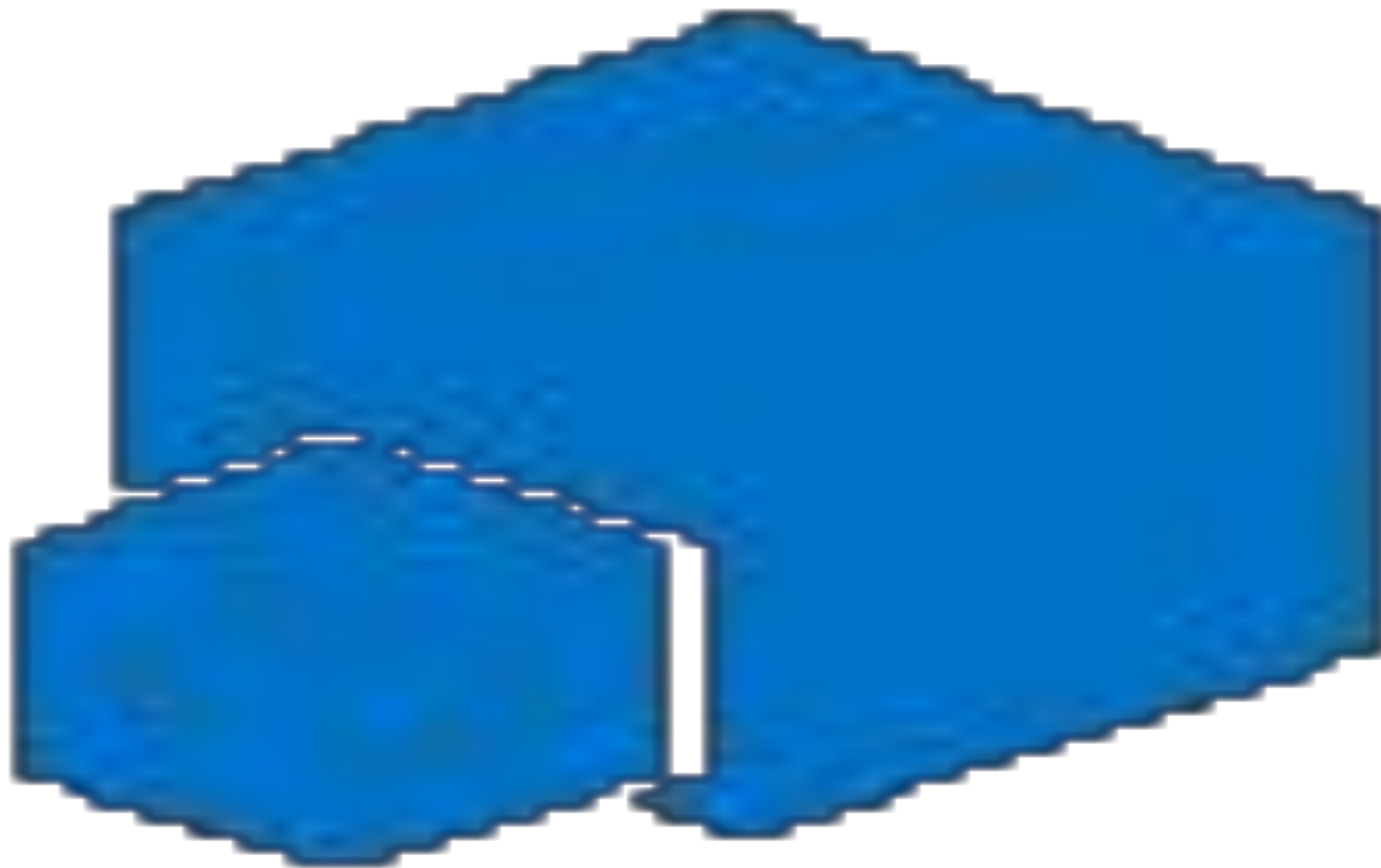BRIDGING THE GAP

MAKING THE MOST OF INTERGENERATIONAL DIVERSITY

"

a generation…is a group of humans that have experienced the same major historical events at the most susceptible age – in youth.

