The Guide to Managing and Developing Young Professionals

Sponsored By: NORTHROP GRUMMAN

Conducted By:
Dear Reader,

Based on discussions with numerous organizations, California State University—Fullerton’s Center for Research on Employment and the Workforce (CREW) determined a major need for *The Guide to Managing and Developing Young Professionals*, sponsored by Northrop Grumman. For this Guide, we conducted the *Multi-Generation Survey* – a nationwide survey of over 2,300 respondents. They identified the most important aspects of a job for individuals of different generational backgrounds and fields of work. With the findings from this survey, as well as data collected from cross-company focus groups and secondary research, we created the guide.

Much more than a research report, this practical and data-driven guide will help organizations attract and retain the best young employees to fill gaps in their talent and leadership pipelines. The Guide provides a valuable resource for both companies and young employees in the following areas:

- **Recruitment:** The guide highlights effective recruiting methods for young, high-potential professionals as well as what internal and external factors affect their decision to work at their current company.
- **Retention:** We address why young professionals stay at their current jobs as well as what causes them to leave and move on to a different company.
- **Management:** The guide describes effective management styles as well as the impact of other initiatives, such as inter-departmental transfers, rotational programs and Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) on young professionals’ careers.
- **Development:** We discuss how young professionals have successfully advanced, as well as become leaders, in their workplace via programs such as task-based achievements, training and extracurricular activities.

We want to thank our supporters, specifically the Classrooms2Boardrooms Executive Advisory Board, the Classrooms2Boardrooms Council and Cal State Fullerton’s administrative leadership. We also want to particularly thank the Northrop Grumman Corporation for underwriting this survey and guide. We hope you send this report to interested individuals and organizations. We invite you to share your observations about these critical issues, so we can all benefit from more cross-company insights. We include contact information in the “About Us” section at the end of this guide and would appreciate hearing from you.

Sincerely,

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Executive Summary

Studies show that retention issues will likely reemerge as an even greater problem once the economy improves – this particularly pertains to young professionals. Adecco Group North America’s latest American Workplace Insights Survey found that 71% of Gen Y employees plan to look for new jobs once the economic upturn begins. A new study from Watson Wyatt found that many employers worry about their ability to retain Gen Y talent. Nearly two-thirds of employers currently express more concern about talent retention than prior to the economic crisis.

Who is “Gen Y” and why should organizations care? Generation Y (those born between 1979 and 1995) currently accounts for 76 million people in the U.S. Like Baby Boomers (1946-1964) who represent 78 million men and women in the workforce, they impact society due to their size and unique characteristics. Gen X (1965-1978) only account for 44 million of the U.S. population. Obviously we lack enough Gen X to replace the Boomers and organizations need Gen Y to fill the leadership gap once Boomers retire. In short, Gen Y is the future of America’s workforce and we need to cultivate, as well as leverage, this talent pipeline.

As the economy rebounds, the war for talent demands that we focus even more on Generation Y. How do we cultivate this emerging talent pipeline? All types of perceptions and comments abound about what Gen Y professionals value. Media and generational pundits have released all types of sweeping comments, mostly anecdotal, about this generation. Yes, some truth exists in all these anecdotes. Still, sensational hype also lurks in them.

What makes this guide different?

We feature:
1. **Data-driven research from 2,300 respondents across multiple companies and industries**, rather than simply anecdotal perceptions. We actually dispel certain generational myths propagated by pundits and focus instead on the data.
2. **Best practices across leading companies related to this research.**
3. **Practical advice and strategies.**

Over the past several years, the intergenerational issue has grown into an increasingly critical one in the workplace. A BusinessWeek survey ranked generational tensions as one of the six key issues impacting today’s workplace. However, many employers and managers have recently noted little difficulty in recruiting and retaining Gen Y employees. Why? The current economic climate is likely masking the generational issue, because most people of all generational backgrounds are just happy to have a job. Simply stated, these two diagrams illustrate the major generational problems and solutions:
This Guide represents much more than a research report. We provide solutions. We provide you with best practices on how to recruit, manage and develop young professionals. We specifically include strategies that address our research findings.

We summarize our key findings below and provide some recommended strategies organizations can employ to retain and develop Gen Y employees. For more-detailed data and recommendations, please read the rest of the Guide.

### Key Findings

**Myths, Money and Motivation:** Contrary to the popular belief that money is less important to Gen Y than other elements of the job, our study found that money motivates Gen Y more than any other factor. In fact, money motivates *all* generations, including Gen Y, when both accepting a job offer and staying at a company. (See Charts 1 & 2.) Money was more important than the position itself or the work environment. Apparently as Maslow noted back in 1943, basic needs must be met first and money to cover essentials such as living expenses significantly trumps all other elements of a job offer.\(^iv\)
Chart 1: Most Important Components for Accepting a Job Offer for Gen Y

Chart 2: Most Important Components for Staying with a Company for Gen Y

**Challenging and Innovative Work:** We often hear that Gen Y craves challenge, innovation and other creative qualities of a job. However, Boomers+ actually demonstrated a stronger interest in “Challenging and Innovative Work” than any other generation. (See Chart 3.) In fact, as noted above in Charts 1 and 2, Gen Y thought the position itself was less important than benefits when it came to accepting a job offer. Additionally, “Position” was the least important element when they were deciding whether or not to stay with a company.

**Boomers+ selected “Challenging and Innovative Work” more than any other generation:**

38% of Gen Y

42% of Gen X

47% of Boomers+

Chart 3: Generational Differences in Importance of Challenging and Innovative Work

**The Work Environment:** Gen Y values a good work environment more than any other generation. This is important in terms of their decision to accept a job offer and to stay with a company. (See Charts 4 & 5.) But “Work Environment” still is only in 3rd and 4th place as shown in Charts 1 and 2—considerably behind “Pay & Recognition” and “Benefits.”
Friends in the Workplace: More than any other generation, Gen Y wants the ability to develop friends at work. (See Chart 6.) They also want to work for a friendly boss. (See Chart 7.) Positive relationships in the workplace are seemingly more important to them than they are to any other generation.

**Gen Y selected “Able to Develop Friends at Work” more than any other generation:**

- **22%** of Gen Y
- **8%** of Gen X
- **5%** of Boomers+

**Chart 6: Importance of...Ability to Develop Friends at Work**

**Gen Y selected “Friendly Personality and Easy to Get Along With” in a boss more than any other generation:**

- **23%** of Gen Y
- **18%** of Gen X
- **14%** of Boomers+

**Chart 7: Importance of...a Boss who has a Friendly Personality and is Easy to Get Along With**

Their Boss: First and foremost, all generations want a fair boss. Gen Y proved no exception. (See Chart 8.) Fairness was nearly twice as important as constructive feedback, mentoring, recognition, clear and specific goals, friendly personality or someone who is open and supportive.
Continuous Improvement: Gen Y values constructive feedback more than the other generations. (See Chart 9.) Many Gen Y grew up with “helicopter parents” who hovered over them constantly, so it makes sense that they crave constructive comments to help them improve. Additionally, they desire “Mentoring and Training” from their bosses. (See Chart 10.)

