

# **Supporting a Positive Work Environment While Bridging the Generational Gap**

**July 14, 2015**

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**Everyone's focused on Millennials.**

**Should we be worried about managing Millennials?**

**Or should we be worried about Millennials managing us?**

## Some key info:

We currently have four generations in our work force:

- Traditionalist – born before 1946.
- **Baby Boomer – born between 1946 and 1964.**
- Gen X – born between 1965 and 1976.
- Millennial – born between 1977 and 1997.

## **2015 is a pivotal generational year:**

- Millennials outnumber Baby Boomers in the workplace.
- The last full class of Millennials graduated from high school.
- The next class (2016) will include the next generation, Gen2020.

**Key point: By 2020 we will have *five* generations in the workforce.**

## What does that mean for us?

1. We need to *adopt a post-generational approach* that bridges generations.
2. We need to *focus on people as individuals* rather than stereotype by age or generation.
3. At the same time, we need to *recognize the elements of an engaged, effective workforce* that are common across generations.

## What are the stereotypes?

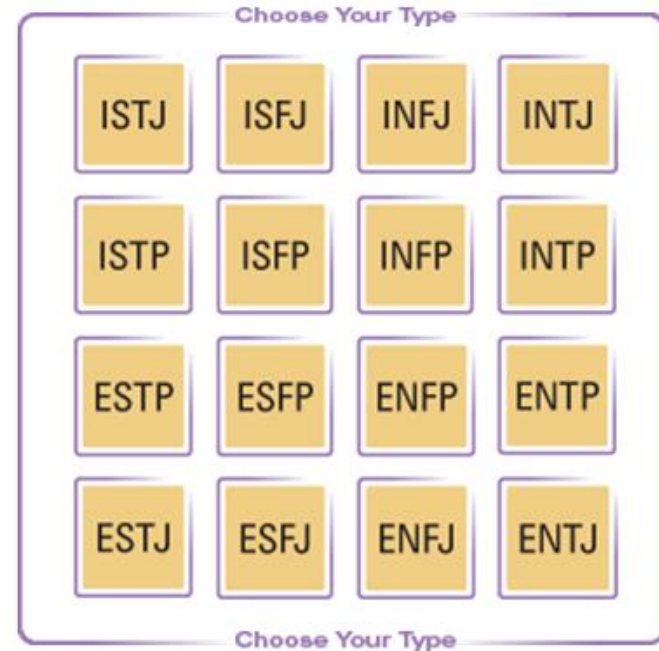
### From *Forbes*:

- Millennials are lazy, entitled and get more done on Facebook than at work.
- Baby Boomers are old, set in their ways and wouldn't know how to use all this new technology even if they wanted to.

## Individual focus

Myers-Briggs personality inventory:

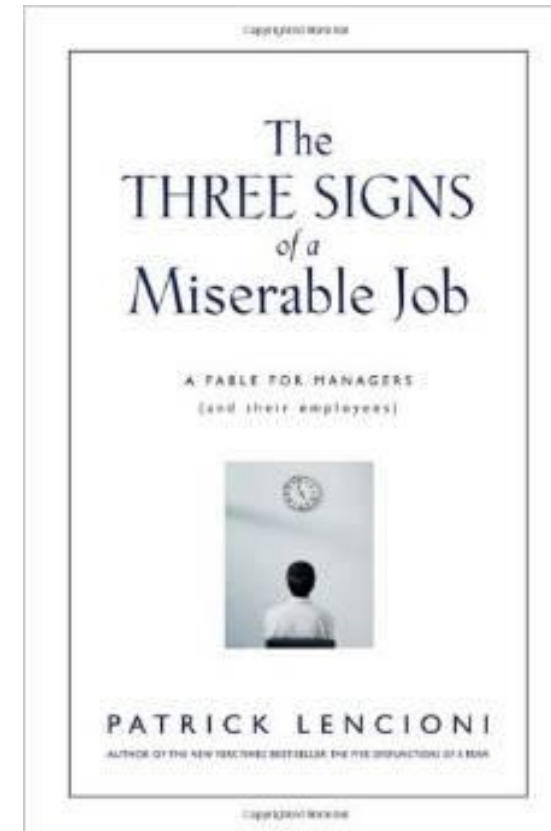
- Extrovert vs. Introvert
- Sensing vs. Intuition
- Thinking vs. Feeling
- Judging vs. Perceiving



**Individual personality will matter far more than generational influences.** Generational influences may drive fashion, music, devices and references, but individual personality will drive performance, interaction and reaction.

## Common elements across generations

1. Everyone needs **trust**.
2. Everyone needs a **vision and mission** that they care about and believe in.
3. Everyone needs to **not be miserable**.
  - a. Everyone needs to know what it means to be **successful** in their job.
  - b. Everyone needs to know that what they do is **important**, even if it's just to you.
  - c. Everyone needs to be **known at work as an individual**, and not just a job title.





## Final points

- Organizations, public or private, are groups of people working on a common mission.
- If you want to build the organization you have to focus on the people.
- "Managing" by generational stereotypes glosses over the people and hurts the organization.
- If you know your people and make it your work to build them up and engage them, the organization will flourish, and generational differences will be minor detail.