Karl Mannheim
Founder of the Theory of Generations

Generational Cohorts
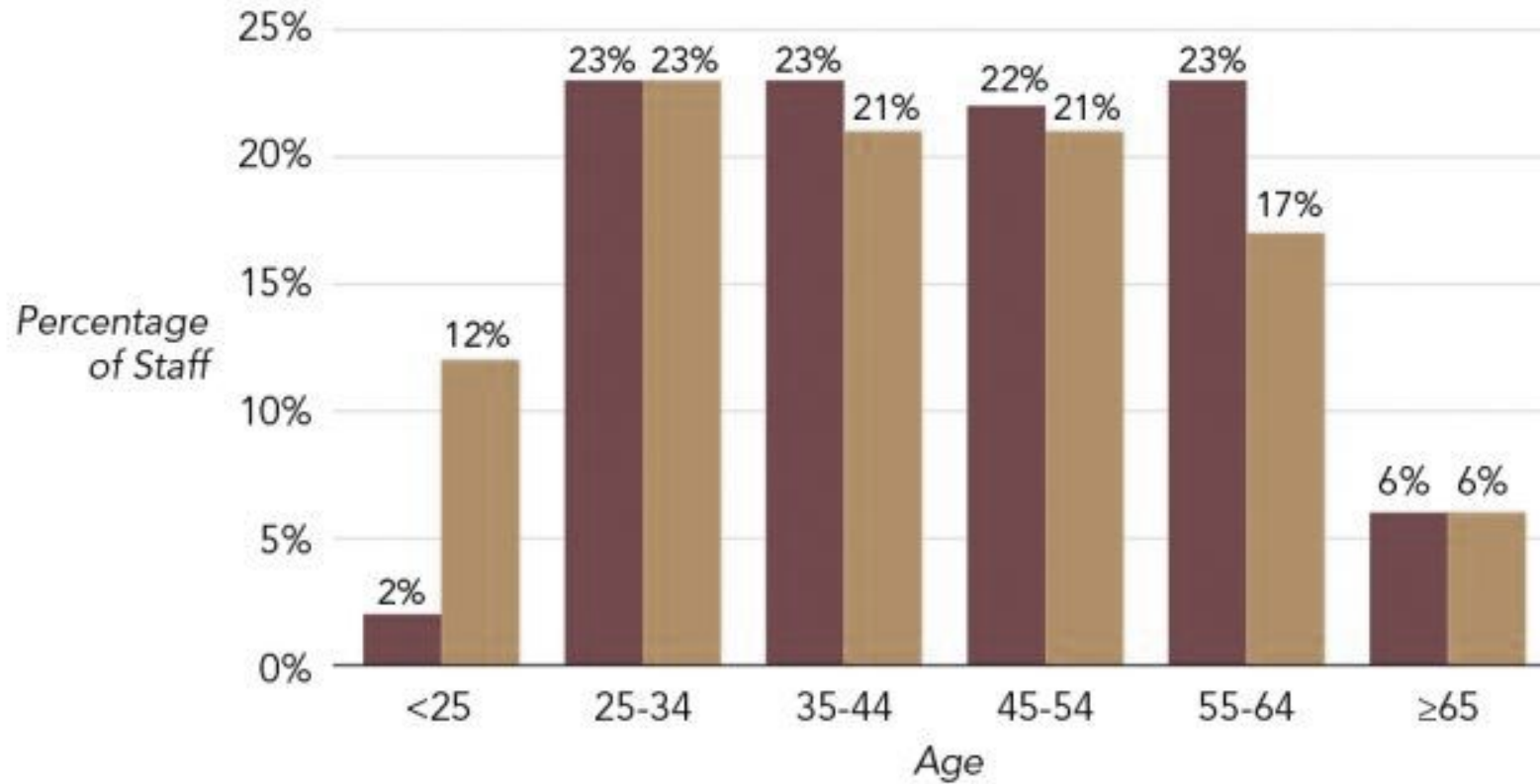
Silents	Baby Boomers	Gen X	Gen Y (Millennials)	Gen Z
1925-1945 Age: 79-99	1946-1964 Age: 60-78	1965-1979 Age: 45-59	1980-1994 Age: 30-44	1995-2012 Age: 12-29

