

Soft Skills, Leadership, and Generational Communications

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Presenter:

- Mike Powers, Clinical Engineering Director at Intermountain Health
- Intermountain is the 8th largest non-profit hospital system in the US, with 33 hospitals and over 500 clinics, and over 200k devices.
- Our territory covers the states of Nevada, Utah, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, and with subsidiaries in Kansas, New Mexico, Arizona, and soon to be New Hampshire
- My portfolio is Field Service Operations: Dialysis, CP, Lab, Imaging, Medical Group, & 4 Rural hospitals with no shop

Let's Cover:

- Soft Skills – Recruiting them, and Developing them
- Leadership / Management
- Generational Differences / Communication

Soft Skills – Why?

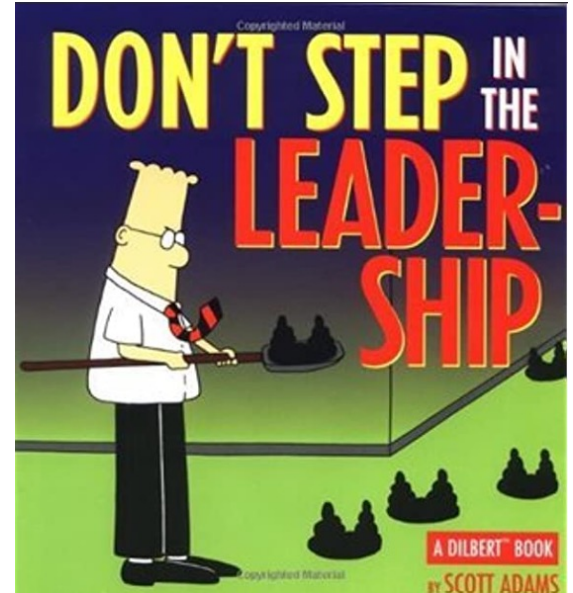
- Planning and partnering with the patient care team
- Marketing!

Soft Skills – How?

- Recruiting – ask more “tell me about a time” questions, and take notes on the way the answer flows. When setting up your interview evaluations, have a column be devoted to communication style and skills. Email follow up, Look you in the eye to talk, Speak clearly ... all the things you would expect
- Developing – training and feedback, classes like “crucial conversations” and emulating effective communication skills as a leader.

Leadership / Mgmt

- Leadership – you lead people
- Management – you manage things
- Communicate.
- Expectations and Frustration.
- Servant Leadership – Robert Greenleaf
 - Lead like a riverbed.
 - Support, guide, avoid obstacles.
 - You work for the individual contributor, not the other way around



“Don't step in the Leadership” is a copyrighted book by Scott Adams

Discovering the Possibilities

Generations:

- Think about your day. Do you wake up and go to the gym? What time do you go to work? Do you wear a tie every day, even though you're not necessarily required to? What about your parents? If you have them, what about your children? Do you see maybe each set of folks has different answers to these questions?
- in 2024: 12,000 people will turn 65 daily.
- Silver Tsunami – 50% of 2020 workforce retired by 2025
- Issues like Procedures and Process arise
- Further Issues on how to Communicate percolate to the surface.

Generations at Work

- Five generations are in the workforce:
 - Traditionalist (76 to 99 years old).
 - Baby Boomer (57 to 75 years old).
 - Generation X (41 to 56 years old).
 - Millennial (26 to 40 years old).
 - Generation Z (25 years old and younger).

<https://www.shrm.org/topics-tools/news/generational-mindsets-affect-workforce>

Generations & Work Organizations

- Traditionalists tend to be loyal to organizations, often having long-term commitment and see a career as an equaling opportunity
- Baby Boomers tend to be loyal to the team, adding value by going the extra mile, and equate career as self worth
- Gen X are often loyal to their manager, and may exceed expectations and deliver results but perceive career as just a part of their identity
- Millennials tend to be loyal to colleagues, for example co-workers that quit on the same day, they expect equitable treatment and see their careers as an opportunity to add value and contribute
- Gen Z tend to be loyal to the experience and are invested in their careers, if that is a way in which they can grow.