**Gen Y selected “Constructive Feedback” more than any other generation:**

33% of Gen Y

**Gen Y and Gen X selected “Mentoring & Training” more than Boomers+:**

26.5% of Gen X & Boomers+

28% of Gen Y & Gen X

17% of Boomers+

Work-Life Balance: Contrary to popular belief, Gen Y does not demand telecommuting more than other generations. Rather, Gen X had the greatest desire to work from home. (See Chart 11.) This is probably a function of where they are in their life cycle—trying to balance the challenges of family and work. But Gen Y did consider flexible working hours or schedule as more important than Gen X and Boomers+. (See Chart 12.)
Gen X selected “Ability to Work from Home” more than any other generation:

- 17% of Gen X
- 8% of Gen Y
- 10% of Boomers+

Gen Y selected “Flexible Working Hours or Schedule” more than any other generation:

- 46% of Gen Y
- 42% of Gen X
- 31% of Boomers+

**Career Advancement:** More than any other generation, Gen Y wants opportunities for career advancement. (See Chart 13.) Their focus on advancement opportunities probably reflects the stage they are in relative to their careers. “Advancement Opportunities” were more important to them than the challenge of the position, job security, opportunities for learning, fun, ability to work with effective teams or access to job rotation opportunities. (See Chart 14.)

Gen Y selected “Opportunities for Career Advancement” more than any other generation:

- 53% of Gen Y
- 47% of Gen X
- 25% of Boomers+

**Impact on the Workplace:** Another common perception of Gen Y is that they want to add value on Day 1. They are often viewed as arriving at a new job with 15-20 ideas they want to share with the CEO about how to improve the company. However, this again seems to be more myth than fact. Rather, Gen Y was least likely to consider it important to have a boss who is open to their suggestions and supportive
of their decisions. (See Chart 15.) Also, as noted above, they want a boss who will give them constructive feedback—not what you would expect from those with an overly inflated perception of themselves!

Older generations selected “Openness to My Suggestions and Support for My Decisions:”

![Chart 15: Importance of a Boss who is Open to My Suggestions and Supportive of My Decisions]

**Implications:** In terms of the implications of this research for the workplace—there are many:

- First, pay is a threshold issue. The figure has to be high enough for Gen Y to consider the elements of the job you are offering them. If they feel they can make more money elsewhere—they will leave. Even if you are offering them a great job on an exciting project with a great boss and opportunities for learning, they’ll still say pay is the most important element of a job offer or reason for staying. From their point of view, it comes down to showing them the money!

- Second, provide a complete benefits package. Gen Y, like other generations, is looking for a good medical plan and also consider retirement plans to be a lot more important than the popular press suggests. In fact, nearly 40% of our Gen Y respondents felt that the company’s retirement plan was an important benefit—yet less than 20% considered tuition reimbursement to be important.

- Third, make the office a fun and personable experience for your new entrants to the workforce. Gen Y consider it very important to have friends at work and to work for a personable boss who will mentor them. So ensure you provide opportunities for them to meet others who are similar in age and interests. Employee Resource Groups are a great means for new hires to meet others in the workplace. Also, let your supervisors know that Gen Y want frequent feedback and the ability to interface with others. They also want someone to mentor them. They are comfortable around adults and want to learn from experience. So don’t leave them alone—rather provide them with frequent guidance, coaching and support.
• Fourth, they are looking for career advancement. Since they have a lot of room to move up the corporate ladder, try to identify opportunities for them to advance—if you don’t, they will look for someone else who will.

• Lastly, the issues that Gen Y bring to the workplace are similar to those we encountered when Gen X started working. They tend to be issues of youth and experience. As they get older, in all likelihood they will come to resemble their older co-workers in terms of values and personal priorities.
More Than a Study: A Data-Driven Strategic Guide

Based on our Multi-Generation Survey, subsequent focus groups and secondary research, The Guide to Managing and Developing Young Professionals provides best practices and recommendations for addressing Generation Y in the workplace. This guide, created by California State University – Fullerton’s Center for Research on Employment and the Workforce (CREW) and Spectrum Knowledge, serves as a valuable resource for any organization because it:

- Addresses the War for Talent in America’s Workforce
- Provides Immediate and Long-Term Best Practices and Strategies
- Promotes Retention of Gen Y Talent
- Facilitates Knowledge Management

**Addresses the War for Talent in America’s Workforce:** Gen X only account for 44 million of the U.S. population while Boomers account for 78 million. Simply stated, we lack enough Gen X in the talent pipeline to replace retiring Boomers. Generation Y number 76 million, and they’re projected to make up almost half of America’s workforce by 2014. We need to look toward Gen Y to quickly fill this pipeline, but can we develop them fast enough? Below, you’ll find a visual representation of the generations in the U.S., similar to that of an hourglass:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generation</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boomers</td>
<td>1946-1963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen X</td>
<td>1964-1978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen Y</td>
<td>1979-1995</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This unequal distribution has led to some tensions in the workplace. Gen X feel ignored when it comes to the discussion regarding generational issues, since most of the dialogue focuses on the differences between Boomers and Gen Y due to their sheer numbers. Concerning the talent pipeline, many organizations prepare Gen Y to quickly move up the corporate ladder to replace the soon-to-retire Boomers. Because of the need to replace these retiring Boomers, managers become increasingly younger and companies look to promote Gen Y. That said, the success of any organization necessitates a firm understanding of the best ways to both retain and develop Gen Y.

**Provides Immediate and Long-Term Best Practices and Strategies:** We looked at many sources for best practices but chose practices that correlated with the needs defined by our research findings. Anecdotally, we have heard many thoughts about Gen Y and how to “deal with” this generation. Stereotypes and contradictory information exist about best practices, so we wanted to gather data to get to the real heart of the issue. Our guide provides solutions to generational issues in the workplace by providing proven best practices and strategies based on primary and secondary research. Our data-driven guide will help your organization more effectively recruit, retain, develop and manage your Gen Y employees.

**Promotes Retention of Gen Y Talent:** Though organizations may have little difficulty retaining employees in a bad economy, they’ll likely encounter problems with retention as soon as the climate improves. A new study from Watson Wyatt found that nearly two-thirds of employers are more concerned about top-talent retention than prior to the economic crisis. And according to Adecco Group North America’s latest American Workplace Insights Survey, it seems like their fears are founded. Nearly three-fourths of Gen Y employees plan on looking for new jobs once the economy improves. Our guide provides specific ways for organizations to retain and develop their Gen Y employees, helping young professionals continue to stay and grow in their current organizations.

