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Generations on the Move

Amanda Holland, Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities



Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities

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Generations Basics

Cutoff
years vary



General
observations

While not an exact science, generational awareness provides tangible rewards.



*Laborers take a break from unscrewing old deck boards during the Yukon River Bridge redecking project.
Photo by Tom Laurencelle, Alaska DOT&PF*



Generations at Work

**Four generations in the workplace
Fifth generation is just entering workforce**

**Many supervisors are younger
than direct reports**

**Age-related workplace conflict on
the rise**



U.S. Generations

1920 – 1945: Builders, Traditionalists, Veterans

1946 – 1964: Baby Boomers, Boomers, Me Generation

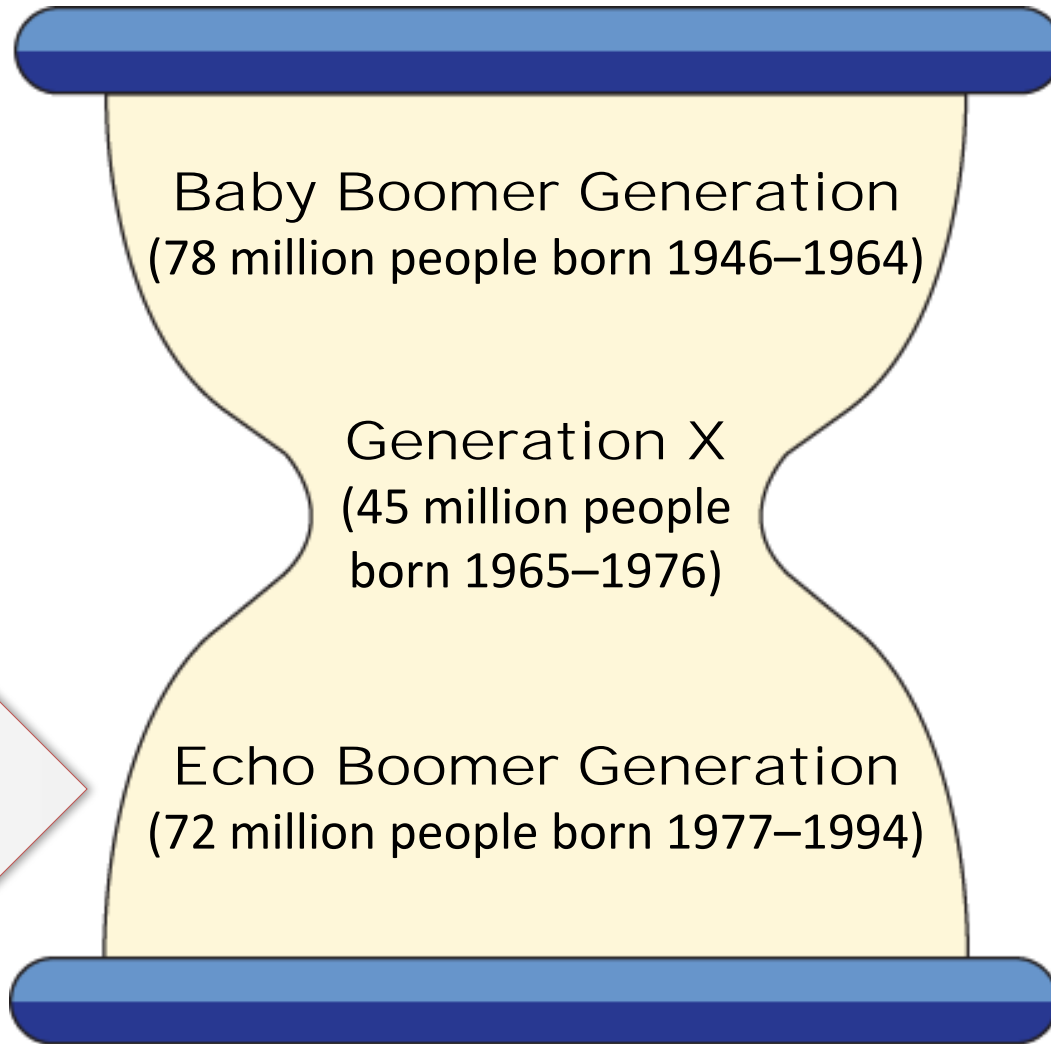
1965 – 1979: Gen X, Lost Generation, Xers

