

AT&T Executive Brief



In September 2010 AT&T University hosted the Generations in Action Conference to explore trends and implications of the 21st century multigenerational workforce. **This is the first of three papers summarizing findings from that event.**

Conference Report No. 1

The Challenge We're Facing



[Tassu Shervani](#), Ph.D., laid the conference framework by examining globalization through its impact on four key markets – talent, capital, commodities and products & services.

Shervani is a consultant in the areas of shareholder value, strategy, business models, innovation and business development. He also teaches in Executive Education at Duke University's Fuqua School of Business, Emory University's Goizueta School of Business and The University of Texas' McCombs School of Business.

Key Takeaways

- ❑ Future labor pools will be driven by the most important number: 2.1 --- the birth replacement rate
 - Below 2.1: populations declining; talent will need to be sourced outside of country (Western Europe, Japan)
 - Above 2.1: populations growing; sources of future labor (India, Mexico, under-developed countries)
- ❑ U.S. is at 2.0; population constant, but new generation is not focused on STEM.
 - Engineering degrees declined by 30%, 1986-2006
 - Few women/minority graduates in science and tech
- ❑ Successful companies must also have a global perspective in order to source/manage future talent

Conference Consensus: Retention of existing talent across generations is critical

BEST PRACTICE GENERATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Boomers	Gen X	Gen Y
Engage them in atypical roles: as community ambassadors, adjunct faculty, mentors to reinforce that they are highly valued.	Open new lattice-type career paths, rather than ladder-only; educate Gen X that lateral movement is growth opportunity.	Ensure transparent and robust opportunities for volunteerism; broad awareness of C&S efforts; opportunities to directly engage. Walk the green walk.
Offer an extensive lineup of re-tooling, re-skilling opportunities. Focus on new technology, motivating teams, social media.	Create rotational fast track programs for HiPo's (keep energy and engagement high)	Make on-boarding process memorable and powerful. Be clear about expectations, set boundaries, discuss career opportunities.
Offer increased job flexibility. Telcommuting, work-life balance issues are important to boomers.	Offer flexible work and wellness programs.	Incorporate social media into 1-2 business processes (collaborative innovation, mentoring, training)

Next Briefing: Commonalities across the generations