**Older generations agreed that Gen Y “Lacks Willingness to Pay Their Dues:”**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Gen Y</th>
<th>Gen X &amp; Boomers+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>33%</td>
<td></td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 16: Differences between Generations – “Lacks Willingness to Pay Their Dues”
Facilitates Knowledge Management: Knowledge management proves the key to effective succession planning as well as running a successful business. Many Boomers have institutional knowledge that needs to be passed down to younger employees, or else that knowledge will be lost once they retire. By increasing understanding between generations in the workplace, organizations can help facilitate a smooth transition and knowledge transfer process. For example, our Gen Y Perceptions Study found that almost twice as many Gen X and Boomers agreed with the statement that “Gen Y lacks willingness to pay their dues” compared to how Gen Y participants rated their own generation. (See Chart 16.)

This kind of misunderstanding and misperception can lead to aggravation and decrease in productivity, which harms the knowledge transfer process. The purpose of this guide is to increase intergenerational understanding and communication. Ultimately, effective communication and knowledge management will help drive innovation and commerce for U.S. companies to compete at a global level.
Methodology

We surveyed 2,323 individuals in our nationwide, online Multi-Generation Survey and asked them to identify the most important aspects of a job in terms of:

1. Benefits
2. Pay and Recognition
3. The Boss
4. Work Environment
5. Elements of the Position

Five survey questions asked participants to select two options from a list of six to eight in regards to the five elements listed above. Additionally, two survey questions asked participants to rank order these five elements of a job from most important to least important when making a decision to accept a job offer or stay with a particular employer.

In terms of generation, the sample included:

- 55.1% Gen Y
- 22.1% Gen X
- 21.1% Baby Boomers
- 1.7% Traditionalists

(See Chart 17.)

For the purposes of our study, we reduced “Generation” to three levels: Gen Y, Gen X and Baby Boomer+ (including individuals who identified as Baby Boomers and Traditionalists) due to the small number of respondents in the Traditionalist category.

Upon completion of our Multi-Generation Survey, we asked 42 focus group participants across all three generations to discuss what factors play a role in looking for a job and deciding to stay at a company. We’ve included some direct quotes from participants periodically throughout the guide within the text as well as in call-out figures. We include these to help clarify or expand upon our survey data.
Analysis and Discussion of Results with Best Practices

What does Gen Y Want?

Understanding Gen Y’s context serves as one of the first steps towards successfully recruiting, retaining, developing and managing this generation of professionals. This entails truly comprehending Gen Y, and what the generation wants from their jobs, bosses and workplace experiences. We found that some of these desires and motivations parallel those of previous generations when they were young. This led focus group participants and researchers to believe that perhaps one’s stage in life rather than one’s age plays a large role in generational issues.

Anecdotally, many “generational experts” claim that Generation Y prioritizes job content over money. However, our survey results show something entirely different. Just like every other generation surveyed, Gen Y prioritized “Pay and Recognition” as the most important component in accepting a job offer and staying at a company. As one Gen Y concisely put it, money is most important because it’s a “bad economy and I have mortgage payments.” If one considers Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, such results make sense. Generation Y prioritize basic physiological and safety needs – as does every other generation in the workplace. In short, money helps fulfill these needs. Generation Y’s selection of “Health Benefits” and “Retirement Plan and/or 401K” as two of the top three benefits a company could provide further demonstrate the young generation’s desire to fulfill basic needs.

Despite some similarities between generations, we also found a significant number of differences. We believe many of these are a result of the young generation’s context and upbringing. Numerous advancements and events shaped who Generation Y is today: Internet, cable TV, reality TV, Columbine, layoffs of the 80s and 90s, the 2000 election crisis, 9-11 and the War on Terror.

Gen Y measures success differently than previous generations, partly because they define themselves by who they are outside of their jobs.

Many Gen Y schedules reflect this mentality. Members of the generation want to be considered unique and special, since many of them were treated this way as children. Many parents told their Gen Y children that they could accomplish anything they put their minds to. Today, we can find the
generation’s desire for individuality and recognition in many of today’s popular online forums such as social networking sites, blogs and avatars.

Gen Y remains in their youth longer than any other generation before them. Many of them live with their parents after graduating from college, marry later, postpone having children and determine their careers later. Their approach to work and careers differ from that of previous generations. When addressing Gen Y in the workplace, organizations need to address the values that are unique to Gen Y, rather than those of the organizations’ management.
Recruitment

It’s probably not too difficult to find young talent who want to work for your company in this economic climate. Quality talent, however, may still be diamonds in the rough. Consider the following aspects of recruitment when searching for your future employees:

Spark Their Interest and Connect to Gen Y: In other words, listen actively to what Gen Y want. The young generation made it clear that they prioritize compensation as the most important element when considering a job offer. If Gen Y wants money, give them money...and they’ll likely come to you. One Gen Y focus group participant called pay “the first filter” when deciding to accept a job offer. Once they’re in the workplace, they want to be paid based on their contributions.

All generations selected “Pay Based on Performance in the Workplace” as the most important component of “Pay and Recognition.” However, “Pay Based on External Peer Comparisons” scored particularly high amongst older respondents as well.

Companies don’t always have a lot of extra cash to give to their new employees. If that’s the case with your organization, be creative about the way you connect to Gen Y. Gen Y indicated “Position” as the second-most important component they consider when accepting a job offer. As one Gen Y put it, “You need to be excited about your job to be productive in it.” Be creative with the positions you create for your Gen Y employees – not just in name, but in tasks as well. Consider giving Gen Y opportunities to engage in creative tasks; competitions for innovation and new ideas will likely keep your Gen Y engaged and excited, but may even lead to great developments for your organization as well.

If you’re having a tough time recruiting for or staffing your organization, try the following:

Go to where they’re located and speak their language. Avoid excess company jargon. While recruiting Gen Y candidates, keep in mind that nearly three out of four Gen Y professionals visit company websites, more than two-thirds use online job boards and nearly one-fourth use social networking sites when seeking jobs. Advertise openings in innovative ways. A popular furniture retailer attracted new talent via handwritten advertisements on the walls of public bathrooms. This campaign generated 4-5 times more applicants than a typical newspaper ad.
Establish relationships with key staff at colleges to find great talent – it’s one of the most practical moves you could make.

Consider hiring your passionate Gen Y customers. If they already love your products and organization, they’ve probably already bought into your company’s philosophy and will be eager to perform well.

Ask your Gen Y staff to recommend their friends for employment. This allows for a personal connection while recruiting candidates and gives your current Gen Y staff an opportunity to work with their friends. Generation Y valued “Able to Develop Friends at Work” more than any other generation in the workplace. In fact, Gen Y selected this element twice as often as Gen X and four times as often as Boomers+. (See Chart 18.) One Gen Y thought friends made work more enjoyable. “Having friends is a great way to candidly discuss issues and have fun outside of work. More like work-life integration than work-life balance.” Because Gen Y value this kind of camaraderie, consider hiring some of their network of friends. Friendship may help lead to a decrease in bureaucracy – a feature that all generations appreciate. In fact, more Baby Boomers+ chose “Minimal Bureaucracy in the Workplace” than any other generation.