1980 – 1994: Gen Y, Millennials, Nexters, Echo Boomers

1995 – 2009: Gen Z, Net Generation, Regeneration

2010 – XXXX: No official name --- Alpha Generation?

The Hourglass Effect



**Echo Boomer, aka
"Gen-Y" – 80 mil**

The Four Working Generations

Generation	Millennial (Gen Y)	Generation X (Gen X)	Baby Boomer (Boomers)	Traditionalist (Veterans)
Birth Dates	1981 – 2000	1961 – 1980	1944 – 1960	1922 – 1943
Population	~ 80 million	~ 45 million	~ 78 million	~ 52 million
Mindset Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School shootings • Oklahoma City • Technology • Child-focused world 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fall of Berlin Wall • Watergate • Desert Storm • Energy Crisis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil Rights • Cold War • Space travel • Assassinations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great Depression • New Deal • World War II • Korean War
Core Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trained in leadership since primary school, are skeptical of power. • Want to work for themselves, not necessarily because of money, but for freedom, lifestyle and to be in charge without conforming to someone else's vision. • Trophy Kids – everyone gets a medal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unimpressed by authority or expertise. • Rely on their own perceptions, experience, intuition and input of friends. • Want flexibility and will change careers readily. • Leaders should be team members, leading from within. • Make it fun. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value freedom of choice/expression • Traditionalists' authoritarian style isn't appealing. • Want knowledge, information and logic to rule leadership. • Like a flatter structure, but still want managers to be experts and lead by their own knowledge and skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong work ethic • Respect for authority • Conservatism • Commitment • Reliability • Management style: clear roles, defined leadership, 'command and control'.

