Understanding and Seeking Differences

South Carolina Association of Counties

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Training Agenda

Part I:
- Welcome and Introduction
- Why Topic is important – Public Discourse and Civility in a Diverse Working Environment
- What do we know about us? Interests, Abilities, Personality and Values
- Introduction of Personality
- Complete short type test (https://www.123test.com/jung-personality-test/) (this is free and can be done ahead of time or during the training time)
- Understanding of Types

\<Break\>

Part II:
- What are Work Values?
- What influences them?
- Demographics and Age-Related Perspectives based upon generational cohorts

\<Break\>

Part III:
- Table Time: Participants will review a real-world issue affecting Counties
- Problem solving is best if teams contain diverse perspectives
- Q&A

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Addressing the Decline of Civility in Public Discourse

National League of Cities

November 13, 2025

Cited:

Rising incivility

Intimidating behaviors

Violent behavior towards those in public offices

Disruptive behavior in council chambers

Hostile public comments

Internal bullying among elected officials

Councils should:

- Develop clear behavioral standards before conflicts occur

- Share guidelines for respectful participation at the beginning of every meeting; if incivil public comments are made, Chair should put person on notice and take a recess to deescalate, if needed

- Set the tone and standards for constructive and civil interactions, modeling the behavior they expect from the community in how they treat one another and the professional staff in their organizations

- Identify and empower respected voices from both sides of a conflict to encourage their own communities to rebuild trust

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Civility … Respect … Solutions

- In 2021, the Municipal Association's board of directors adopted a strategic plan that included restoring civility in government as a top priority.

- Our nation was founded by people who believed they were creating a system of governance that would enable citizens to work together constructively, whatever their differences of opinion. But the system relied upon those citizens treating each other with patience, tolerance and respect.

- As destructive as incivility can be in everyday life, it is particularly harmful in a city council meeting, or in our municipal offices. Local government is about solving practical problems, and anything that interferes with effective, respectful communication, renders nearly impossible the vital jobs our members do.

- Take the Civility Pledge: I pledge to build a stronger and more prosperous community by advocating for civil engagement, respecting others and their viewpoints, and finding solutions for the betterment of my city or town.

https://www.masc.sc/civility-initiative

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Pillars of Civility

Be as eager to listen as to speak.	Concentrate on what you have in common, not what separates you.	Act as you would expect someone to act in your home.
Concentrate on facts, not theories.	Ask "what will persuade people in this room?" not "what will make a great tweet?"	Make your point about the issue, not the person.
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What Makes Up Who We Are?

"Your identity is a set of physical, mental, emotional, social, and interpersonal characteristics that are unique to you. Your identity plays an important role in how you treat others and how you carry yourself in the world.

We are born with traits and temperaments that play a role in shaping who we become":

• Interests

• Abilities

• Personality

• Values

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What is Personality?

- Personality refers to a person's distinctive patterns of thinking, feeling, and behaving. It derives from a mix of innate dispositions and inclinations along with environmental factors and experiences. Although personality can change over a lifetime, one's core personality traits tend to remain relatively consistent during adulthood.
- Psychologists who study personality tend to rely on frameworks that combine trait levels to describe one's personality.
- To assess these individual differences, a variety of personality tests have been created. These tests commonly prompt people to indicate the extent to which various descriptions of thinking or behavior reflect their own tendencies. Based on a person's responses, the test yields a "personality type" description (in the case of a test like the MBTI)
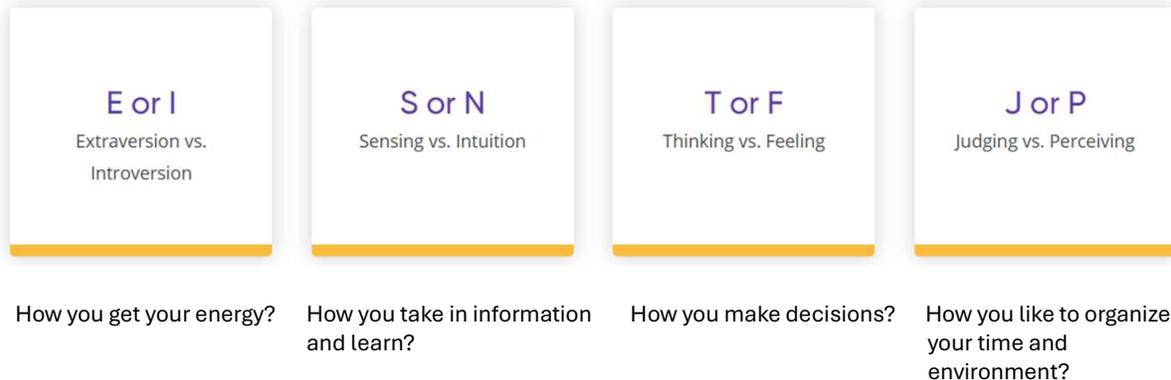
- https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/personality

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What is the MBTI?