Gen Y selected “Able to Develop Friends at Work” more than any other generation:

22% of Gen Y

8% of Gen X

5% of Boomers+

Chart 18: Differences between Generations – “Able to Develop Friends at Work”

Once you spark Gen Y’s interest in your company, keep things simple with these three steps:

1. Decrease the number of obstacles between Gen Y’s initial interest and their ability to become new employees. Reduce the time between applications, interviews and job offers. Allow Gen Y candidates to easily apply for jobs via your website, which should have a clean and easy-to-use interface.

2. Keep Gen Y candidates engaged via multiple forms of communication. This is especially important if you have some down time between applications and interviews and hiring. Consider sending them an e-mail link to a hidden page on your company site for more information. Interactive dimensions also help keep your candidates interested in you.
3. **Make it easy to apply to your company but not so easy to get hired.** The Marines appear exclusive because they say that “We’re Looking for a Few Good Men.” Let your candidates know that you’re looking for a few good employees.

When you directly interface with a candidate, it’s your time to shine. Sell them on your company and the advantages of being on your team. Believe the positive things that you tell them. They’ll call your bluff if you don’t. Don’t just tell them what they want to hear. Instead, articulate your employer brand and let them know what your company is all about. Avoid overselling your organization, though. Media and advertising have inundated Gen Y for as long as they can remember. The generation consists of smart and market-savvy consumers. They dislike being oversold.

Add some of your current Gen Y employees in the recruitment mix by having them assist you with the initial contact, screening and interviewing of the candidates. Ask your Gen Y employees to come to recruitment events since they’re an authentic representation of your thriving employees in action. Use this method to create a win-win situation. Your Gen Y candidates will appreciate how you involve your young employees in important processes, while your Gen Y employees will enjoy the opportunity to be involved in the recruitment of a colleague. They may even opt to assist in the orientation, training and mentoring processes.

**Hire Informed Candidates:** Many quality candidates conduct intensive research on your organization and its people prior to the interview. This enables them to develop talking points and get a better sense of the organization. However, there’s only so much they can learn about your organization through your website and marketing materials. To give them a true understanding of your organization:

- **Ensure candidates with an opportunity to interact with their future boss.** This serves as a relatively accurate representation of the types of interactions they’ll have in the workplace. Gen Y tends to develop more loyalty to their boss rather than the organization itself (as we’ll discuss further under “Management”). Such interactions prove a critical part in allowing Gen Y to truly understand your company.
- **Give candidates the “inside scoop” of your company,** by allowing them to talk to their peers that currently work for your organization.

What if you lose a quality candidate because of all of this disclosure and candor? If the truth scared off your candidate, then he or she probably would’ve figured it out in a few months anyway. If that’s the case, you probably wouldn’t want him or her working for your organization if he or she isn’t the right fit for you. It’s better to figure this out early on – before you hire the candidates – rather than after months of investing time, money and training.

**On-Boarding:** Integrate your new hires immediately in order to get them to buy into your company mission and develop company loyalty. Demonstrate that you care about your new Gen Y employees by going out of your way to make them feel comfortable from Day One. Some companies have novel, multi-day orientation programs that allow employees to interact with one another in a social environment and even meet-and-greet the CEO. Develop some sort of technique to welcome and integrate your new employees – even if your budget or schedule doesn’t allow for such an elaborate orientation program. Doing something as simple as preparing your new Gen Y employee’s workstation and personalizing his or her manual could mean a lot. From iPods to Dell computers, Gen Y is used to –
and appreciates – mass customization. Try implementing this concept with your new employees to make them feel like an important part of the organization right off the bat.

Whether it’s through an orientation program or a training manual, give Gen Y the opportunity to get to know the organization’s history, rules, people, language and culture so that they can quickly connect to the company. Additionally, establish and/or further solidify performance expectations, since establishing these early on help prevent misunderstandings and conflict in the future.

I like to know exactly what I need to do and what is expected.

Keep in mind that your organization’s rules and expectations should exist based on sound reason and need. If your rules seem unnecessary or outdated, consider changing or eliminating them. Gen Y can follow rules, but it’s easier for them to do so if they make sense to them.

A final word about the on-boarding process – your training program materials for new employees should be engaging. Check to see if any of the names, stories and examples you use are outdated. If so, modify them. This simple act can mean a lot for Gen Y’s interest level, which now rests in your hands. Utilize different types of media to deliver your modules. You can even ask some current Gen Y employees to examine and evaluate your training program to ensure that it’s Gen Y-approved and friendly. Better yet, make the training interactive and have some of the Gen Y trainees teach one another the material. Many Gen Y grew up with “helicopter parents” (who constantly hovered around to make sure everything was okay) and “soccer parents” (who chauffeured them to their multiple extracurricular activities); they’re used to a “high touch,” interactive environment.

In summary, the following strategies enable organizations to effectively recruit Gen Y employees:

- **Spark Their Interest and Connect to Gen Y**: Give Gen Y what they want – without going overboard. Keep your current and future Gen Y employees engaged by integrating some of your young employees in the recruitment process.
- **Hire Informed Candidates**: Allow your Gen Y candidates to understand your organization by giving them opportunities to interact with their future bosses and colleagues.
- **On-Boarding**: Make your new Gen Y employees feel welcome with an engaging and relevant orientation program. Integrate your new employees early on so they feel like an important part of your organization.
Retention and Development

Now that you have Gen Y employees, how can you retain them? Many organizations face this challenge today. You’ll likely retain Gen Y if you match another employer’s offer with additional perks, money or whatever else you may have up your sleeve. But don’t always be on the defensive. Instead, engage in some of the following best practices to keep your Gen Y employees yours. Better yet, make your employees love the job so much that they want to stay.

Provide Opportunities for Health and Wellness: You don’t always have to one-up your competition, but you can try to give Gen Y employees what they want…within reason, of course. If pay and basic benefits played a strong role in a Gen Y’s decision to work at your company, then they’ll continue to be important factors in his/her decision to remain at your company. Keep your compensation and benefits package competitive.

Gen Y identified health benefits as the most important benefit a company could provide. In fact, all generations did. (See Chart 19.) Why? As one Gen Y employee explained, “Fear of economic bankruptcy from a health event” causes this young generation to care about healthcare. Boomers+ selected “Health Benefits” more often than younger generations. (See Chart 20.) Their fears parallel Gen Y’s; as one Boomer explained, “I am getting older and more things are starting to show up and hurt. I can’t afford my own health care.” Give all of your generations – including Gen Y – peace of mind, and enable them to become more productive, by keeping them healthy. Peace of mind and mental health prove particularly important in this current economic climate, and as we move toward recovery.

Don’t have the best health insurance coverage for your employees? Consider alternative health benefits that keep employees healthy and energized. On-site gyms not only keep your workforce in shape, but they keep them in the office building as well. Subsidizing gym memberships can also encourage fitness among employees. Some workplaces initiate company-wide, employee-run “weight loss programs” through which a large number of employees try to lose weight together. These programs include prizes or other incentives for employees who lose the most weight or highest percentage of body fat. It’s not all about weight loss, though. Some companies provide and promote “keep fit” programs that
encourage their employees to become and stay physically fit. Others mix physical fitness and volunteerism by supporting their employees’ efforts in charity walks and other outdoor fundraising activities. Providing healthy options at your on-site dining facilities – preferably at low cost – also keeps your employees healthy and happy.

