



Tradewind Solutions LLC

Executive Search

Finding Candidates Through Generational Profiling

No matter what the state of the economy, companies still want their ranks to be stocked with the “best of the best” in terms of employees. After all, it’s only with employees of this caliber that a company can reach its full potential in terms of both productivity and profitability.

In order to quickly and effectively find the candidates you need, you have to know more about candidates than just their skill set or their employment history. You also have to gain a “big picture perspective,” one that will allow you to address the candidate in a way that they can understand and to which they can relate. One way to gain this big picture perspective is by adopting a “generational point-of-view.”

There are many distinct generations currently in the workforce, especially since older workers are finding it more difficult to retire. In addition, superstar candidates can be found at any level and at any age; they’re not all clustered in one generation. By knowing what’s important to candidates of **every** generation, you increase your chances of connecting with those candidates and hiring them.

Generation presentation

There are four separate generations—Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y. Below are thumbnail sketches of each one, providing insight into how they think and how they operate.

Traditionalists

This group encompasses anyone 65 years of age or older. One of the biggest characteristics of this group is that lifetime employment with one company was the rule, not the exception. (My, how times have changed.) With that in mind, they value loyalty, respect, and sacrifice, and they also believe that you need to pay your dues in order to get ahead.

Baby Boomers

Almost everybody is familiar with this generation, which includes those born between 1947 and 1964. This group is career-focused and comfortable with a process-oriented environment. In addition, its members could be described as “optimistic workaholics” who have a love-hate relationship with technology. Although some members of this group are starting to retire, many are not, and in fact, they’re continuing to work, either on a full-time or a part-time (contracting) basis.

Generation X

This group encompasses those born between the years 1965 and 1977. This is where you begin to see a distinct break from the previous two generations. These people value independence and autonomy and possess a desire to invest in themselves in the form of education and training. In addition, they view technology as a valuable tool, although they’re often skeptical of the corporate world.



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Generation Y

This generation, born between 1978 and the present, has also been slapped with the unfortunate title of the “Entitlement Generation,” whether it’s a deserved moniker or not. This group loves information and technology (the World Wide Web might have something to do with that), and its members are extremely confident of their skills and their ability to succeed. They’re also very business-oriented and advocates of continuous learning and education.

A quick word about “Cuspers,” which are people who are technically within the age bracket of one group, but actually identify more with another. As you might imagine, these are individuals who are what you might call “between generations.” This phenomenon, completely natural considering the transitional nature of the generations, is something else to keep in mind when dealing with candidates.

So . . . why all the fuss about generational profiling? When it comes to finding superstar candidates, it’s almost impossible to have too much information—too much **quality** information, that is. Generational profiling will allow you to gather that information so you can unearth those candidates who will make the biggest impact as employees.

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