

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 last of three papers summarizing findings from that event.**

Conference Report No. 3

Evolving brains ... amazing games

What do analyses of the evolving brain and the future of gaming have to do with corporations' workforce and generational challenges? For answers, we turned to a leading researcher, and a gaming expert. **Sandra Bond Chapman**, Ph.D., founder and chief director of the Center for BrainHealth in Dallas, is collaborating with other brain scientists around the world to solve some of the most important issues concerning the brain and its health. **Peter E. Raad**, Ph.D., is founding Director of the Linda and Mitch Hart eCenter at SMU. Under his leadership, the Guildhall at SMU, incubated in 2002, has become the nation's leading masters program for video game development.



Key Takeaways

- ❑ After college, the workplace is largely responsible for neuroengineering the mind across generations.
- ❑ We can improve corporate brain health and increase workforce mental assets across generations.
- ❑ Particular attention needs to be paid to:
 - Strategic Attention
 - Integrated Reasoning
 - Innovative Thinking
- ❑ Networking and interactivity have dramatically changed how we live, learn, work, and play.
- ❑ Game –playing can help bridge generational gaps
- ❑ There are gamer “skills and dispositions” that are valuable, like persistence, risk-taking, quick thinking under pressure, optimizing time and resources and solving intellectually challenging problems
- ❑ Companies will increasingly adopt gaming in learning and development curricula.

Conference Consensus: Each generation is unique. Customize learning!

BEST PRACTICE GENERATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Boomers	Gen X	Gen Y
Demonstrate business benefits of social media and gaming applications to influence adoption; provide training in this and other new platforms.	Recognize and leverage Gen X familiarity with innovative learning and social media platforms; they are the bridge between generations	Utilize gaming and social media platforms they are familiar with to facilitate learning.
Tie incentives and promotion to desired behaviors ... like flexibility, agility and willingness to collaborate and learn in new ways.	Provide a broad array of courses clearly tied to career growth, delivered over multiple platforms	Give them projects that build critical thinking skills that may be lacking; help them analyze issues and develop solutions.
Continue to demonstrate that face-to-face learning and networking are highly valuable approaches; facilitate opportunities for these.	Encourage and facilitate opportunities to engage in more collaboration: Identify “teaching moments”	Conduct monthly performance reviews/ touch points to ensure learning is happening and critical thinking skills are developing.