



DESIGNING STRATEGIES®

Business Strategies for the Design Industry

A Maurer Consulting Group Publication

Volume 4 • Issue 15 •

March/April 2007

Did you ever have an advertisement catch your eye, deliver its message on the spot then stick in your mind long after you've closed the magazine or turned off the television? Ads like this make marketing folks beam. These are the things that make great advertising.

Just the other day, a Toshiba copier ad caught my eye. The ad features a gray haired Baby Boomer CFO, neatly attired in a navy pinstriped three-piece suit and wing tips. He was shown hand-in-hand with a much younger, CIO with shoulder length hair, dressed in jeans, an untucked pullover, sandals and a string of beads around his neck. The Gen-X IT guy could easily have been the CFO in his younger, 'hippier' years; long hair, love beads and all. The text beneath their picture read: "CFO & CIO -- So happy together."

Visualize



The message was about copiers meeting different levels of expectations. To me, it showed that regardless of the different generations in the workplace, they could peacefully coexist. How do you address the generational differences of your workforce? Are you still stuck to the old model of time clocks and 40-hour workweeks? Still operating on the old military chain of command model where upper management seldom set eyes on, much less talks to the underlings? Do your managers operate under the premise that they say 'Jump!' and employees are expected to say "How high?" or better yet, just shut up and do it?

Analyze

Bob Dylan sang: "The Times They Are A Changing." Younger, very talented people are at your doorstep hoping to fill vacancies made as Baby Boomers and Traditionals move to retirement. Most Boomers don't understand Gen-X and Gen-Y candidates, or know how to handle them. And, truth be told, these new entrants into the workforce aren't sure what to do with you, or your management style, or your expectations, either. The times are well beyond 'changing', they have changed. Hopefully you noticed and decided to do something about it.

Review how you are recruiting these different groups. Each generation has different expectations, from compensation and benefits packages to style of work, from corporate culture to scheduling and opportunities for advancement. Generation X will not accept what was good for the Baby Boomer generation, nor will Generation Y. Once you've figured out Generation X, get to work on Gen-Y. Discover what makes each group tick and develop strategies to accommodate their wants and needs. Think of it like feeding plants. Provide a quality, fertile atmosphere that supports growth, nourish them regularly with feedback and praise, and prop them up when necessary. This care will result in strong, productive employees upon whom you can base the growth and success of your firm. The positive results will be well worth your effort.

Strategize



Maurer On The Move

Want to learn more about the generations as clients and employees? See below for personal appearances discussing these topics. If you have questions about an event or topic, contact Terri at:

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March 20th

"Designing For The Generations"
Denver Merchandise Mart

May 10th

"Branding: It's Not Just for Cattle and Major Corporations"
NWSID - Portland, Oregon

June 11th

Generations In The Workplace
NEOCON 'Building Show'

June 12th

The Changing Marketplace: Selling to the Generations
NEOCON 'Office Expo by OFDA'

"If You Build It They Will Come"

Remember that memorable line in the Kevin Costner movie, 'Field of Dreams'? "If you build it, they will come." Unfortunately, that is not the rule of the workplace. Designing a single strategy that will appeal to employees of all ages isn't going to work. Take a look at what Lynne C. Lancaster and David Stillman said in their book [When Generations Collide](#) about generations and career goals.

Traditionals: Build a legacy

Baby Boomers: Build a stellar career

Generation X: Build a portable career

Generation Y: Build parallel careers

How could anyone hope to meet all those different goals with one basic strategy? Thinking that one size can fit all is clearly no longer the case.

Visualize - Analyze - Strategize... Plan for success!