I'm Lyn. And I'm a [proud] millennial.
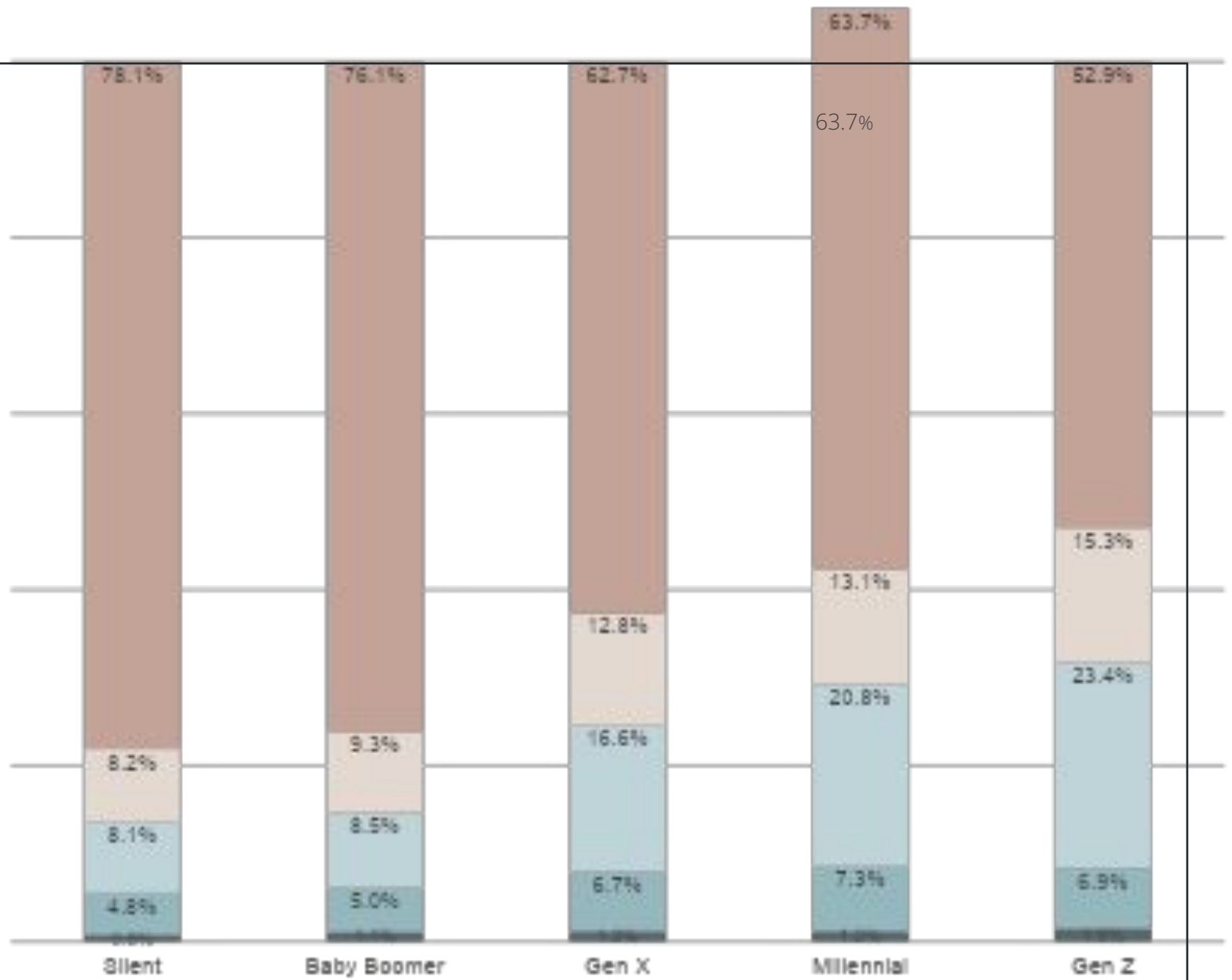
STAFF IN HIGHER EDUCATION SURVEY 2019

Percentage of Higher Ed Staff and U.S. Workforce by Age Group

Higher Ed Staff   U.S. Workforce   cupa-hr

U.S. Population, 2021

- ■ Native American
- ■ Asian, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander
- ▫ Hispanic
- ▫ Black
- ■ White