![Chart 21: Two Most Important Aspects of Position for Gen Y](chart)

**Provide Opportunities for Learning and Advancement:** We combined “retention” and “development” because one of the best ways to retain Gen Y is to provide professional and personal development opportunities. Gen Y ranked “Opportunities for Career Advancement” as the most important part of a position. (See Chart 21.) This generation prioritized this aspect of the “Position” more than any other generation, which is unsurprising considering their stage in their careers.

> If you’re not moving ahead, you’re falling behind.

With the career advancement that young professionals desire comes training and development. PricewaterhouseCooper’s *Managing Tomorrow’s People, Millenials at Work: Perspectives from a New Generation* found that Gen Y ranked personal training and development as the most important benefit.
in the workplace. 98% of these respondents believed that working with strong coaches and mentors played an important role in their development. We recommend that you consider expanding your current coaching and/or mentoring programs to Gen Y employees. It’s a great way to train and retain them.

Mentoring allows for knowledge management and provides an effective way for employees across generations to network and build relationships. Such opportunities allow Gen Y to learn from people in their organization who’ve “been there” and feel like a valuable asset to the organization. We encourage organizations to try “reverse mentoring” as well.

What is reverse mentoring? This type of mentoring enables young professionals to build relationships with more senior members of their organization by mentoring Boomers and Gen Xers. The older generations can learn a lot from their Gen Y employees’ knowledge of technological advancements, effective use of social media, current trends, popular culture, or even more about Generation Y as a whole. It’s valuable for Gen X and Boomers to tap into the Gen Y resource, while enabling these young employees to “learn by teaching” and interface with managers and others who could potentially help their careers.

Gen Y seeks stability but also realizes that the days of “lifetime jobs” are over. Many Gen Y saw their parents get laid off after business cycles declined in the late 80s and 90s, which made them skeptical of corporations. Many have adopted a short-term career perspective as a result. They focus on developing the skills and competencies that will make them marketable at any time and to any employer they choose. They seek opportunities to continuously learn to develop themselves professionally and personally, both for the purposes of marketability as well as productivity.

Keep the learning curve high and many of your best Gen Y employees will remain engaged. Once these opportunities disappear, they’ll disappear too.

Generation Y valued “Job Rotation Program Available” more than any other generation. Rotation programs enable your employees to experience different departments in your company. Some Fortune 500 companies set up such programs, because young employees enjoy the learning opportunities within the context of a stable company. At a basic level, “rotations are great ways to gain experience quickly,” one recent graduate explains. At a more advanced level, “More exposure to and understanding of the
company and its...goals and customers” will enable your Gen Y employees to add more value to your company, another young professional explains.

Unfortunately, not all tasks are fun and exciting. Some just need to get done. Still, it’ll help if you frame the not-so-exciting tasks as learning opportunities for Gen Y. Can your new Gen Y employee learn more about the company while filing its important documents? Can he or she learn more about your brand while organizing its marketing plans? If you frame a boring task as a learning opportunity, your Gen Y employee may try to make it so. Ultimately, Gen Y want challenging and innovative work because they want an “opportunity to feel I am making a contribution,” one Gen Y participant explained.

Surprisingly, Boomers+ selected “Challenging and Innovative Work” more than any other generation simply because for these older workers, “challenging work keeps work interesting” after so many years. You can try to cut back on perceived boredom for Gen Y by explaining the significance of a particular not-so-glamorous task to the organization. By knowing how the task plays into the bigger picture, they may be more incentivized to complete it quickly and thoroughly.

No matter how you spin it, you can’t easily retain your Gen Y employees if you make them perform menial tasks indefinitely. It’s not that Gen Y is unwilling to pay their dues; they’re just not willing to do so for an unlimited amount of time. A recent Robert Half study found that about half its Gen Y respondents expect to spend no more than one to two years “paying their dues” in entry-level jobs.

"Tuition Reimbursement” more than any other generation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Generation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22%</td>
<td>Gen Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Gen X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6%</td>
<td>Boomers+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 22: Differences between Generations – “Tuition Reimbursement”

Many of Gen Y employees see additional graduate and/or professional degrees as a necessity in today’s competitive work environment. They see this as a form of paying their dues. The same Robert Half study found that nearly three out of four Gen Y respondents thought they’d go back to school to obtain another academic degree or certification. Our survey echoes these results. Gen Y valued “Tuition Reimbursement and/or Outside Training” more than any other generation. In fact, Gen Y selected this
element more than twice as often as Gen X and more than three times as often as Boomers+. (See Chart 22.) This is an appealing benefit for Gen Y because it allows them to, as one focus group participant explained, “...further my education without having to pay for it.” The way Gen Y sees it, tuition reimbursement helps the company as well.

Gen Y’s desire to learn transcends into the workplace as well. The young generation wants an education they can get on the job, so they can build skill sets required for the business world. To make sure that they don’t run off after you invest hours and dollars training your Gen Y employees, help them understand the advancement opportunities in your company so they know there’s a future for them there. If you plan to put “golden handcuffs” on Gen Y for their tuition reimbursement, then at least allow for advancement opportunities and salary increases upon completion of the degree. The value of the degree will start to deteriorate with age and without a promotion.

Allow for Creative Working Styles and Innovation: Engage your Gen Y employees to reduce tedium in the workplace. Challenge your young employees to invent new, fun ways of completing repetitive tasks. Allow them to be creative and find solutions to the “boredom problem” (and even other problems) in your workplace.

Many Gen Y are creative and innovative. By giving them the freedom to explore new methods and approaches to existing problems, you’ll not only help make things a little more exciting for your younger staff members but their unconventional approach may even solve some long-standing company problems. Tap into Gen Y’s creativity and innovation as well as their ability to adapt and embrace change before it even happens. This will help your company stay one step ahead of the changes in your industry and your competition.
If you or your management aren’t quite ready to hand over the problem-solving reigns yet, consider giving non-critical assignments so your Gen Y employees can take risks and still learn from failure. Reduce boredom by changing up Gen Y’s tasks so that they don’t get sucked into monotony. Don’t just delegate the dirty jobs that nobody else wants. Instead, give them varied, challenging tasks or opportunities to multitask. Remember, this generation grew up with multiple tests, tasks and extracurricular activities; they know a thing or two about juggling multiple factors at once. You can also vary the procedures or simply the physical working environment; they appreciate continuous change. Involve Gen Y in projects with deadlines to capitalize on their efficiency and task-oriented mentality.

You don’t always have to mix things up. Sometimes it’s all about the way you frame your young employees’ task. Gen Y employees are some of the best learners when they see personal benefit in a task. If you take a few moments to “personalize” their assignments, they may appreciate and see value in it. Sometimes addressing how the assignments relate to their personal or professional interests, or explaining why they’re the right person for the job, can make all the difference.

