



THE EMPLOYEE ADVISORY SERVICE MANAGER/SUPERVISOR NEWSLETTER



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

Aug
17

Getting To Know Your Employee Advisory Service (EAS)

We invite you to learn more about the new services provided to you and your family through EAS by attending our bi-monthly webinar orientations. Register below for the next supervisor/manager session.

When: Tuesday, August 15th
11:00 AM - 12:00 PM ET

To Register:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4277961533825166083>

August Manager/Supervisor Webinar

How to Motivate Your Employees

Motivated employees are engaged and productive. This important session will discuss research on employee motivation, identify the three primary needs that employees seek to meet at work, and discuss management approaches to help create and maintain a motivated team.

When: Tuesday, August 22nd
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM ET

To Register:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4022084287320256259>

Take a Free Mental Health Screening

Stressed?

Take a free anonymous mental health screening at:

<http://screening.mentalhealthscreening.org/NJEAS>

Phone: 866-327-9133
Web: www.state.nj.us/csc
Email: EAS_help@csc.nj.gov

Bridging Generation Gaps

Cultural miscommunications lurk with four generations at work.

It's common to find four generations sharing the same workplace nowadays. Navigating unfamiliar cultural territory can become a daily task. Generational identity — much like gender and ethnicity — distinguishes each person, but generations don't have to divide people. Understanding and appreciating each other has always been the key to teamwork.

The common generations are the Silent or Traditional Generation (born 1930 to 1945), the Baby Boom Generation (born 1946 to 1965), Generation X (born 1966 to 1979), Generation Y, also known as The Echo Boom Generation or Millennials (born 1980 to 2000).

With such diverse time frames, it's little wonder that most workplace polls show that the majority of workers have experienced generational clashes of attitudes, ethics, values and behaviors.

One problem is that reporting hierarchies no longer correlate to age or experience. Though people of different ages have always worked together, the ranking system that once separated them — with older folks at the top — is largely a thing of the past. Twenty year-olds are working alongside people old enough to be their grandparents and, in some cases, managing them.

Organizations aren't solely responsible for mediating the war of the generations. Rather than wait for employers or consultants to provide a fix, individuals can control their own destinies.

At a time when most people feel fully responsible for their own careers, you might want to ask yourself what you're going to do to work effectively in a multigenerational workplace. You can start by acknowledging that the workplace has changed and that it will continue to change. You should also accept the various cultures, and respect your associates and their backgrounds. Your career will benefit if you take time to master a few communication tools and strategies.

Here are some suggestions:

- **It's not what you say, but how you say it.** Generational clashes often stem from miscommunications in tone or style. The Silents, for example, are aware that they might be technologically challenged; empathy is a better strategy than derision. The younger generations, in general, might have shorter attention spans than their seniors, so they may prefer verbal training to reading documents.
- **Understand the different generational motives.** GenXers may seem to be less driven, and baby boomers managing GenXers should know that money usually isn't the motivating force. It's quality of life. Managers should look for ways to support GenXers' balanced lifestyle.

- **Look beyond appearances.** When that cherubic echo boomer suggests that a lovebug has corrupted your computer files, you better listen. When a Silent suggests you're shooting yourself in the foot, realize that there may be memory and wisdom behind the advice.
- **Benefit from diverse opinions.** Poor teams allow generational differences to divide them; effective teams leverage generational knowledge to better understand and serve their customers and clients. A four-generation team will produce stronger results than any single focus could.
- **Choose your mentor wisely.** Echo boomers launching careers should skip a generation when seeking guidance or nurturing. They're not likely to find mentoring a priority among GenXers, who often think of themselves as free agents looking for balance in their lives and time for themselves.
- **Keep an open mind about attitudes.** Just because others don't share your work ethic, it doesn't mean they're lazy. If GenXers seem like slackers to the baby boomers and Silents, perhaps it's because they're mindful of how workaholicism affected their own upbringing. They've seen the damaging effects of blind loyalty to an organization (many of their parents were laid off) and aren't apt to fall victim themselves.
- **Adapt your style to the realities of today's workplace.** Navigating an echo boomer work world with a GenX mindset will inevitably derail your career. Technology, global competition and demographics have reshaped the workplace, so don't think that your attitudes and perceptions should remain the same.

When navigating the generational landscape, look for what unites you with your peers. Everyone is living through profound changes in the business world. By recognizing and respecting differing ideals about the workplace, you'll get the job done better and faster. Plus, you might have fun.

Source: King, D. (Revised 2017). Bridging generation gaps. (A. Moyer, Ed.). Raleigh, NC: Workplace Options.



Ask EAS!

The following are answers to common questions supervisors have regarding employee issues and making referrals to EAS. As always, if you have specific questions about referring an employee or managing a workgroup issue, feel free to make a confidential call to EAS for a management consultation.

Q. My employee says she is thinking about quitting because she can't get along with her coworker. Should I send her (or them) to EAS, or should I first try to resolve the problem myself? I am a little nervous about doing this right the first time. I don't want to lose her.

A. Managers should first attempt to resolve conflicts between employees. Here's one approach: Ask this employee to share the history of the conflict with you, how it began, and what prompted her to come to you now. Ask what steps she has taken to resolve the conflict and why she believes they have not worked. Ask your employee about how she would like to proceed with a resolution, but anticipate making a decision to meet with both employees and play a leading role. This is important because for some employees, remaining in conflict is easier than the compromises necessary to resolve them. If you lose control of this process, change becomes optional. In this sense, employee conflicts are not solely personal problems, because they can always potentially affect the bottom line. Managers must shepherd them to a resolution. If a resolution does not appear forthcoming, involve EAS to save time and to address hidden agendas or other unspoken issues underlying the conflict that may require ensuring confidentiality in order to properly address it.

Q. I am a new supervisor. What are the top complaints of employees about supervisors? I plan to avoid all of them.

A. A national 2015 Harris Poll was conducted that asked employees this question. Read about it in the Harvard Business Review online at hbr.org (search bar "top complaints"). These complaints, starting with the most frequently cited, are not recognizing employee achievements, not giving clear directions, not having time to meet with employees, refusing to talk to subordinates, taking credit for others' ideas, not offering constructive criticism, not knowing employees' names, refusing to talk to people on the phone or in person, and not asking about employees' lives outside work. Keeping this list in mind, conducting a self-assessment, and working to champion all of them will produce more engaged and happier employees, reduce turnover, and play a role in helping your bottom line. EAS can help you be a stronger performer in any of these areas where you think you fall short.

Q. I read that fatigue is an important health matter employees should monitor, and that it results from too much work and difficulty separating work and home life. Do supervisors have any role in identifying employees who are experiencing fatigue, and in getting them help?

A. You should not diagnose employee problems or refer employees for conditions you think you have identified. Fatigue can be caused by many other medical conditions, including medications; health problems like diabetes, chronic fatigue syndrome, and sleep disorders; and even depression. Suggest instead that employees seek self-referral to EAS based on how they appear or what they have shared with you about their problems. This may include obvious signs and symptoms of being tired. When employees look tired, ask them how they feel, recommend they get some rest, and make it easy for them to get it. At work, you may notice the effects of fatigue on someone's behavior even before you identify clinical symptoms of the fatigue's effect on the body. These effects include problems with an employee's mood or difficulties in the way the employee interacts with others, and perhaps seeing an employee appear to be asleep during work hours.

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