



A choice and a Generational preference

It is indeed a privilege and an opportunity I do not take lightly to be reaching out to young professionals and the future generations through this medium. As I write in the following weeks and months, I'll be focussing on people issues in the workplace, our society, and in life in general, and I would be aiming mostly at an audience made up of the age groups known as Generation Y or the Millennials, and the Generation 2020.

I'm not by any means blotting out my contemporaries in the Baby Boomers and the Xers Generations. I have only learned over time that my scarce resource of time is far better spent sharing gainful knowledge with, and grooming the younger generations. However, I have testimonies of some of my contemporaries who have ignored my snub, listened attentively in my classes or while working with me and we have mutually beneficial experiences to show for it.



Reasons for my generational preference are many and today's discussion would be to examine some of those reasons based on their strengths and peculiarities.

Just a quick generational summary – before the baby boomers generation is the traditionalists, people born before 1946. They are the veterans. They have seen it all. We still have a few of them in the workplace. The baby boomers are those born between 1946 and 1964. This is my generation. The Americans refer to this generation as the Baby Boom, because of the “extra seventeen million babies born during that period relative to previous census figures”. Generation X or Xers for short are those guys born between 1965 and 1976. The Xers are the children of the younger traditionalists and the older boomers.

Next follows my favourite generation and most dynamic so far. They were born in a period loosely put between 1977 and 1997. As characteristic of these individuals, they probably have the most appellations – Generation Y, the Millennials, Nexters, Generation www, the Digital Generation, Generation E, Echo Boomers (because they are the children of baby Net Generation. They themselves as the Non-the Nothing-Is-Sacred the Feel-Good Do-or-Die Generation, Identity Generation and them later. Generation those born after 1997. They are still evolving.



You may want to ask me why not pay attention to my generation? My answer is simple. This column is about leaving a legacy, it is about motivating those who still have enough energy left in them and are willing to play to their strength. Why am I not motivated by my generation? My experience has shown that both in the corporate setting and in the fellowship, my generation thinks they have seen it all, they think they know what you are about to say, they want you to say whatever and quit the stage, etc. But the Millennials are hungry for knowledge - they want to ask questions, they want answers, they are asking what happened if when the older generations went to the University they lived like kings, how come the Millennials are living like paupers in the same schools? How come many pages of so many library books are missing?

This is a generation with so much energy that working with them in the office, in NGOs, and in the church is a pleasure and a very rewarding experience. One other encouraging factor is whether we like it or not, this is the generation we would hand over to ultimately in all facet of human endeavour. Better put, these are the ones that would take over. A generation shaped by parental excesses, computers and dramatic technological advances. One of the most frequently reported characteristics of the Millennials is their comfort with technology. They value team work and collective action. They embrace diversity. Furthermore, they seek flexibility and they desire a more balanced life. They are multi-taskers. They are the most highly educated generation. They also value training. They have also been characterized as demanding and as the most confident generation. What then should be our attitude toward this generation? I have seen people being impatient with this generation, wondering which school produced them or why they can't seem to act with the same decorum as the generations before them or how come they don't fit in automatically into the

corporate world, or blaming all problems on the poor quality of education received by this generation.

You are of this blessed generation and you are out there or you are a parent or you are privileged to be associated in any way to one in the Millennial Generation, all you need do is to look upward, discover already deposited reason and appropriate fullest, then go on generations before,



inward and look the enormous strength in this generation by the situation of their birth that strength to the to excel. As for the I encourage you to

watch out for the Millennials or Generation Ys in your midst, invest in them, grow them, theirs is the future. You have great talents among them. I have a few of them working with me and they take the load off me with idea generation, my power-point slides, excel, web design, updating my Linked-in, configuring my Mac, overseeing seamless presentations, etc. Millennials need nurturing, wherever and whenever you come across any. Do not talk down on them. This is the generation most primed to bring about the anticipated change. What they need is our support and encouragement.

An investment of any kind in any members of the Generations Y and 2020 is a worthy investment and you will surely reap the benefits in a massive manner.

Tribute: I would heavy heartedly today be closing with a tribute to celebrate a dear friend, colleague, benefactor and pastor, Michael Ajani Sobowale who until his passing unto glory recently at a youthful age of 42 years was the HR Director, West Africa, Glaxosmithkline. Our thoughts are with his wife, sister Omosola, children, Tofunmi, Nifemi and Pelumi. We love you Mike. You touched lives.

Till next week people, go out and touch a life for good.

Enjoy.

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