Enable Them to Contribute to the “Bigger Picture” and Be Significant: Gen Y was raised with the notion that “everyone is a winner.” Growing up with the Internet and interactive entertainment, Gen Y embraced the belief that everyone deserves to have a say. Many Gen Y grew up with the desire to be important and contributing members of society. One Gen Y focus group participant explained that he wanted “to be heard, to feel like a contributor to the team.” You can help Gen Y fulfill their desire for meaning and purpose by giving them opportunities to contribute to the success of the company. You may not assign them important, high-profile tasks early in their careers. Yet, Gen Y still wants to know where they fit into the bigger picture of the company. Help them understand this by explaining their roles and why they’re in their jobs. When discussing roles, allow your Gen Y employee to give some input as to what they want to contribute to the company. This will help you and your Gen Y employees understand their value to the company.

Many companies make their Gen Y employees feel valuable by incorporating them into the decision-making process, rather than giving mandates. One of Fortune 500’s 100 Best Companies to Work For in 2009, engages in collaborative efforts to give all employees a say in the decision-making process.xi Gen Y value such democratic processes, because many of them believe that information and decision-making should be quick and transparent as well as fully accessible and inclusive – much like instant information on the Internet.
In order for your Gen Y employees to effectively provide input, they need to truly understand the company. Consider sharing aspects of your duties and responsibilities and give them opportunities to interact with your vendors and suppliers. By experiencing the business first-hand, they can provide more useful feedback to the organization. Also, consider using surveys to figure out what they really think, and use these metrics to help you benchmark and understand what they want.

Enable Gen Y to feel like they’re contributing to the organization by allowing them to leverage their skills. This not only helps for the purposes of motivation, but could help your bottom line as well. Gen Y is known for their technological savvy, so hone in on the skill set by:

- **Utilizing social networking sites.** Promote brand loyalty amongst current as well as potential employees.
- **Creating internal online networks.** This enables employees to interface and build camaraderie with one another.
- **Taking advantage of unique opportunities.** The technological advances of our time give people the ability to work from home. Interestingly, Gen X valued the “Ability to Work from Home” the most, likely because of their stage in life. The generation selected this element because, as one Gen X explained, “I can have my son in after school activities.” Even though your young employees may not physically be present at your office, they can still complete all their tasks while telecommuting. In fact, it feels normal for many of them to constantly check into work with their BlackBerry during off-hours as long as they’re given some flexibility during the workweek.

Our Generation Y Perceptions Study found that Gen Y view themselves as strong team players and self-directed learners. Let Gen Y play on their strengths. Get software that encourages teamwork like Yammer for group-based discussions or PBWiki for group thinking. Give Gen Y some guidance, but then allow them to learn on their own while creating and innovating.

**Remember that Work can be Fun, Too:** Most people, despite their generational identity, want to feel passionate about their work. This is especially the case for Gen Y; they want to engage in fun activities that they like and want to do.

Gen Y valued “Have Fun and Like the People I Work with” more than any other generation. As most working professionals know, work can’t be all fun and games. However, you can liven things up a little. To some, this may sound like a good idea but too much effort. Is it really worth it? Well, let’s put it this way. Workers who have fun are often more productive. With higher morale, they’re less likely to complain about other aspects of their jobs like wages, benefits and time off.

Generation Y valued “Work Environment” more than any other generation both while accepting a job offer and when deciding to stay at a company.
How can you make your workplace a fun place? Inject some fun into your work environment by simply making it a little more social. Gen Y enjoys social interaction with the people that they work with, so consider creating an environment that’s conducive to this. Consider livening up the atmosphere of the break room with chic furniture or lowering the walls of the cubicles. Company social events allow young employees to get to know each other, socialize and have a little fun. Interestingly, the Robert Half study found that two-thirds of the so-called “wired” Gen Y actually preferred in-person conversations with coworkers over other types of communication.\textsuperscript{iv}

**Understand that Time = Money:** As the saying goes, time is money. Gen Y strongly values both money and time. If you’re not able to give them a lot of money, consider giving them some time off or flextime to compensate. They’ll appreciate this extra time to spend on their personal lives, rather than at the office.
In regards to benefits, Gen Y ranked “Flexible Working Hours or Schedule” as the #2 most important benefit a company could offer (See Chart 23) and valued “Paid Time-Off” more than any other generation in the workplace. As one Gen Y employee aptly put it, “My schedule outside of work is hectic, and I like to be able to come into work at whatever time I want.” To some Gen Y, work should fit into their schedules, so they appreciate flexibility on the part of the employer. Others simply want “to be able to have work-life balance.”

As we mentioned earlier, social gatherings can be used as a motivator for Gen Y employees. Be cautious of hosting them off-hours, though, since many young employees perceive after-hour social gatherings and holiday parties as intrusions on their personal time rather than as rewards.

Incentives allow you to create and reinforce positive behaviors by recognizing and rewarding them. Though employers use this as a management technique, many Gen Y have come to expect some sort of reward system in the workplace. Retention now necessitates rewards. To ensure their effectiveness, provide rewards as soon as possible and preferably in public. Try to make them personal but proportionate – to keep things fun but fair. Enable your managers’ prompt delivery of rewards by giving them the ability to grant on-the-spot mini-bonuses or rewards, days off, vacation days and other rewards. A little pre-planning can go a long way. You can even enlist your Gen Y employees’ help in selecting the rewards; give them the ability to create a “menu” of rewards so they can select their own incentives. If you need to reward multiple positive behaviors, consider using a punch card so that your employees accumulate several points before receiving their prize.

Not all rewards cost money. In fact, some of the best incentives in life are free. Gen Y appreciates personal recognition, so some form of public praise or even personal outreach from a senior manager could mean a lot to them.

Recognition in front of management or senior management is very valuable in building a career and networking for future opportunities (and) job security.

Try something as simple as knowing their name (along with their correct spelling and punctuation), shaking their hands, or even looking them in the eyes and thanking them for their hard work. This could potentially have more impact than any tangible reward. Other “freebies” include providing opportunities for visibility. Some Fortune 500 corporations use some of their top performers in their TV commercials and advertising campaigns. Though using incentives may seem like kowtowing to the wishes of your Gen Y employees, at the end of the day, it’s still easier (and far more motivating) to reward your dependable employees than to punish your unreliable ones.
Be Positive: Positivity makes people happy, including Gen Y. This generation has been inundated with negative news since their childhood, so they value good news. When something good happens in the workplace or to a colleague, let them know. Keep your Gen Y employees apprised of how they’re contributing to the company’s success; they’ll appreciate it. Inform Gen Y about positive opportunities as well. Use bulletin boards, newsletters, company meetings and personal notes to keep them apprised of opportunities for advancement and special training programs.

Why is positivity so important? “Positive Morale/Energy in the Workplace” by far outranked every other factor in employees’ consideration of work environment in our survey. This proved to be the case for all generations – including Generation Y. This generation also selected “Work Environment” as the second-most important component they considered when staying with a company – second only to “Pay & Recognition.” (See Chart 24.) Many of our Gen Y focus group participants even made a bottom-line case for positive morale in the workplace.