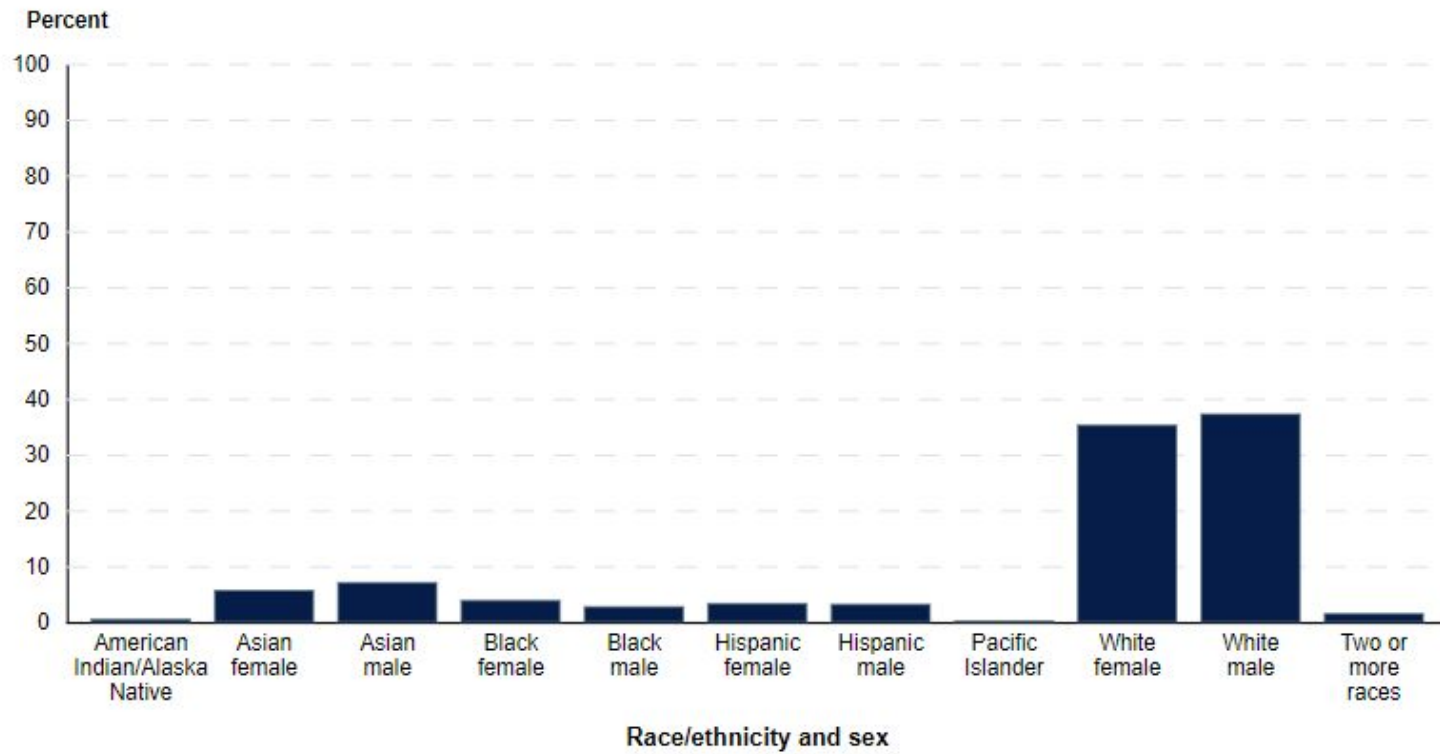|	Silent	Baby Boomer	Gen X	Millennial	Gen Z
White	78.1%	76.1%	62.7%	63.7%	52.9%
Black	8.2%	9.3%	12.8%	13.1%	15.3%
Hispanic	8.1%	8.5%	16.6%	20.8%	23.4%
Asian, NHPI	4.8%	5.0%	6.7%	7.3%	6.9%

Generations, 2023

Figure 3. Percentage distribution of full-time faculty at degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by race/ethnicity and sex: Fall 2022

Americans who self-identified as LGBTQ in 2021, by generation

Surveys of 12,416 U.S. adults conducted between January and December 2021

Gen Z
(Born 1997-2003)
20.8%

Millenials
(1981-1996)
10.5

Gen X
(1965-1980)
4.2

Baby boomers
(1946-1964)
2.6

Traditionalists
(before 1946)
0.8

Gallup, 2022

Generational Shaping Moments

Silents	Boomers	Gen X	Millennials	Gen Z
Hitler's invasion of Russia	Absence of world wars	Daycare and divorce	9/11	Sandy Hook
Pearl Harbor/ WWII	Cold War era	Berlin Wall, USSR	Columbine	Public mass shootings
Korean War	Turbulent 1960s	Racial tension	Hurricane Katrina	COVID
Pioneers in equality	Voting Rights Act	Immigration	Social movement on anti-racism	Economic difficulty

Evolution of Technology

Silents	Boomers	Gen X	Millennials	Gen Z
Invention of the radio	Television	Computer technology	Internet news	Virtual education
Aviation	Home appliances	AIDS was identified	Wireless communications	Virtual reality
Manufacturing	Air conditioning	Music videos and new genres	Social media	Artificial intelligence
Defibrillator	Birth control	Video games	Electric vehicles	Self-driving cars

