Generational Differences in Nursing

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Chief Nursing Officer,
Memorial Hermann-Texas Medical Center

Memorial Hermann-TMC Campus

- Founded in 1925, Memorial Hermann was the first hospital to open in the world-renowned Texas Medical Center in Houston.
- Built on a long-term affiliation with The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth) Medical School, the Memorial Hermann – TMC Campus brings together a world-class team of clinicians, researchers and educators under one roof.
- The 865-bed Campus provides exceptional care in the areas of trauma, heart, neuroscience, orthopedics, pediatrics, women’s health, general surgery, organ transplantation, oncology and more.
- The Memorial Hermann – TMC Campus encompasses two hospitals and four renowned institutes including the McAllister Neurosciences Institute, the Heart & Vascular Institute, the Texas Trauma Institute and the Ironman Sports Medicine Institute - all offering the latest innovations, technology and treatment.
- In 1976, the hospital established Memorial Hermann Life Flight® – the first air ambulance service in Texas – which currently performs more than 3,000 annual missions with a fleet of six state-of-the-art helicopters.

The Challenge

“One of the great challenges facing any organization today, is to get all of its members to realize that to become the best team they must embrace the diversity within. Outstanding teamwork is critical to patient safety.”

Palm Healthcare Foundation conference, November 21, 2008
Consider…

William
Shatner
The Focus

- Current Nursing Workforce
- Generational Lessons
- Routine Practices
- Working Together
The Power of Four

Veterans 65-86 Yrs of Age Now
Born 1922-1943

Boomers 48-65 Yrs of Age Now
Born 1943-1960

Gen Xers 28-48 Yrs
Born 1961-1980

Millennials 8-28 Yrs
Born 1980-2000

We See the World Differently!!
The Flip Flop Flap

Chicago Tribune Headline (07/19/05)
“You wore flip-flops to the White House?”

Generational Inventory

• What generation are you?
• How many generations are in your unit/department?
• Are all of your units generationally diverse?
• What are the issues r/t generation that you see in your environment?
Does It Matter?

• Why learn more:
  – We have 4 generations working side-by-side in the work force today
  – People are at the heart of healthcare and what we do
  – The generational “gap” in values, styles, experience and attitude leads to misunderstanding and frustration
  – Good teamwork and communication is essential for patient outcomes/safety
  – Strategies for retention/recruitment that worked in the past may no longer apply

Interesting Factoid

Engagement supports financial stability. A 2006 Gallup poll estimates the cost of employee disengagement at $328 billion per year.

Attitudes of the Four

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vets</th>
<th>Boomers</th>
<th>Gen X</th>
<th>Millennials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WAR</td>
<td>Win a War WW I &amp; II Korea</td>
<td>Why a War? Vietnam &amp; Cold War</td>
<td>Watch a War Iran hostage Desert Storm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WORK</td>
<td>Obligation</td>
<td>Adventure</td>
<td>Challenge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICONS</td>
<td>Big Band</td>
<td>Rolling Stones</td>
<td>Madonna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOB</td>
<td>Stable Thorough Loyal Hardworking</td>
<td>Driven Want to please</td>
<td>Adaptable Independent Creative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Veteran Nurses

Formative Experiences
• WW I and WW II
• Roaring Twenties
• Great Depression
• Pearl Harbor
• Rationing
• Korean War
• Atomic Bomb

When Bomb Shelters Were All the Rage…

Interesting Factoid

“By 2050, people 65 and over will comprise an impressive 21 percent of the U.S. population.”
Veterans

- Loyal
- Self-sacrifice/Be heroic
- Control & Command
- Hold people accountable
- Value respect/courtesy
- Consider the common good
- Honor chain of command

Veteran Nurses

- How do they like to communicate?
  - Rotary phones
  - Memos
  - Formal interactions

Veteran Nurses

- What motivates them?
  - “Your experience is respected.”
  - Satisfaction in a job well done
  - No news is good news
Veteran Nurses

- How do they learn?
  - Individually
  - Traditional
  - Adhere to the rules
  - Structured environment

Veteran Nurses

- What are the challenges?
  - Work ethics
  - Technology

Veteran Nurses

- Managers who drive them crazy....
  - Seem too touchy feely
  - Are indecisive
  - Worry about making unpopular decisions
  - Use profanity and slang
  - Are disorganized
Consider that…

Actor George Burns won his first Oscar at age 80.

"Retirement at sixty-five is ridiculous. When I was sixty-five I still had pimples."
- George Burns


Boomers

Boomers Formative Experiences

- Cold War
- Civil Rights/Martin Luther King
- Space Race/John Glenn
- Assassinations
- Vietnam War
- Energy Crisis
- Watergate & the Nixon Administration
- First Transistor Radio
- First Heart Transplant
- Woodstock
- Dr. Spock
The Boomers

- Optimistic
- Collegial
- Workaholics
- Social reformers
- The ME generation
- Serious work ethic
- Competitive
- Be Anything you Want to Be

The Boomers

- How do they like to communicate?
  - In person
  - Love to have meetings
  - Team-oriented

The Boomers

- What motivates them?
  - “You are valued/needed”
  - Money
  - Title recognition
The Boomers

• How do they learn?
  – Feedback important
  – Empowerment
  – Reward for learning
  – Want to have a voice

• What are the challenges?
  – Clinical experience
  – Organizational experience
  – Mentor
  – No work/life balance

• Managers who drive them crazy...
  – Aren’t open to input
  – Are bureaucratic
  – Are brusque
  – Don’t show interest
  – Practice one-upmanship
Gen X Formative Experiences

• Roe vs. Wade
• Challenger Disaster
• The fall of the Berlin Wall
• Persian Gulf War
• AIDS
• The Clinton Administration
• Reagan Assassination Attempt
• Massive Corporate Lay Offs

Gen Xers

• Independent/Competent
• Heroes don’t exist
• Decisive
• Suspicious of authority
• Skeptical “Get Real”
• Technologically savvy
• Ambitious
• Crave work-life balance
Generation Xers

• How do they like to communicate?
  – Technology
  – Bottom line
  – Direct
  – Immediate
  – Always ask “why?”