(A positive work environment) encourages me to want to do more and be more productive.

Gen Y
In summary, the following strategies enable organizations to effectively retain and develop Gen Y employees:

- **Provide Opportunities for Health and Wellness**: Offer a competitive benefits package. If that’s not possible, consider providing health and fitness programs to promote your employees’ mental and physical wellbeing.
- **Provide Opportunities for Learning and Advancement**: Enable your Gen Y employees to grow personally and professionally by providing mentoring and reverse mentoring programs. Assign challenging and interesting tasks in order to keep Gen Y employees engaged and invested in your organization’s success – and not just their own.
- **Allow for Creative Working Styles and Innovation**: Opportunities for innovation reduces the “boredom problem” for your young employees. It may even lead to ground-breaking ideas for your organization.
- **Enable Them to Contribute to the “Bigger Picture” and Be Significant**: Let Gen Y contribute to the overall success of your company in any way they can. Gen Y can help your organization keep up with the times and move ahead of the competition with their technological savvy.
- **Remember that Work can be Fun, Too**: Liven things up. A few small touches – such as low cubicle walls or a chic break room – can go a long way.
- **Understand that Time = Money**: Gen Y strongly value money but you don’t have to break the bank to keep them happy. Give out time-based incentives or on-the-spot rewards to motivate Gen Y to keep up the good work.
- **Be Positive**: Spread good news and keep Gen Y employees apprised of positive opportunities. Let them know how they’re contributing to the success of your organization.
Management

Below, we provide you with some best practices on how you can effectively manage your young talent. Additionally, we recommend that you leverage successful managers as resources and find out how they manage and develop their young employees.

![Chart 25: Two Most Important Characteristics of a Boss for Gen Y]

**A Boss’s Characteristics:** What Gen Y looks for in a boss is similar to what many of us look for in a friend or close colleague – fairness and honesty. Gen Y ranked “Fairness in Pay, Promotions, Recognition and Assignment Decisions” as the most important characteristic they want in a boss. (See Chart 25.) Interestingly, older respondents selected this characteristic even more than Gen Y.

As one Gen X participant bluntly stated, “If I don’t feel I’m being treated fairly, I leave, PERIOD.” We see this desire for fairness throughout a variety of industries and studies as well. The top-ranked company in Fortune 500’s 100 Best Companies to Work For in 2009 sported an egalitarian culture. In order to make things fair for your employees, let everyone know the rules of the game in advance. Then, attach specific consequences – good or bad – to specific actions. “Fairness is vital to objective analysis, optimized motivation, and both company and personal success,” one Gen Y employee explained. As mentioned earlier, solicit Gen Y’s input when appropriate so they can have a say in the company direction and corporate culture.

Be truthful to your employees; if anything, this will help win their respect and admiration. Consider letting Gen Y know the state of your company – whether good or bad – so they’re well-informed. This isn’t so that you can scare them away. Since many Gen Y are resilient, they’ll likely stay and appreciate the fact that you candidly shared this information with them. In addition to being honest, be reliable and always do the right thing. This may sound somewhat elementary, but Gen Y appreciates a boss that leads by positive example.
Lastly, Gen Y is known for wanting flexibility in their jobs. Many of them seek this kind of flexibility in their bosses as well. If Gen Y employees ask you for a favor, don’t immediately cave in just to retain them; that’s a quick way to lose their respect. Instead, be flexible and negotiate with them. Gen Y employees will appreciate your willingness to discuss different options, while not immediately caving into their demands.

![Chart 26: Two Most Important Characteristics of a Boss for Gen Y](image)

**Relationships with Bosses:** Gen Y wants positive relationships with their bosses – more as role models than friends. As the chart above shows, they’re looking for a mentor more than a friend. They appreciate the personalized attention, and they like someone who mentors and leads them. Gen Y selected “Mentoring and Training” after “Fairness” and “Constructive Feedback” as the third-most important thing they want from their boss. (See Chart 26.)

*Your boss’s experience, network and insights are invaluable resource to help you grow and move up the company.*
Many of them want bosses who will help them establish their goals and plans for the future. Work with each of your employees and help them develop a plan for personal and professional growth and development. Help establish clear timelines so that Gen Y can see how they’ll grow as individuals as well as in the context of the company.

I need to know if there is a future for me in this company, preferably in 3 to 5 years; it’ll keep me motivated.

The more help they receive preparing for their future at the company, the more likely they’ll stay. By understanding your employees’ short-term and long-term goals, you can tailor tasks to align with both your goals and theirs. Check in with them periodically to figure out what they’re learning and where they can learn more. Consider introducing them to people and opportunities that can help them in the future.

Just because Gen Y doesn’t look for a “friend” in their boss doesn’t mean they don’t appreciate friendliness. Gen Y selected “Friendly Personality and Easy to Get Along With” more than any other generation. One Gen Y participant explained the value of friendliness by saying, “Friendly bosses create a better work environment and (are) easy to approach for questions.”

Addressing Gen Y’s management preferences may sound like a lot of work but it could pay off dividends in the future. Gen Y can be extremely loyal to people, especially to those with whom they’ve developed a solid relationship. Young employees demonstrate loyalty to bosses who have taken the time to lead and mentor them. In fact, some young employees follow their boss when he or she moves on to a different department or company. They value the relationship so much that they’re willing to follow their role model.

Strong Communication: Be clear. Use straightforward language. If you need something done, tell your Gen Y employees what you want done. Let them know when and how you want it done as well. Don’t beat around the bush and make something sound like a suggestion, because they’ll take it as just that. Instead of telling your Gen Y employee that it’d be “nice” if such-and-such task was accomplished, let them know that they’re responsible for completing a certain task by a certain deadline. That way, they’ll know for sure that you’re assigning them the task and they’ll get it done. For the employees who need a little more structure, consider developing a routine for giving instructions. Give them a detailed assignment sheet with the step-by-step instructions on how to accomplish a particular task. At the same time, provide some flexibility so that they can come up with a more efficient way to complete the task, if possible.
Communication is a two-way street. An open-door policy is great, since it gives Gen Y employees access to you. On the other hand, it requires that Gen Y take the initiative to talk to you. Though many of your high performers may take advantage of this opportunity without being asked, others may need a little more prompting to keep the lines of communication open. Consider talking to your employees and really getting to know them, because Gen Y wants a manager who’s interested in them. You don’t always have to talk about work either. Because Gen Y often identifies themselves as who they are outside of work, let them talk about their interests and the things they value.

**Feedback:** Criticisms and reprimands can hurt, despite your generational identity. According to much anecdotal evidence, this proves especially true with many Gen Y employees. In order to make the negative feedback process a little easier on everyone, consider giving reprimands in private and promptly. Use neutral language and remind them of their value to the organization. You don’t want an entirely negative conversation. Besides just giving feedback, take things one step further. Help your Gen Y employee create a plan to ensure that they don’t make the same mistake again.

