

Creating Healthy Work Environments 2019

"Navigational Leadership" Through Our Multi-Generational Healthcare Workforce

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One of the realities in today's world, employers are challenged with how to lead their employees, to include healthcare settings and the world of academia. The leaders of today are faced with many challenges and perplexities of dealing with a rapidly growing, fast-paced global world, multi-culturalism and a multi-generational workforce. Presently, there are five different generations ranging from the ages of 16 years old to over 72 years old employed in today's workforce, along with some outliers of those working into their 90's. In the United States of America (U.S.A.), these workgroups consist of the Millennials who make up the largest workforce in the U.S.A., peaking at 56 million in 2017, surpassing the Xer's at 53 million, followed by the Baby Boomers at 41 million. The latest employees to enter the workforce, the post-millennials, known as the iGens have reached a working number of 9 million. Lastly, the smallest workforce and the longest existing group are the Traditionalist, coming in at a workforce of 3 million (Pew Research, 2017).

Furthermore, another aspect to be considered is the gap of years between generations is becoming narrower and more compressed. At same point in the future, leaders will not only be faced with the challenge of leading five to six generations in the workforce but may have to lead up to seven to eight generations at the same time. The concept of what makes a generation is changing from years of time in between birth years, to changes in behaviors displayed amongst a generational group (Dorsey, 2015).

In the essence of time and brevity, this scholarly discussion is going to focus on the multi-generational healthcare workforce aspect in the U.S.A., but the context can be applied to other industrialized countries, world-wide and various types of professions. The main focus will be to appraise each of the group's uniqueness and attributes, followed by suggestions as to which leadership theories and strategies would be best suited for a leader to apply to foster a more productive and cultivating work environment. The title of this scholarly discussion is "Navigational Leadership" through our Multi-Generational Healthcare Workforce. The reason for the name of "Navigational Leadership" is largely due to the fact; I choose to lead this scholarly discussion as if one is attempting to navigate the terrain of the landscape of the U.S.A. workforce. Foremost, the best way to navigate a journey is to become knowledgeable and familiar with the terrain, in order to plot out the best approach to reach your destination. Leading and guiding the workforce of today's U.S.A. landscape is the same. I truly believe the best way to lead individuals, is to know them. Comparably, in order to best lead your workforce is to become familiar with your employees.

You as the participant may question whether or not it is important to know your employee's generational attributes and how it affects the healthcare workforce, in particular nurses. I am here to tell you it is important based on the 2015 National Workforce Survey of the nursing workforce which concluded that 50% of the workforce is 50 years old or older; 12.4% were 65 years old or older with the remaining being 37.6% below the age of 50 years old. Moreover, this is not including outliers, such as the oldest working nurse, Alice Graber who retired back in 2016 at the age of 93 years old (Pelletiere, 2016). Other facts that corroborate why it is important for nursing leaders and managers to be aware of the different generational attributes and how they impact the work environment is how a significant turnover of nurses on a unit impacts the unit's morale and availability of funding for nurses for continuing education, and other benefits. Consequently, this impels the overall quality of patient's care and health outcome negatively in units with high attrition and turnover rates of nurses (Blegen, Spetz, Vaughn, & Park, 2011; Cimiotti, Aiken, Sloane, & Wu, 2012; Needleman, Buerhaus, Pankratz, Leibson, Stevens, & Harris, 2011; Tubbs-Cooley, Cimiotti, Silber, Sloane, & Aiken, 2013). The average cost to replace a nurse is approximately \$82,000 due to cost to cover the nurse's absence, advertising and recruiting of a new nurse, training and orientation and the lower efficiency of a new hire (Kerfoot, 2015). Another fact to be considered is the looming and impending nursing shortage that is anticipated and presently being experienced by some areas of the country, making it more important than ever before to find strategies to increase the retention

rates of new nurses entering the workforce, as the large majority of Baby Boomers head into retirement (NCSBN®, 2013).

