



## Law Enforcement Leadership

“What Generation Y Brings to Law Enforcement and How Police Agencies Can Benefit”

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### Objective Today – To Answer these Questions

- What is Gen Y?
- What skills and traits do members of Gen Y bring to law enforcement?
- How can these traits be harnessed for the benefit of law enforcement and public safety?
- What can my agency do?

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## Table Top Exercise

- Individually - Map the generations in your agency.
- Individually – List current generational issues or problems/experienced at your agency
- At your table– Discuss problems/issues, report top three to class

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## Why is this important?

- First time in history four generations are in the workplace
- Each generation has unique and *conflicting* characteristics, values and approaches
- 75% of employees express being “disengaged” from their jobs costing businesses \$300 billion a year in lost productivity
- Competition between private and public sectors
- Staffing changes and shortages could affect public safety and the well being of law enforcement officers
- By 2020 most police officers will be members of Gen Y

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## Disclaimers & Some Words of Caution

- This is not a trend – it’s just the way it is.
- Demographers, researchers & trainers disagree about specific time breaks in generations, characteristics and values.
  - So will you.
- One generation is not more “right” or “correct” than another.
- Generational studies are *generalizations*
- This information is based on American influences in the most generic way possible.

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## Generation: A Concept

"A generation is composed of people whose common location in history lends them a collective persona."

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- Icons – people, places or things that become reference points for a generation

- Conditions – are the forces at work in the environment as each generation comes of age

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The USS ARIZONA burning after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. December 7, 1941. Photo: National Archives

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Civil Rights March on Washington. August 28, 1963.  
Photo: Library of Congress

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Space Shuttle Challenger STS-51L Explosion.  
January 21, 1986. Photo: NASA

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Columbine High School Incident. April 20, 1999.  
Source: Jefferson County, Colorado Sheriff's Office.

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## Generational Assumptions:

- Each generation assumes the following generations will want what they have and will share their same definition of “success”
- Each generation then believes the following generations should “pay their dues” the same way to earn that success
- With a few exceptions, each generation thinks the following generation has had it much easier

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## Who are we talking about?

Generational Definitions

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## Today's Population by Birth Years

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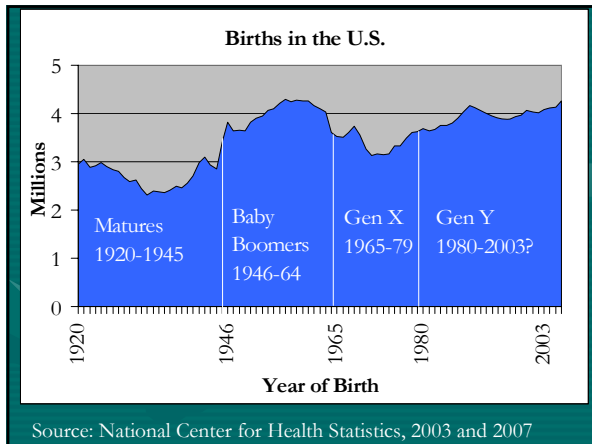
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### What are the Generations?

- Matures (Traditionalist) : 1920-1945  
64-89 years old
- Baby Boomers: 1946-1964  
45-63 years old  
(\*1960-1965 A LOST Generation?)
- Generation X: 1965-1979  
30-44 years old
- Gen Y (Millennial) : 1980-probably 2003  
29 and younger

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### Each Generation

Major Influences  
Characteristics  
Some Facts

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## Matures: Major Influences

- The Great Depression
- WWII & Korean War
- Golden Age of Radio
- The Rise of Labor Unions
- New Deal
- GI Bill
- Silver Screen/ Studio Era
- Social Security

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## Matures: Characteristics

- Duty, honor, country, patriotism
- Dedication, sacrifice
- Conformity, unity – “We First”
- Patience
- Hard, hard times, then prosperity
- Doing a good job is most important
- Age = Seniority
- Faithful & believing in large institutions
- Fiscally conservative

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## *Some Facts about Matures*

- Only 1 in 5 has a PC in their home and 8.8% have internet access
- They have experienced fewer (per capita) on-the-job accidents
- They are the most affluent elderly population in U.S. history and buy 1/4 of all toys sold in the U.S.
- 50% of Mature men have served in the military

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## Baby Boomers: Major Influences

- McCarthy Hearings
- Television, Elvis, and Rock & Roll
- Kennedy Presidency
- Civil Rights Movement
- Kennedy (John, Bobby) & King Assassinations
- Vietnam War
- Woodstock, "Free love," & birth control
- Moon Landing
- Women's Rights Movement
- Credit Cards

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## Baby Boomers: Characteristics

- Work ethic = Worth ethic<sup>2</sup>
- Competitive
- Defined by their job
- Success is largely visible – trophies, plaques, lifestyle elements
- Optimistic, Politically Adept
- Consumers, Liberal Spenders
- Personal Development

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## Facts about Boomers

- Since Boomers have joined the workforce, the average time spent on the job has increased by 1 full month.
- Boomers will need to triple their rate of saving to avoid a substantial decline in their standard of living upon retirement. (Don't worry, they'll do it or simply redefine it.)
- Baby Boomers were the majority of Harley-Davidson motorcycle buyers through the mid-90s to mid-00s.