Gen Y does want constant feedback, though, so make sure you give it to them. Gen Y considered “Constructive Feedback” the second-most important factor they look for in a boss; they also valued this element more than any other generation in the workplace.

Similarly, the Robert Half study found that 35% of Gen Y respondents wanted to communicate with their boss several times a day. Learn how to **consistently** manage your Gen Y employees without micromanaging.
As your Gen Y employees grow in your organization, they may begin to want support in addition to basic feedback. Over time, their preferences may reflect those of older participants who more often choose “Openness to my Suggestions and Support for My Decisions” as an important characteristic they look for in a boss.

As a manager, I really value the freedom to make and execute my own decisions and do what I think is right for the business.

Gen X

In summary, the following strategies help supervisors effectively manage Gen Y employees:

- **A Boss’s Characteristics**: Be fair – that’s the #1 characteristic Gen Y looks for in a boss. Gen Y respect honesty and integrity, and they’ll develop a strong loyalty to bosses with such characteristics.
- **Relationships with Bosses**: Gen Y want roles models. Mentor and lead your Gen Y by providing personalized attention and facilitating their professional growth within the company.
- **Strong Communication**: Be clear. Let Gen Y employees know exactly what you want from them. They’ll appreciate the “straight talk.” Communication is a two-way street, so encourage some of your young employees to talk to you as well.
- **Feedback**: Give reprimands in private and promptly. Gen Y highly values constructive feedback so use neutral language and remind them of their value to the organization.

**Conclusion**

Throughout the course of this guide, we’ve provided numerous recommendations on how best to recruit, retain, develop and manage your Gen Y professionals. You can implement many of these suggestions right away, while others require a more long-term approach. All of these serve as stepping stones toward attracting strong Gen Y candidates, and ultimately keeping the Gen Y employees that you hire. Effectively manage and develop young professionals by balancing their desires and expectations with the realities and budget of your company. By finding the right compromise between these factors, your company will receive the best ROI from its Gen Y workforce.
About Us

The Career Center at Cal State Fullerton established the Center for Research on Employment and the Workforce (CREW) to complement our services to employers and students. The CREW collects, analyzes and disseminates information about issues and trends that are reshaping the professional opportunities of our graduates and the behavior of our employing organizations. These issues and trends include diversity, globalization, generational issues, knowledge transfer, and the impact of emerging technology. For more information, please contact the Career Center at: jcase@fullerton.edu or visit our website at: http://campusapps2.fullerton.edu/career/employers/workforceresearch.aspx.

Spectrum Knowledge, Inc. provides Organization Optimization, Employee Elevation and Intercultural Innovation. Our company consists of diverse cultural, organizational development and leadership experts who have backgrounds in research, education and training related to these areas. We provide solutions to clients that enhance and grow organizations, particularly through the investment in human capital. The organization provides both customized and ready-to-go services. For more information, please contact Spectrum Knowledge at: vupham@spectrumknowledge.com or visit our website at: www.spectrumknowledge.com.

If you are interested in learning more or being involved in the Classrooms2Boardrooms Initiative, whether with our Executive Advisory Board, Classrooms2Boardrooms Council, or attending courses from the “Mastering Interpersonal Dynamics” series, please visit us at: www.spectrumknowledge.com/signatureprograms.

We would like to extend a special thank-you to all of our Executive Advisory Board members who help make this initiative possible:

Beth Boulet, Senior VP of Audit, Amedisys
Sandra Evers-Manly, Vice President of Corporate Responsibility, Northrop Grumman
Larry Harrington, VP of Internal Audit, Raytheon
Bay Hilborn, Human Resources Manager, State Farm
Mel Jackson, Director of Diversity, Raytheon
Maaike Jacobson, VP of Human Resources, Western Federal Credit Union
Bert Lacher, Vice President, Southern CA, Verizon Business Solutions
Charlotte Lazar-Morrison, General Manager, Human Resources, Aerospace Corporation
Kim Martin, Recruiting Manager, Enterprise Rent-A-Car
John Martinez, Vice President of Total Rewards, Amedisys
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Harold Silverman, VP of Internal Audit, Houghton-Mifflin-Harcourt
Jeff Zych, Global Audit Director-Finance Audit, Zurich
Endnotes


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vi Adecco Group North America.


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About Our Classrooms2Boardrooms Initiative

Organizations face major challenges with recruitment, retention, management and development of professionals, while navigating four generations in the workplace.

In response to these challenges, California State University – Fullerton’s Center for Research on Employment and the Workforce (CREW), in conjunction with Spectrum Knowledge, has launched the Classrooms2Boardrooms Initiative. Classrooms2Boardrooms addresses these challenges, as it focuses on generational workplace issues from the perspectives of soon-to-be employees in the classrooms to executives in the boardrooms. Our initiative includes research, training and sharing of best practices across multiple companies.

What’s different about this initiative? Our initiative is unique in that it allows for cross-company knowledge and understanding across multiple industries, rather than serving as a single body of expertise. We’re all about facilitating shared knowledge, collective wisdom and common goals. Topics covered by Classrooms2Boardrooms include talent management, recruitment, retention, as well as employee and leadership-pipeline development. The initiative helps individuals and organizations respond to generational differences in the workplace through:

- **Research**: Conduct research on critical intergenerational issues that affect companies nationwide. Our past projects include the Generation Y Perceptions Study, which focused on perceptions from multiple angles – how the three major workplace generations all perceive Gen Y. CREW has also produced The Guide to Managing and Developing Young Professionals, which assists companies and recruiters with targeting, retaining and developing young employees. Upcoming projects include the Generation X Perceptions Study and the Boomer Perceptions Study, as well as other research projects that help inform multi-generational workforces.

- **Training**: Spectrum Knowledge’s flagship training program, Mastering Interpersonal Dynamics, helps professionals improve their careers. This four-part series includes:
  - Networking, Influence and Strategic Relationships: Yes, It Is About Who You Know
  - Impactful Verbal Communication: Practical Everyday Strategies for Effective Workplace Communication
  - Professional Power and Presence: Negotiating Organizational Environments, Marshalling Emotional Forces and Leveraging Personal Brands
  - Cultivating a Culture of “Intrapreneurship”: Embracing Innovation, Risk-Taking and Overcoming Roadblocks.

- **Website**: The Classrooms2Boardrooms website is the Intergenerational Knowledge Resource for, by and about workplace professionals and leaders. We equip our users with three key knowledge areas: data-driven research and frameworks (THE PULSE), practical and tactical industry insight (THE BRAIN), as well as development and advancement strategies (THE VOICE). We accomplish these through leveraging and distributing key knowledge online. Most think tanks cater to policy. We are a think tank for professionals.

- **Community**: The Classrooms2Boardrooms Executive Advisory Board consists of executives from major organizations in the accounting, aerospace, business services, communications, consumer products, entertainment, financial services, healthcare, law, publishing, public service, and technology sectors. These executives champion actions that create a better work environment by bridging generations. The Young Emerging Professionals Council consists of representatives from these same companies. Council members are leaders in their organizations who show high potential and have the support of their company executives.