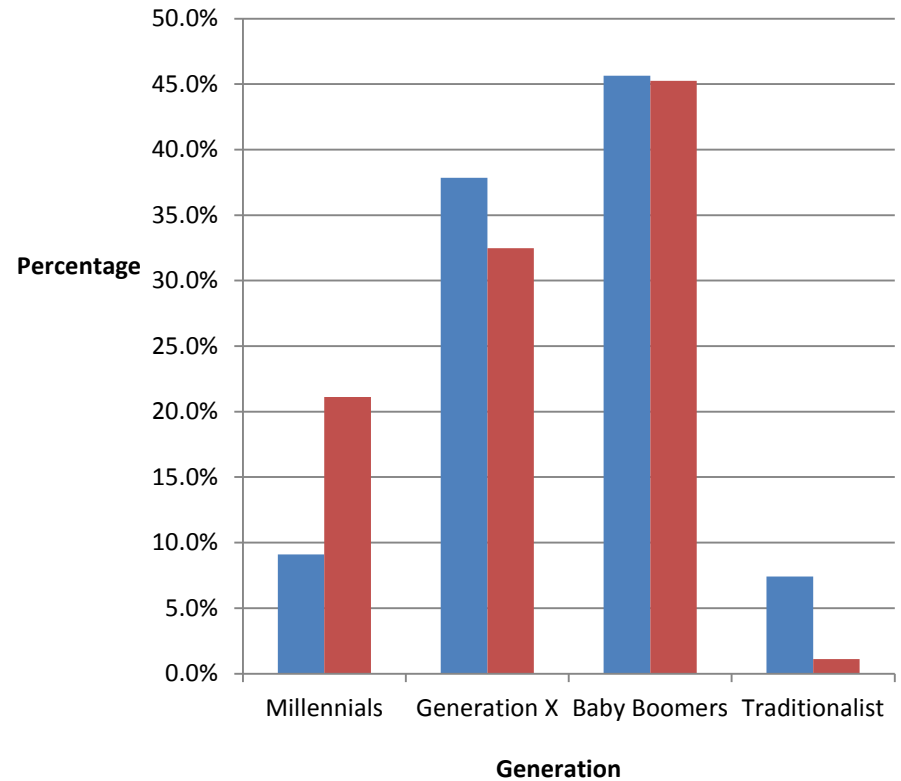


Generation Group Comparison

DOT&PF Workforce – 2011 & 2014

Surprisingly, Baby Boomers are holding steady in the DOT&PF workforce.

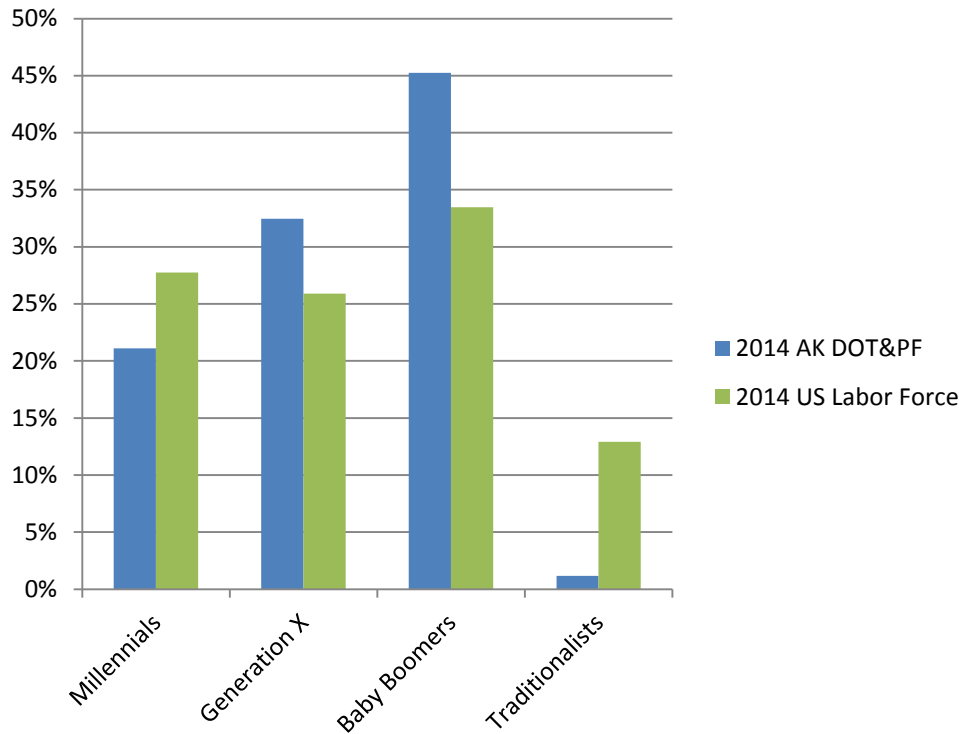
DOT&PF Generation	Spring 2011		Spring 2014	
	Employees	%	Employees	%
Millennials	295	9.1%	695	21.1%
Generation X	1227	37.8%	1069	32.5%
Baby Boomers	1480	45.7%	1490	45.3%
Traditionalist	240	7.4%	38	1.1%
Total	3242	100.0%	3292	100.0%





Generation Group Comparison

DOT&PF Workforce to U.S. Labor Force



Generation	2014			
	AK DOT&PF	%	US Labor Force	%
Millennials	695	21%	64,306,000	28%
Generation X	1069	32%	60,049,000	26%
Baby Boomers	1490	45%	77,564,000	33%
Traditionalists	38	1%	29,912,000	13%
Total	3292	100%	231,831,000	100%

The department's workforce has a noticeably higher percentage of Baby Boomer employees.