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## Generation X: Major Influences

- Tripling Divorce Rate, “Latch Key kids”
- Video games, Cable TV & MTV
- Corporate Downsizing
- Computers
- Reagan Red
- HIV/AIDS
- Challenger Explosion
- Persian Gulf War

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## Generation X: Characteristics

- National institutions came into question
- “This company never promised you anything.”  
Layoffs – end of lifelong employment
- No common heroes
- Suspicious of Boomers values
- Raised as their parent’s “friends”
- Had to learn to fend for themselves
- Very self-reliant & resourceful
- Cynical, skeptical and pessimistic
- Fiscally conservative

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## *Some Facts about Generation X*

- Xers are the first generation in U.S. history that will likely be unable to replicate their parent’s lifestyle.
- Because of their numbers & juxtaposition between Boomers and Gen Y, their time of power and influence may be short.
- Autonomy, flexible schedules & time off are top reasons Xers give for staying with an employer.

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## Gen Y: Major Influences

- Desert Storm
- “Girls” Movement
- Technology & information driven
- Google, Web, Texting, Facebook
- School Yard Violence
- Clinton/Lewinsky scandal
- Corporate & Political corruption as a way of life

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## Gen Y: Characteristics

- Optimistic, Confident, “Big Thinkers”
- Individualistic yet group oriented
- Difficulty focusing on “non-stimulating stuff”
- Fearless & civic minded
- Busy, multi-taskers, fast thinking & talking
- Like “X,” raised as their parent’s friends
- Acknowledge and admire *select* authorities
- Think Matures are cool! Parents, too
- Ambitious, yet may appear aimless
- Desire to be like peers, but with a unique twist

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## Some Facts about Gen Y

- 9 out of 10 are satisfied with their relationship with their parents (Parental advocacy continues into adulthood)
- 3 times more likely to text than call
- About 36% have tattoos and 30% have body piercing
- Consume 31 hours of media within a 24 hour period
- 10,000+ hours gaming by age 19

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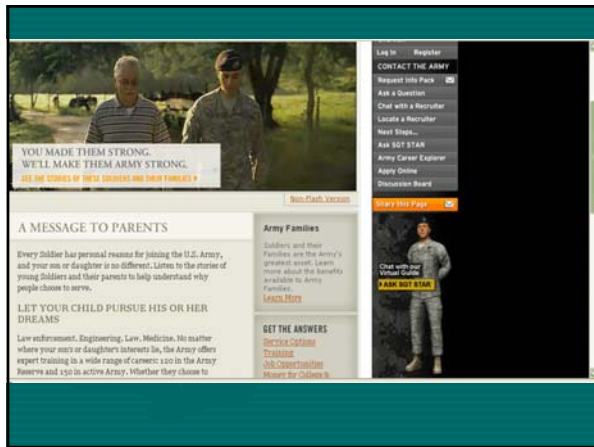
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**Break Time**  
Please return in 10 minutes

- While on your break, please think about the positive aspects of having four generations in your workplace.
- Be prepared to discuss your thoughts when we return...

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## Table Top Exercise

- At your table –Discuss with the other group members some of the positive aspects of having four generations in your workplace.
- Spokesperson - Report to the class three positive aspects

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## What Gen Y Brings To LE

*Attitudes and Ambitions that Characterize Gen Y*

Work Ethic  
Technology  
Lifetime Priorities

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## Work Ethic

- Matures – defined by the punch time clock; respect authority, hard work
- Boomers – workaholics; work ethic and worth ethic - same thing
- Gen X – get it done move on; “ what does it matter when I work, as long as I get it done.” Self-reliant, want structure and direction

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## Gen Y Work Ethic -no longer defined by 50+ hour workweek

- Not interested in overtime or concerned with face time
- Productive by nature of their skills: energetic, enthusiastic and tech savvy
- Work is a gig. Finish up and go to the next gig
- Can become dissatisfied when caught in slow moving bureaucracy or hierarchy
- Seek balance – it's not all about the promotion

