

Coping with Generations in the Workplace

We've all read about the four generations in the workplace and know how many challenges arise from having them work side by side. Indeed, there are basic differences between each generation and good management strategies for how to motivate each to be their best in the workplace.

It's good to remember that understanding management techniques that are effective across all generations is just as important as managing the differences between them. Practicing these techniques encourages the best performance from all workers. In short, they are:

- **Building a culture of respect:** People of all ages want to be respected. Consider how you speak to those you work with and remember the golden rule of treating others as you would like them to treat you.
- **Trusting workers to give their best:** Most people want to do their best on the job. Assume the best and remember that most problems stem from ineffective processes and communication gaps rather than from untrustworthy people.
- **Appreciating workers for their efforts:** Even though people are paid to work, it is important to thank them for a job well done. This is a time when even the small stuff is important. The best "thank you" is one that includes why the work was good. For example, "thanks for taking extra time with that customer – it made a difference to him."
- **Acknowledging and celebrating successes:** It's easy to get busy and move right from project to project. But when successes have been made, take time to celebrate them. This makes work more fun and helps everyone remember the purpose for working so hard.
- **Providing flexibility where possible:** Is there some flexibility your workplace could offer? Flexible lunch times? A late start option? The option to eat outdoors? Working from home sometimes? With all the juggling people have to do to balance personal and professional responsibilities, flexibility can be an appreciated benefit.
- **Discussing professional goals:** Talk with workers about their goals. This will help them feel understood and might lead to changes in the workplace that could help them reach their goals and enjoy success.
- **Building on strengths:** Focus on workers' strengths and consider how they can be leveraged to enhance work performance. Just the process of detailing strengths helps people to feel more appreciated and valued on the job.



Follow these practices and you will surely achieve success. At First Sun we offer free podcasts, manager training and a web-based PowerPoint on this very subject. We even have half and full day training in which our seasoned Business Consultants help organizations harness the potential inherent in this diverse workforce mix with services such as teambuilding, succession planning, generations in the workplace presentations and much more. We also provide interactive training to help managers and workers understand policies and help prevent workplace violence. If you want to know more about how to achieve this in your workplace, give us a call toll free at **800-968-8143** or in Greater Columbia at **803-376-2668**.