The Higher Ed Experience by Generation

Silents	Boomers	Gen X	Millennials	Gen Z
75% + Growth Rate of Colleges	National Defense Education Act	College tuition inflation	For-profit institutions	Growth of online education
Enrollment increased to 1.5M	Enrollment increased to 3.6M	First fully online degree	College scorecard	Artificial intelligence
Improvement in persistence rate	Higher Education Act of 1965	Liberal arts colleges struggle	Student debt crisis	The enrollment cliff
Servicemen's Readjustment Act	Title IX Amendment	First online university	Women college grads lead	Workforce shortage

Silent Generation (1925-1945)

- Characteristics:
  - Disciplined
  - Loyal
  - Respectful
  - Adheres to rules

- Strengths:
  - Know change comes slowly
  - Respect authority
  - Thrifty

- Values:
  - Chains of command
  - Traditional instruction
  - Tangible recognition
  - Money and position

- Limitations:
  - Technology
  - Fast change

Baby Boomers (1946-1964)

- Characteristics:
  - Optimistic
  - Strong work ethic
  - Work-centric

- Values:
  - Recognition
  - 3 P's (perks, prestige and position)
  - Hierarchical structure

- Strengths:
  - Independent
  - Team Player
  - Very committed to goals
  - Hard working

- Limitations:
  - Workaholics
  - Competitive
  - Base self-worth on position

Gen X (1965-1979)

- Characteristics:
  - Highly educated
  - Active
  - Happy
  - Task-oriented

- Strengths:
  - Questions the rules
  - Self-reliant
  - Expect change
  - Enjoy fast pace

- Values:
  - Independence
  - Education
  - Family
  - Flexibility

- Limitations:
  - Questions the rules ☺
  - Rigid schedules
  - Less loyal to employers

Gen Y [Millennials] (1980-1994)

- Characteristics:
  - Self-directed
  - Eager
  - Social
  - Confident

- Strengths:
  - Technology
  - Inclusive
  - Enjoy problem solving
  - Entrepreneurial

- Values:
  - Healthy work-life balance
  - Sense of purpose
  - Independent learning
  - Structure

- Limitations:
  - Less likely to stay in a job for a long period of time
  - Expect more supervision and feedback

Gen Z (1995-2012)

- Characteristics:
  - Bright
  - Pragmatic
  - Individualistic
  - Cautious

- Values:
  - Data (graphics)
  - Instant feedback
  - Customized learning
  - Financial, emotional security

- Strengths:
  - Require less direction
  - Appreciate diversity
  - Open minded

- Limitations:
  - Underdeveloped social skills
  - Insecure
  - Lecture/test classrooms

Generational Stereotypes

- Millennials stereotype Gen Z as lazy.

- Gen X may be stereotyped as uncaring.

- Baby Boomers tend to see Millennials as being entitled.

- Millennials think that Gen Xers and Baby Boomers care more about their hours worked than work produced.

- Gen Z is likely to be stereotyped as young and inexperienced.

Flip the Script

- Millennials are self-directed; Gen Z has less real-world experience and may need more direction.

- Gen Xer's tend to go with the flow.

- Millennials know they have choices and they don't settle.

- Gen Xers and Boomers are accustomed to a work culture that expects a set amount of hours (40, etc.). Millennials focus on productivity versus time.