The first part of this discussion will be a review on each of the generational groups separately, “Who they are”, “Where they are coming from”, “What has shaped and influenced their likes and dislikes”. The purpose of this approach is to help better orient you, the participant, as to which leadership theories would be most appropriate to implement and theoretically, well-received by each generational group and provide some strategies that may work with the generational groups. It is the hope and intent of this discussion will give you, the participant, a better insight and appreciation of what the different generations have to offer and how with right knowledge, management and good work practices, this diverse generational workforce can become a more cohesive and synergize team.

Title:

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Keywords:

leadership, management strategies and multi-generational workforce

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Abstract Summary:

The leaders of today are faced with many challenges and perplexities of a rapidly growing, fast-paced global world and a multi-generational workforce. The best way to lead your nursing workforce is to be knowledgeable of which strategies are best suited for this multi-generational workforce to create a synergized environment.

Content Outline:

“Navigational Leadership” through our Multi-Generational Healthcare Workforce

- Introduction
 - Baby Boomers vs. Millennials
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JADG4hXaqy4&pbjreload=10>)
 - Challenges of leading today’s workforce
 - Multi-generational workforce
 - Impact on nursing and patient care delivery
 - Focus of the scholarly discussion
 - Navigational Leadership Conceptual Model
- Generational Groups – The “4” W’s
- Traditionalists (1925 to 1945)
 - Who they are and where they come from
 - Oldest workforce
 - Known as the “Silents”
 - Children of the Greatest Generation
 - Frugal
 - What and when shaped and influenced their likes and dislikes
 - Great Depression and “Dust “Bowl”
 - Post- War World II Affluence/Korean War
 - “McCarthyism”
 - “Lucky Few”
- Baby Boomers (1946 to 1964)
 - Who they are and where they come from
 - “The Golden Generation”
 - “Fertility Valley” and “The Rabbit Hutch”
 - Innovators
 - Biggest Consumers
 - Children of the Traditionalists
 - Parents of the Millennials
 - What and when shaped and influenced their likes and dislikes
 - Television!!
 - 1960’s civil unrest
 - NASA
 - Cold War
 - Deferred retirements
- X’ers (1965 to 1976)
 - Who they are and where they come from
 - Smallest generational group
 - “America’s Neglected Child”
 - “Latch-Key” kids
 - Adaptable and versatile
 - Children of the Traditionalists
 - What and when shaped and influenced their likes and dislikes
 - Government scandals and corruption of the 1970’s and 1980’s
 - Economic crisis and downfall of the 1980’s
 - Introduction of cable and computers usage
 - Global Terrorism/Home grown terrorism
 - 401K’s

- Millennials (1977 to 1995)
 - Who they are and where they come from
 - Entitled and over indulged
 - Largest workforce group
 - Children of the Baby Boomers
 - Ideal and moralistic
 - Extravagant
 - Most educated generational group
 - What and when shaped and influenced their likes and dislikes
 - Failed parenting
 - Cell phones
 - “9/11”
 - Internet
 - World of digitalization and instant gratification
- iGens (1995 to 2012)
 - Who they are and where they come from
 - Youngest workforce
 - Largest generational group
 - Children of Xer’s and Millennials
 - Conservative
 - “Digital natives”
 - True Diversity
 - What and when shaped and influenced their likes and dislikes
 - Same-sex marriage
 - President Obama
 - Family unit (?)
 - On-line consumers
- So, what does all this mean?
- “Seven values that matter most to workers of all ages”
- Leadership Theories and Generational Match-up
 - Behavioral
 - Contingency
 - Transactional
 - Transformational
- Generational Attributes and Work Ethics
 - Where are they now?
 - Who are they?
 - Communication Styles
 - What they want
 - What they bring to the table
 - Work Ethic
 - Work Focus
 - View on “Authority”
 - Work Values
 - Leadership Style
 - Interactive Style
 - Feedback and Rewards
 - How to give feedback
 - Work Assets
 - Work Liabilities
- Strategies
- Communication and its impact
 - Patient care
 - Workplace environment
- Health Information technology

- Creating a healthy work environment
 - Teamwork
 - Retention
 - Managing conflict
- Conclusion

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