

UNDERSTANDING GENERATIONAL DIVERSITY

3-2-1 DISCUSSION GUIDE

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3 TAKE-HOME MESSAGES

Review these messages together.

Generations have common traits because they have shared experiences and reference points that help shape their worldview.

Every generation has something to teach and something to learn. We all have experiences and knowledge to share.
(Dr. Megan Gerhardt)

Appreciate generational differences and use them to help improve communication between generations in the workplace. However, it is important to recognize everyone as an individual and not stereotype them based on their generation.

2 QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

Question for **team discussion**

Share your thoughts with your team.

How do generational differences play a role in our communication or workplace challenges?

Question for **self-reflection**

No need to share your answer or thoughts with anyone.

How can I embrace generational diversity and treat everyone as an individual, while still appreciating the unique qualities that each generation brings to the table?

1 ACTION TO TAKE AS A TEAM AND ONE TO TAKE AS A JOURNEYIST

Make a commitment together as a team to implement at least one of the suggestions below. This will be your team behavior change.

- Establish peer mentoring programs to leverage the skills of different generations and individuals. Emphasize that learning is expected from older to younger generations as well as from younger to older generations.
- Discuss communication styles as a team. What forms of communication should be used when? How formal or informal should they be?
- Ask your colleagues to submit one thing they think individuals of an older generation and one thing individuals of a younger generation should know that is important to veterinary workplaces. Read these insights at your next staff meeting and discuss.

Make a commitment as an individual to follow through on at least one of these suggestions (this can be private).

- Identify someone in your life from a different generation and get to know them a little better. Ask questions about their life experiences and how they see the world.
- Read about what it was like to grow up in a time that was different from yours. Imagine if you had grown up under those conditions. Do you think you would be the same person you are now?
- Check out the Time.com blog post, “What To Know When Five Generations Share an Office,” for insightful tips on working in a multigenerational workplace.

We hope that after the meeting, you will be inspired to explore generational diversity in greater depth, either as a team or individually. We invite everyone to check out Dr. Rodems’ recommended resources in the [Topic Overview](#).