- Gen Z is younger and less experienced, but no less valuable.
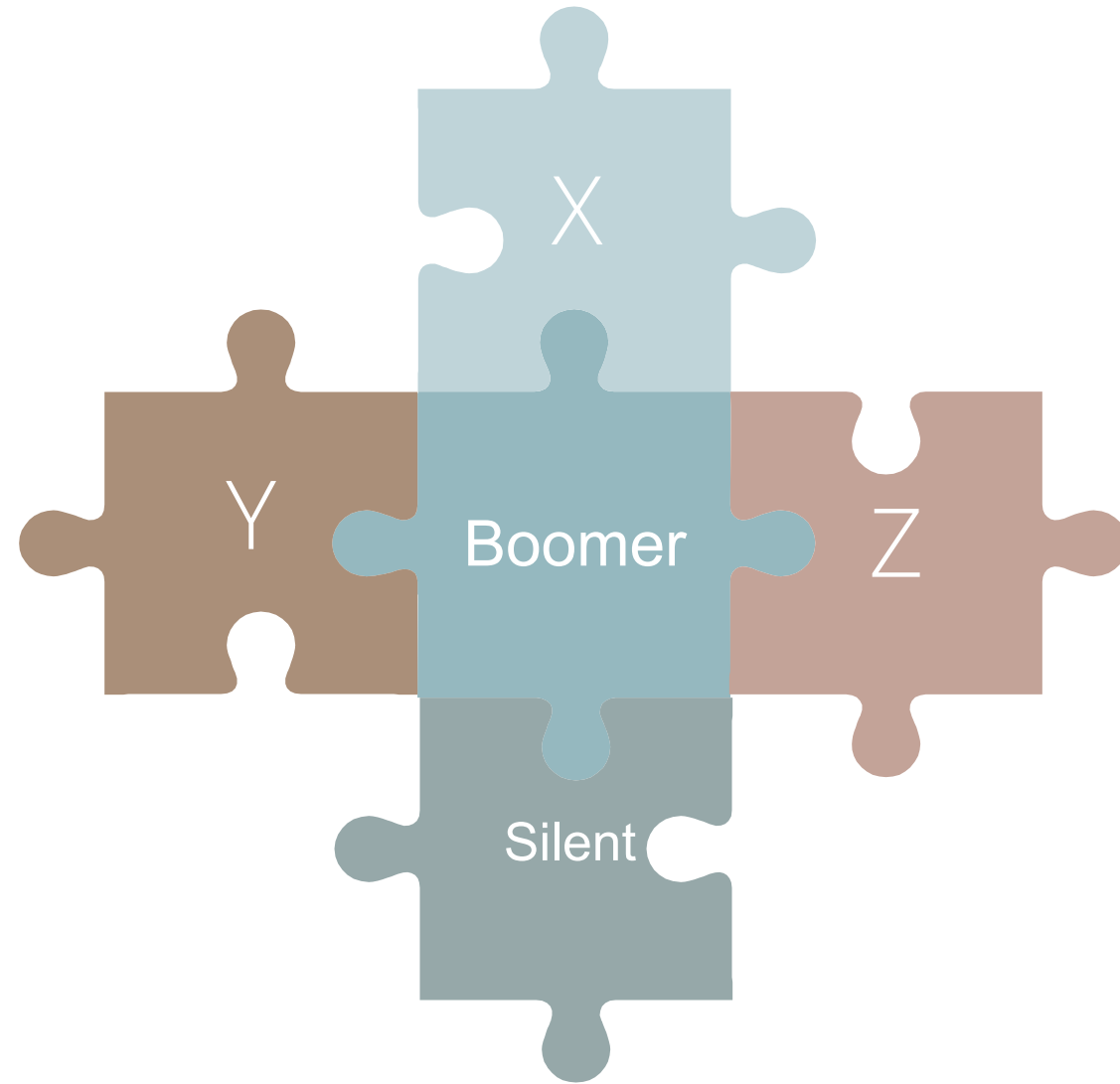
Generational Preferences

	Communication	Dress	Technology	Schedule
Silent	Face to face	Formal	Novice	Traditional
Boomers	Face to face	Formal	Novice	Traditional
Gen X	Phone, email	Informal	Advancing	Flexible
Millennial	Immediate, electronic	Casual	Proficient	Very flexible/ untraditional
Gen Z	Frequent, electronic	Casual	Proficient	Flexible

Benefits of diverse teams

- Breadth and depth of skills, experiences, and perspectives

- Better decision-making

- More productive collaboration

- Improved overall performance

Gerhardt, Nachemson-Ekwall, and Fogel, 2022

Boomer

Y

Z

Silent

X
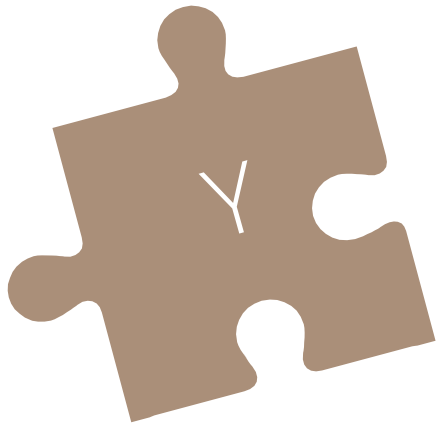
What can you do?

- Consider your own assumptions and biases.

- Find your common purpose.

- Share your expertise and learn that of others.

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What are some of your generational shaping moments?

What experiences with generational differences have you had?

What stereotypes have you applied to others or have been applied to you?

Thank you!

Lyn Telford, MSN, RN, CPHQ
ENFP • Innovator • Influencer • Creator