

## Intergenerational Conflicts at Workplace: Strategies and Leadership Communication Skills to Avoid and Combat with Conflicts at Workplace

\* Sipra Routaray

### Abstract

*Intergenerational conflict exists in the workplace because of the diversity between each generation. Generational diversity in the workplace is there as there are four generations (traditionalists, baby boomers, generation X, generation Y) in the workforce working on the same platform. Each generation is defined not only by the time period of their birth but their previous influences along with similar characteristics associated with their generation. The expectations of each generation regarding their work environment, management, and subordinates vary across all generations, they have their own way of thinking, work ethics, ways of handling and being handled which sometimes clashes with each other leading to conflicts. There is a growing realization that the gulf of misunderstanding and resentment between the generations in the workplace is growing and is problematic. These issues can be overcome by airing perceptions, finding generationally appropriate fixes, exploring commonality, and learning from each other.*

*The youngest generation, Generation Y has a high turnover rate. With the Traditionalists and Baby Boomers soon retiring, Generation Y will take over the workforce and be promoted into positions they may not be prepared for. Organizations need to recognize this shift in the workforce, the high turnover rate of Generation Y. By gaining knowledge of Generation Y's orientations, leaders can build a relationship and learn to interact with Generation Y so that organizations can retain these young, talented workers. Leaders in the workplace can then help young workers prepare and reach their potential when Traditionalists and Baby Boomers retire. Each generation has a unique value set and outlook marking their particular approach to work and life. Creating harmonious relations among generational groups. Organizational structures and workplace arrangements should be carefully considered to avoid creating generational silos. Where possible, mixing of generations is to be encouraged as a means of creating shared values and experiences. Events and social gatherings can also be arranged to facilitate greater generational interaction.*

*Improved and effective communication is critical to successful change in the workplace by avoiding conflicts among the generations. Managers must develop a variety of motivational strategies when dealing with age differences. They must be sensitive to societal changes, communicate to employees the locations of desirable opportunities. Leaders in the workplace should be aware of conflicting communication patterns and work expectations, and realize the appropriate type of leadership communication for intergenerational conflicts at workplace is going to be on a situation-by-situation basis. Underlying message is that if an organization cares about people in the first place, and chooses to show it through their workplace strategy, they successfully bridge the generations before they even realize.*

**Keywords:** Generations, Maslow's Need theory, Directive, consultative and participative leadership styles. Path Goal theory of communication styles, Transformational and transactional leadership.

---

\* Visiting Faculty, JOSHI and BEDEKAR College of ARTS and COMMERCE, Thane, Maharashtra.  
Email Id: Sipra.routaray@gmail.com