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Discovering the Possibilities

Generations & Authority

- Traditionalists tend to respect authority and a hierarchical system, where seniority and job titles are valued. “Tell me what I should do.”
- Baby Boomers challenge authority (1969 Woodstock?) and desire flat organizations and democracy. “Let me show you what I can do”
- Gen X may be unimpressed by authority and expect their own competence and skills to be respected. “Tell me what you can do for me”
- Millennials respect authority figures who demonstrate competence. “Show me what you can do for me right now.”
- Gen Z respect process and follow direction but want to be engaged. Mgmt should avoid 1 way conversations. “What can we do together?”

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Generations Work Styles

- Traditionalists tend to be linear and follow the rules – change is needed when something is broken.
- Baby Boomers like structured organizations, but challenge rules and are cautious around change
- Gen X tend to be flexible, want to change the rules and see change as an opportunity
- Millennials expect to create the rules with change equaling improvement
- Gen Z are agile and seek balanced rules, seeing change as just part of reality

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Generations Communication

- Keep in mind that the ideas expressed in the next few paragraphs are stereotypes. Each person is an individual. However, the technology that people grow up with shapes the channels of communication that they prefer. For instance, Baby Boomers started their careers typing up formal letters. So texting goes contrary to what is comfortable for them. This group prefers face-to-face meetings. Phone calls (the audio ones) are also very comfortable for them and common. Studies show that over 93% of this generation uses email consistently as well.
- However, the more technological the communication channel, the more resistant to the channel they are. Video meeting apps like Zoom have changed the business world. During the Covid Pandemic, this generation was forced to embrace this type of technology. However, they totally missed out on many of the Social Media platforms, texting, video phone calls, and chatting.
- The Baby Boomers are most resistant to chatting apps like Slack and Microsoft Teams.

[Differences Between Generations and Style of Communication | \(leadersinstitute.com\)](https://www.leadersinstitute.com)

Generations Communication

- Because a phone call (if you get the other party on the line,) is instantaneous, Generation X prefers this channel for instant response. However, this generation came of age in the era of email, so they use this method most often. So if you are communicating with a Generation X person and you don't answer your phone, get ready for another call fairly quickly. They also freak out when they accidentally FaceTime someone.
- If miscommunication occurs because of an email, the Generation X member will likely pick up the phone and call. If that doesn't work, he or she will come to visit the other party in person.
- Generation X also embraced the video meeting era fairly well. But just like with the Baby Boomers, they prefer a scheduled video meeting versus a spontaneous FaceTime call. This generation embraced the start of social media. However, as social media evolved, they lost interest.

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Generations Communication

- Millennials embraced texting and chatting. They also invented the chatting apps that companies use today. This generation also recently surpassed the Baby Boomers in size. (Sorry Baby Boomers. Neither of these generations is adding more members currently.) So Millennials are the people who will be leading communication in the not-so-distant future. However, this generation will need to realize that they are the odd man out so to speak.
- For instance, they are the only generation in the workplace who rate chatting and chatting apps in the top three communication channels. They are also the only generation who doesn't prefer in-person communication in the top three channels.
- The generation acknowledges the value of video meetings. However, they often keep their cameras off during the meeting and use the chat window instead of just speaking up.

[Differences Between Generations and Style of Communication | \(leadersinstitute.com\)](https://www.leadersinstitute.com/differences-between-generations-and-style-of-communication)

Generations Communication

- The Baby Boomers and Generation Z have very similar preferences in communication channels. Gen Z likes face-to-face meetings at work and video calls with their friends. By the way, this was not in the research, but I'm assuming these preferences are mainly because the people they communicate with at work don't like video calls (yet).
- The main difference between the Baby Boomers and Gen Z is just the technology. Baby Boomers just aren't comfortable with FaceTime, so they stick with the tried and true audio phone call.

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Communication

- Don't overthink it. Start from the perspective that all employees want to do well and help the company. That perspective will lay a strong foundation for building relationships. When you're confident everyone on staff wants to succeed, team members will be eager to improve communication and work together.
- Consider communicating in a way that is preferred by the audience
- Perhaps determine the method needed for the outcome desired
- Be open to change, if miscommunication occurs, try something different.

[How to Communicate With a Multigenerational Workforce \(businessnewsdaily.com\)](https://www.businessnewsdaily.com)

Wrap Up

- Soft Skills
- Leadership
- Communicating with Generations

Questions?

Discovering the Possibilities

Thanks for attending

Presented by: Mike Powers



Discovering the Possibilities