Things to Consider about Boomers

Grew up where there were literally more kids than seats in the classroom

Believe they have to fight for it all; if they don't fight for it, someone else will get it

Compete on one path

(once they decide where going, cannot be altered from that path)



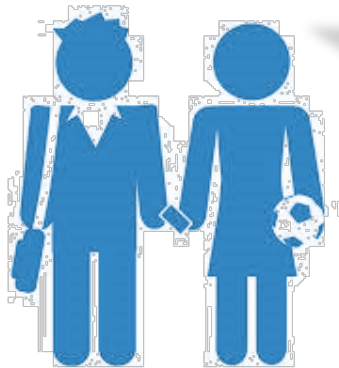
Things to Consider about Xers

Grew up where institutions were failing
(corporate layoffs, marriage, etc.)

First generation of latch-key kids

**Think in terms of options; they believe
in having contingency plans**

Balance multiple paths
(key is keeping options open just in case)

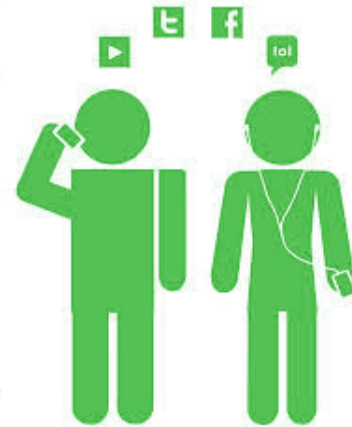


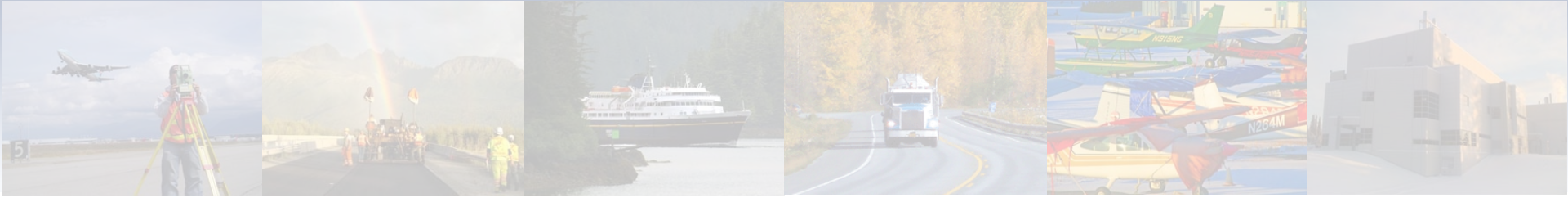
Things to Consider about Gen Y

Grew up where something terrible could happen tomorrow
(e.g., 9/11)

First generation who is unconsciously competent with technology
(grew up with it)

Live with a constant sense of randomness; live life to the max each day
(I want today to matter because there may not be a tomorrow)





“Generations”



Cross-Generational Challenges



Filling potholes in the snow! Photo by Noah Hill, Alaska DOT&PF



Considerations

Boomers = achievement-oriented, dedicated and career-focused – subject matter experts (prefer to have staff in the office, face-to-face, every day)

Gen X = options thinkers – what we need in today's changing environment (appear to disregard authority)

Gen Y = drive us to use new technology to fundamentally re-energize work (proficiency expectation for others is very high)

Gen Z = bring sense of pragmatism – how to create balance and compromise in times of change (constantly in motion)

Working DOT & PF





Work Environment

**Texting, social media,
smart devices**
(e.g., March Madness)

Office protocol
(e.g., arriving on time,
interrupting others,
personal business)

**“Because we’ve
always done it this
way” is no longer an
adequate answer**



Awareness

Behaviors

(e.g., ear buds in office, personal space, feedback)

Framing

(e.g., repetitive words “like”, profanity, request v. command)

Life Filters

(e.g., outdated phrases, authority figures, public exposure, work ethic)





