

Investigate the following for the Baby Boomer generation:

Birth years

The standard years ascribed to the Baby Boomer generation are individuals born between 1946-1964.¹ It's important to note that these years may slightly vary by geography.² However, 1946-1964 is what is used in research.¹

Percentage in the US workforce

Baby Boomers make up ~15% of the US workforce as of the second quarter in 2024.³

Interestingly, the *Current Population Survey* reported that ill-health and physical disability are the main reason Baby Boomers who would *like* to work, cannot work.³

Career goals

Baby Boomers strive to make a difference in their organizations.⁴ Additionally, they like challenges and strive to “climb the ladder” to success within their organizations.⁴ Baby Boomers strive for excellence, visibility, and financial stability while working towards obtaining positions at the highest levels within the organization.⁴ They strive to contribute to their organizations, strive for recognition, and also strive to “stand out” amongst their peers.⁴

Attitude toward technology

Baby Boomers have continuously adapted to technology throughout their entire careers and aren't intimidated or overwhelmed by technology – new or old.⁵ Additionally, they seem to be optimistic about emerging technology and are ready to embrace it.⁵ Baby Boomers are more likely to exhibit skepticism when it comes to AI, but they do recognize how technology can improve or streamline certain processes for the organization.⁵

Attitude toward career

Baby boomers are optimistic, have a strong work ethic, are continuous learners, desire quality work, and sometimes question authority.⁶ Due to their strong work ethic, Baby Boomers experience limited work-family balance and are very involved and loyal to their organizations.⁶

Preferred communication media

Preferred communication media include in-person presentations, in-person meetings or phone calls as these forms of auditory interactions require some sort of personal connection that conveys commitment, credibility, and sincerity.^{7,8} Additionally, Baby Boomers prefer direct and decisive communication.⁸

Preferred communication style

The preferred communication style for Baby Boomers is in-person auditory interactions (i.e. in-person presentations, in-person meetings or phone calls).⁷

Benefits of the generation to the workforce

Baby Boomers bring vast knowledge, experience and expertise that has been acquired over the several years of working, as they are an older demographic compared to their peers.⁹ The knowledge, skills, and expertise cannot easily be replaced as it has taken literally *years* in the workforce to gain such knowledge and skill.⁹

Challenges of the generation to the workforce

Challenges of Baby Boomers in the workforce may include communicating with other generations as Baby Boomers prefer in-person meetings, detailed and direct communication, detailed and direct emails whereas younger generations are less formal and may prefer messaging or more informal language and/or communication.^{7,8,10} This may all lead to frustration and misunderstanding amongst Baby Boomers and younger employees.¹⁰ Additionally, Baby

Boomers prefer formal, structured training sessions whereas younger generations may prefer self-directed or online learning.¹⁰

Describe leadership strategies that will be used if you are to implement a new project with your group. Point out any actions that must be taken into account for generational differences. What do you do differently if you have a mixed group with multigeneration?

If I needed to implement a new project with a group of employees, I would gather all employees together for a team meeting and explain to them *what* the project is, *why* we need to complete the project, and receive employee feedback. What do the employees think will work, what do they think won't work, and why? I'd ask them to work amongst themselves to divide project responsibilities (if possible). If they can't divide the work up evenly, or disagree on who should do what, then I as the manager would assign project responsibilities. But either way, listening to the employees, empowering them with a choice to set their goals and areas of the project they want to work on, and explaining *why* we need to complete this project should help rally the varying generations to work together.⁶ Additionally, I would immediately address performance issues by providing direct, swift feedback.⁶

Though it is important to understand key motivators for each generation, it is important for the manager to know how their employees, *as individuals*, learn, prefer to receive information, communicate, and work with others.⁶

Lastly, if I had a mixed multigenerational group that worked for me, I'd ensure plenty of "team building" activities are scheduled so the employees can get to know one other, better understand how one another thinks and operates, and allow them time to get comfortable communicating with one another. This would give the employees the opportunity to better see one another as *humans* vice "that old guy" or "that annoying young kid."

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