Gen X

• What motivates them?
  – “Forget the rules…”
  – Do not like to be micromanaged
  – Recognition is based on merit
  – Rapid progress toward goals

Gen X

• How do they learn?
  – Seek opportunities for learning
  – Education is a way to “get there”
  – Technology
  – Like to challenge authority
Generations Xers

- What are the challenges?
  - Very fluid career
  - Independent
  - Extremism
  - Whatever

Gen X

- Managers who drive them crazy….
  - Micro-manage
  - Don’t walk the talk
  - Spend too much time on process and too little on results
  - Are flashy
  - Are bureaucratic
  - Schmooze

#1 Generation Xer
Formative Experiences

Millenials

- Internet
- Death of Princess Diana & Mother Teresa
- Globalization
- The Columbine school massacre
- The Oklahoma City bombing
- The Lewinsky scandal and subsequent impeachment trial of Bill Clinton
- The Rodney King riots
- The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001

Millennials or Net-Generation

- Hopeful/Collaborative
- You are special
- Determined “Achieve Now!”
- Polite
- Digital Natives/Connect 24/7
- Close to parents and grandparents
- Inquisitive
- Values Driven
- Enjoy Structure
- Anxious to advance career quickly

Millennials

How do they like to communicate?

- Technology
- Cellular phones
- Texting/instant messaging
- E-mail
- Blogs
Millennials

• What motivates them?
  – “You will work with other bright, creative people”
  – Use of technology
  – Flexible Scheduling
  – Meaningful work

Millennials

• How do they learn?
  – Coaching/mentoring
  – Extensive orientation
  – Personal feedback
  – Use of technology

Millennials

• What are the challenges?
  – Instant gratification
  – Can be cynical
  – Getting them involved
  – Earn to spend
Millenials

- Managers who drive them crazy...
  - Are cynical and sarcastic
  - Treat them as if they are too young to be valuable
  - Are threatened by their technical savvy
  - Are condescending
  - Are inconsistent & disorganized

Millenials have no idea....

- “Heeeere’s Johnny!” is a scary greeting from Jack Nicholson, not a warm welcome from Ed McMahon (who is Johnny Carson?).
- They never saw Roseanne Roseannadanna live on Saturday Night Live.
- They have done most of their search for the right college online.
- Aspirin has always been used to reduce the risk of a heart attack.
- Cher hasn’t aged a day.
Ideas about Career Paths...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Path/Goals</th>
<th>Veterans</th>
<th>Baby Boomers</th>
<th>Generation X</th>
<th>Millennial</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Desire to build a legacy</td>
<td>Job changing has stigma</td>
<td>Want to build a stellar career</td>
<td>“Job changing puts you behind”</td>
<td>“Build a portable career”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job changing puts you behind</td>
<td></td>
<td>“Job changing is necessary”</td>
<td></td>
<td>“Doesn’t need to be a straight line”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finding Balance...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is balance?</th>
<th>Veterans</th>
<th>Boomers</th>
<th>Xers</th>
<th>Millennials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support me in shifting the balance</td>
<td></td>
<td>Help me balance everything else and find meaning myself.</td>
<td>Give me balance now, not when I am 65.</td>
<td>Work isn’t everything, flexibility to balance my activities is.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Strategies for Feedback & Communication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feedback Needs</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Veterans</td>
<td>Strong, silent, Truthful feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby Boomers</td>
<td>People should open up Feedback on a regular basis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen-X</td>
<td>Instantaneous, immediate feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millennials</td>
<td>Who knows?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

And feedback can be a challenge...

It Could Be Worse...

What are meaningful rewards?

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Intrinsic Rewards</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Veterans</td>
<td>“Satisfaction of a job well done”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby Boomers</td>
<td>“Money, title, recognition”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen-X</td>
<td>“Freedom”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millennials</td>
<td>“Work that has meaning”</td>
</tr>
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Challenges for Hospitals

Typical hospital is the antithesis of what the younger workforce is looking for:

- Hierarchical
- Old-fashioned
- Lagging in information technology
- Older workforce

A word about social networking…

Interesting Factoid

- A 103-year-old woman from the U.K., Lillian Lowe, is currently the oldest Facebook user.
- According to reports she uses her iPad to keep in touch with her 7 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren.
According to the Chronicle of Higher Education

• By age 21, today’s college students will have spent:
  – 10,000 hrs playing video games
  – Sent/rec’d 200,000 e-mails
  – 20,000 hrs watching television
  – 10,000 hrs on a cell phone
  – Under 5,000 hrs reading

Trends to Watch with our Millennial Nurses

• Strong interest in volunteerism

• Choosing nursing at a much younger age than Gen X

• Returning to complete their BSN immediately after finishing ADN

• Interested in Nursing Leadership

Managing Millennials

• Provide structure
• Provide leadership/guidance
• Encourage the “can do” attitude
• Encourage them to join teams/councils
• Listen
• Need challenge, boring is bad
• Multi-taskers
• Technology oriented
• Networking
• Work-life balance
• Fun workplace
“If I were given the opportunity to present a gift to the next generation, it would be the ability for each individual to learn to laugh at himself.”

- Charles M. Schultz