***“With or without formal training,
leaders have been emerging within your organization.”***

-Michael DeMarco

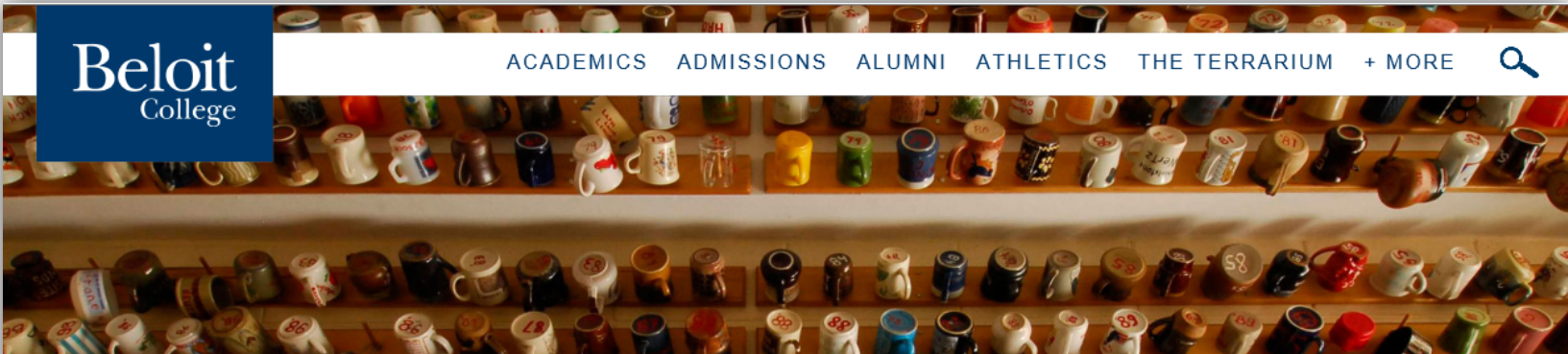


Kirby Maury is the most senior engineering assistant in Central Region construction. He has been a great teacher and a mentor for many young engineers. This project will be his last since he plans to retire. Photo by Chong Kim, Alaska DOT&PF

Boss Factoids

-  **75% of the workforce reports their immediate supervisor is the most stressful part of their job**
-  **At least 20% lower risk of heart attack if work for a good boss**
-  **Best bosses are those aware of their own strengths, weaknesses, quirks**
-  **1/3 of all employees spend at least 20 hours a month lamenting about their bosses' behavior**

Beloit College Mindset List



Beloit
College

[ACADEMICS](#) [ADMISSIONS](#) [ALUMNI](#) [ATHLETICS](#) [THE TERRARIUM](#) [+ MORE](#)



THE MINDSET LIST

2018 LIST

[BOOKS AND SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS](#)

[FEEDBACK](#)

[PREVIOUS LISTS](#)

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The 2018 List

The authors talk about their latest Mindset List

2018 LIST

Students heading into their first year of college this year were generally born in 1996.

Among those who have never been alive in their lifetime are Tupac Shakur, JonBenet Ramsey, Carl Sagan, and Tiny Tim.

On Parents' Weekend, they may want to watch out in case Madonna shows up to see daughter Lourdes Maria Ciccone Leon or Sylvester Stallone comes to see daughter Sophia.

For students entering college this fall in the Class of 2018...

1. During their initial weeks of kindergarten, they were upset by endlessly repeated images of planes blasting into the World Trade Center.
2. Since they binge-watch their favorite TV shows, they might like to binge-watch the video portions of their courses too.
3. Meds have always been an option.
4. When they see wire-rimmed glasses, they think Harry Potter, not John Lennon.
5. "Press pound" on the phone is now translated as "hit hashtag."
6. Celebrity "selfies" are far cooler than autographs.
7. The Daily Show with Jon Stewart has always been the only news program that really "gets it right."

Stepping into the Future



Assessing flood damage on Richardson Highway in Keystone Canyon. Photo by Mike Isaacs, Alaska DOT&PF