

Gen Trends

Catching the Wave of the Generations to Come!

September 2007

Getting It Right

Over the past several months, I have had the privilege of serving as a special advisor for a recruitment and retention study conducted by the American Productivity and Quality Council (APQC). The culmination of this was a “knowledge transfer session” in which we shared the findings of the study and the benchmarked companies had a chance to explain their practices in more depth.

As I listened to the energy and ideas circulating in the room, I was struck by all the efforts these companies are making to connect with the emerging generation of workers. At the same time, it dawned on me that most of what they’re doing is common sense.

While many employers struggle to attract and retain top performers, these companies, including Tellus, Abbott Laboratories, and Lincoln Financial Group, are not going that far outside the traditional box in their efforts. But they are using every means available including blogs, social networking sites, and spending their time and effort seeking candidates rather than waiting for them to appear. On top of this, every one keeps a constant watch on their metrics. They track everything from applicant pool size to exact costs per hire.

As we all know, this is not rocket science. What makes these efforts special is the intensity with which the effort is being made. The world has changed and firms who will ensure adequate applicant pools in the future are in getting into high gear now to source and recruit the best.

The study will be released at the end of this year. We’ll let you know when it is available for purchase.

Another Special Deal

Copies of the Center’s new book *Crossing the Generational Divide* flew off the shelf this past month when we offered it at a 30 percent on-line discount. If you missed the opportunity, we’ve got another *special* deal for you. Order the book at its retail price and receive a copy of the newly released third edition of *Smart Hiring* for half price.

Newly updated for the internet age, *Smart Hiring* has become the bible of recruitment and selection for thousands. The book includes 500 sample interview questions, 101 recruiting strategies and more than 50 ready-to-use forms for everything from calculating cost of turnover to organizing the selection process. This offer is only good until October 5. [Click here for more information or to order the books right now.](#)

The Freshman Fifteen

Anyone familiar with college students knows about the dreaded “freshman 15” – the 15 pounds that first year students seem to gain during their initial college experience. But there’s a new concern that is beginning to worry administrators – “the senior 3000.” That’s the average credit card balance that nearly half of college seniors are leaving school with according to the National Foundation for Credit Counseling.

I Remember When

The Center’s electronic game for understanding generational differences.

[Click here for more.](#)

Upcoming Center audiences include:

KPMG
Nebraska Economic Development
National Tool and Machining Association
Purdue University
Vacation Rental Managers Association
Mechanical Contractors of America

“GenTistics”

1957 - the average American production worker was earning \$82.32 per week.

US Bureau of Labor Statistics



Robert W. Wendover
Editorial Director



15200 E. Girard Ave.
Suite 2500
Aurora, CO 80014
Phone: 303-617-7207
Fax: 303-617-7209
Toll Free: 800-227-5510
www.gentrends.com

Pizza Hut and Big Brother

Several months ago, I conducted a seminar on classroom management for Kodiak College in Kodiak, AK. When the whole faculty came together in this majestic but far-flung place, there were a total of twelve people in the room, including me.

In speaking of the power of today's technology during the program, I made an off-hand comment that one can now order pizza from Pizza Hut and have it delivered by simply going on line to pizzahut.com, typing in a zip code and submitting a credit card number. Not giving the comment another thought, I moved on with the presentation.

A few minutes later, one of the faculty members raised his hand and informed me that while ordering Pizza Hut on-line might be possible in other locations, it was not possible on Kodiak Island. I responded by saying I was sorry that the good citizens of Kodiak did not have access to Pizza Hut's delectable offerings.

"But we do," he retorted. "The store's about a quarter mile from the college. They just don't deliver." He then explained that while I had continued to talk, he had gone on-line using the wireless hub in the classroom to investigate the veracity of what I had said.

While we all got a chuckle out of this exchange, it dawned on me that the ramifications of this incident were more far-reaching than catching the instructor in a minor factual error. As wireless classrooms, libraries, airports, restaurants, and, of course, homes have become commonplace, the balance of perceived authority is shifting. I now stand in front of a group, any group, with an understanding that anyone in the audience can be checking the veracity of what I'm saying as I'm saying it. Of course these agents of accuracy are depending upon the World Wide Web as their source of infinite knowledge. *Continued in column three*

Case Study Corner

I'm 53 and a human resources director in a regional hospital. As we continue to recruit young nurses and technicians, there is an increasing chasm that's growing between veteran workers and these newcomers. Scheduling is the biggest issue. Trying to get young nurses to take weekend and evening shifts is a real challenge and the veterans are tired of having the young nurses calling in sick to take unexpected days off. What should I do to avoid a train wreck?

You are coping with a situation that seems to be affecting every organization that deals with shift workers. The bottom line is a simple difference in the philosophies about work. Most older individuals believe that work involves duty, sacrifice, and a sense of community. Most emerging professionals see a job as what they do to earn wages. They do not seek to develop a social circle on the job. Therefore, there is less reason to work extra hours if it's only about the money. While they are certainly willing to work hard and get the job done, there is a clear demarcation between what they do to make money and the rest of their lives.

Employees of all ages consistently identify flexibility in work schedules as their first priority on the job. Younger employees have simply been taking organizations to task on this point in recent years.

While there is no clear solution to this, there are several things you can do to mitigate this growing chasm, as you put it. Begin by placing more focus on beliefs about work during the selection process. Yes, there is a shortage of healthcare professionals. But that doesn't mean you have to hire every nurse who "fogs the mirror."

Re-establish and enforce clear expectations about scheduling. Be prepared for younger workers to challenge work rules not to their liking. But if you allow them to work the system, you will face the enmity of every veteran nurse.

Finally, verify the reality of those who complain about young nurses. Is this issue for real, or is this more grousing by veteran nurses who don't like the work styles of younger workers. It's always easier to complain than change.

Leadership and the Emerging Generations

This newly-released video program is based on the popular presentation of the same name that's been conducted for associations and corporations across the US. Discover how aspiring leaders are going to change the way we all do business. Learn how to anticipate these upcoming impacts. For more information, [CLICK HERE](#) or call our offices at 1-800-227-5510.

Pizza Hut continued

This phenomenon, however, impacts parents, managers, police officers, teachers, volunteer leaders, politicians, anyone who has up to this point been able rest on his or her presumed authority to pronounce the facts.

Even the media are not above this scrutiny. Pick any subject and you can visit a host of websites from Wikipedia to Ask.com that will all portend to be the authority on your subject of interest. This has become so commonplace that young people are searching several sites when "watching the news" and simply taking an average of what they see and hear. This, of course, has the propensity for reducing every argument to a competition for who seems to offer the most plausible information or source -- never mind that the information contained therein might have been concocted by someone with an axe to grind or simply a devious sense of humor.

While I don't expect all this to alter my presentations in dramatic fashion, it will make me more diligent in my research and handling of the facts. Heaven forbid I get called out on a misspoken blunder in front of thousands. I'd like to think that others in positions of authority will make the same effort -- but only time will tell.

Coming soon . . .
The Psychographics of the Emerging Consumer