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## Technology

- Matures – Massive Structures like the Hoover Dam
- Boomers – Microwave: things that make life easier
- Gen X – Cell phones, palm

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## Gen Y and Technology

- Easy competence in using technologies and mastering new ones
- Always had technology
- Part of life – ethereal
- Part of who they are
- Use technology to connect with others (unlike Gen X)
- Grew up gaming

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## Lifetime Priorities... Work is

- Matures – an obligation; keep work and life separate
- Boomers – who they are; no balance “live to work”
- Gen X – defined contract; “work to live”

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## Gen Y - Priorities

- Work is a means to an end
- But while I do it I need to change the world and be CEO by Friday
- Need to be engaged – constantly
- Need to be learning – constantly
- Leads to loyalty

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## Potential Gaps & Disconnects

Respect for authority  
Skill building  
Rewards/Recognition

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## Viewing Authority

- Matures – Based largely on seniority and tenure
- Boomers – Similar values to the *Matures*; They've earned it
- Gen X – Authority figures deserve skepticism & testing
- Gen Y – Test, but search & seek out

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## Skill Building

- Matures: Training happens on the job. New skills benefit the company
- Boomers: An ingredient to being successful, but not as important as work ethic
- Gen X: My next job will come from my amassed skills; work ethic important, but not as much as my skills
- Gen Y: Training and new skills are important, and I want them through mentoring

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## Rewards/Recognition

- Matures: subtle, private recognition
- Boomers: attention, money, promotion & public recognition
- Gen X: time off
- Gen Y: recognition from their heroes

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## Closing the Gap

- LE different because of the prior commitment involved (advantage for LE)
- We as leadership need to speak their language and learn to understand them
- Leadership vs. Management
- Success depends on leadership

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## What Attracts Gen Y to LE?

- Agency Reputation...  
...from outside sources (other LE officers, agencies, and the public)
- Pay (but this is only a bonus at first)
- Opportunity within organization
  - “I wanted to work some place where I could stay AND have options”

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## Dislikes of Gen Y

- Monotony
- Strict or “By the book” leaders
- Leaders I don’t respect...
  - “You have to respect the stripes, but I really only respect the individual”
  - “Camaraderie and personal relationships go a long way”
  - “I want leaders who are in the field. They must have been a good cop to get where they are, but I have never saw that”

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**Break Time**  
**Please return in 10 minutes**

- Be thinking about strategies for attracting and retaining members of Gen Y

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**Exercise:**  
**What Can LE Agencies Do?**

- As a group – Discuss and identify ideas for attracting and retaining members of Gen Y (there are no right or wrong answers here)
- Spokesperson – Report two ideas from your group.

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**What Can My Agency Do?**

Improve your agency reputation  
Develop your leaders

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## Improve Your Agency Reputation

Exposure to LE community:

- Does your agency participate in candidate training?
- Task force participation
- Positive media exposure
- Positive word of mouth: Do your officers represent your agency to others in a positive light?
- Read your organizational climate

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## Examples of What to Do

Exposure to the public

- Professional presentation and appearance of officers.
- Media attention:
  - Community newspapers
  - Radio programs
  - Get off the beaten path...

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## Examples of What to Do

Media attention continued:

- Actively recruit for your agency. Discuss your minimum qualifications
- Department website – Be creative
- Do you have officers teaching at the high school and college level (mentoring)?
- Research – What is your agency reputation within the community (be scientific)?

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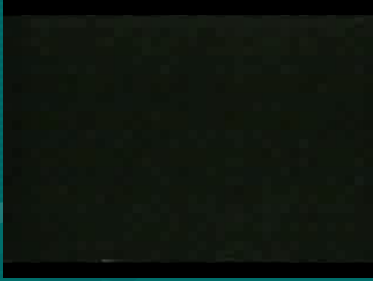
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## Cop For A Day



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## Examples of What to Do

Develop current and future leaders

- Mentoring programs
- Education on generational/diversity issues
- Leadership courses
- Offer/encourage relevant training

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## Members of Gen Y want...

- To work in teams
- To make a difference
- Leaders with honesty and integrity
- Learning opportunities and a career plan
- Collegial work environments
- Some fun at work
- To be treated respectfully
- Some flexibility to pursue activities outside work
- Mentoring

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## Tips for Leadership

- Acknowledge work strengths without labeling
- Respect & reinforce different work styles
- Explain your expectations, and compromise
- Individualize approaches if possible
- Mentor new workers with experienced staff
- Give more autonomy
- Solicit feedback

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## QUESTIONS?

Sgt. Drew Sanders  
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