



## Mind the Gap: Managing and retaining your graduate entrants

Somehow Generation Y workers are different, and somehow we do have difficulty managing them, and somehow we also have difficulty in retaining them and maximising their performance. Why is this?

### Why and how Generation Y employees different?

They are different because of the environment in which they have been brought up:

From birth, their parents have cared for them and supported them with an intensity never previously seen.

In school they have been taught to present, debate, discuss and challenge throughout their school lives. It becomes the norm for them to challenge anything and everything.

They have been continually exposed to a celebrity and consumer society that teaches them that whatever they want, they can get it, and they can have it now.

They have been promised a fairer and more peaceful world and yet they have lived through; Rwanda, tsunamis, Aids and famine. They have watched Enron, and seen their parents made redundant whilst executive pay has soared.

They live in a MTV world where short, sharp, colourful and vibrant scenes are the norm and where technology is a dominant feature.

As a result we have created a generation which thinks independently, speaks freely, believes it has a right to an opinion and which seeks immediate gratification.

### What does this mean they expect as employees?

Their life experiences have created habits and expectations which they bring into the workplace.

**The workplace environment** - they expect something more visually stimulating than previous generations; more colourful and more modern.

**Relationships** – they seek a strong social environment which fosters team working and strong relationships.

**Career development** - they expect to be continually mastering new skills and moving from one level to the next.



## What does this mean when you are hiring Generation Y's?

**Hire people who will fit** - make sure you hire people who share your attitudes and values.

**Manage expectations** - be honest when describing the job; explain the positives and negatives, warts and all.

**The customer is king** - understand what motivates each individual and offer a mix of reward and career opportunities

**The right stage** – create a context in which they can perform and offer a community to which they can belong.

**The right director** - make sure you have managers who have the skills and attitude to maximise the return from your investment in this generation of employees.

**Manage the results** - make sure you are measuring and managing the cost of recruitment and retention. Set targets, report progress and take action.

## How do you manage Generation Y employees?

There are three main areas that you need to consider if you wish to maximise performance of this group:

**Focus delivery** - make sure that you give them a clear purpose which means something to them and which inspires and energises them.

**Create the right context** - they will need to see that you put people at the heart of performance and that you are equitable and ethical both inside and outside of your company.

**Maximising capability** - your managers need to be good at understanding individual's aspirations and motivations and helping them to master new skills.

But in truth, is this any different from the needs of any of your staff? Or is the only difference that Generation Y's are willing to speak out when you don't live up to what they want?

Richard Wyatt-Haines speaks and facilitates internationally to bring alive, and make very applicable his thinking and approaches so that you can identify:

- Where you are going
- How you can get there quicker
- Why people will follow you

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