- An assessment of personality based on questions about a person's preferences in four domains: focusing outward or inward; attending to sensory information or adding interpretation; deciding by logic or by situation; and making judgments or remaining open to information.

- The MBTI was initially developed in the 1940s by Katharine Cook Briggs and her daughter, Isabell Briggs Myers, loosely based on a personality typology created by psychoanalyst Carl Jung

- When responses are scored, the assessment yields a psychological "type" summarized in four letters, one for each preference: Extraversion (E) or Introversion (I); Sensing (S) or Intuiting (N); Thinking (T) or Feeling (F); and Judging (J) or Perceiving (P). The results combined into one of 16 possible type descriptions, such as ENTJ or ISFP.

- We're going to take a short one now: https://www.123test.com/jung-personality-test/

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MBTI Types:

E or I	S or N	T or F	J or P
Extraversion vs. Introversion	Sensing vs. Intuition	Thinking vs. Feeling	Judging vs. Perceiving

How you get your energy?	How you take in information and learn?	How you make decisions?	How you like to organize your time and environment?

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What are Values?

"Core values are essentially the things that make you, you. They're the things that motivate and drive you; they're very personal to you."

Work values are the deeply held beliefs that guide your actions and decisions in the professional realm. They act as a compass, ensuring your career trajectory aligns with your personal beliefs and ethical standards.

When your career and personal values align, you'll feel more motivated, satisfied, and fulfilled in your work.

In a diverse workplace, not everyone will share our values, which can lead to misunderstandings.
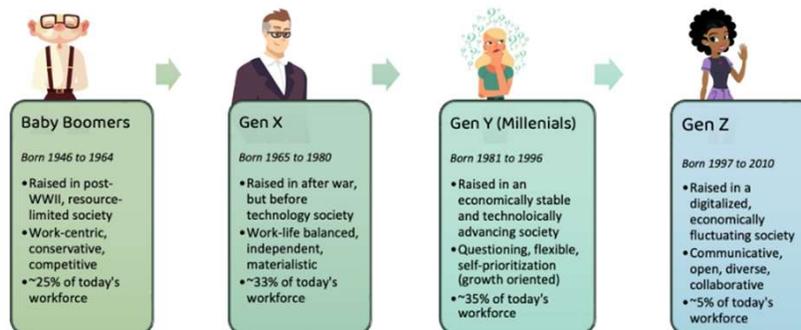To handle value conflicts in the workplace:
1. Identify Clashing Values
2. Seek understanding
3. Communicate Effectively
4. Accept Guidance

https://spotlight.beapplied.com/posts/what-are-work-values-21-examples-and-how-to-define-your-own

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Changing Generational Values

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Generations:

- Traditionalists (Born 1945 and before)
- Baby Boomers (1946 - 1964)
- Gen X (1965 - 1980)
- Gen Y (1981 - 1996)
- Gen Z (1997 - 2010)

Bureau of Labor Statistics (bls.gov)
Liveaboutdot.com
https://imagine.jhu.edu/blog/2022/11/17/the-changing-generational-values/
https://blog.haiilo.com/blog/millennials-in-the-workplace-11-ways-to-attract-and-keep-them/

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2/12/2026

Who are they?

Traditionalists:

G.I. Generation (1901-1924) (G.I. = Government Issue)

Silent/Veteran/Mature Generation (1925 – 1945)

- They set "THE" rule of the workplace
- Financially conservative
- Use "Command and Control" leadership style
- Tend to be risk adverse; have respect for authority
- Workplace values: hard working, cautious and organizationally loyal

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Who Are They?

Baby Boomers:

- Born and raised post-WWII

- This period saw younger marriages, higher childbirth rates, and, resultingly, greater resource scarcity

- Limited resources inspired a generation of competitors: individuals who operated with a "*work as hard as you can, then work even harder the next time*" mindset

- Worker values are work-centric and workaholic, independent and self-assertive, goal-oriented and career-focused, competitive, and self-actualized

- Value a workplace that prioritizes efficiency and efficacy in the workplace but has little regard for a work-life balance, with work tending to be the center of their lives

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Who Are They?

Generation X, or Gen Xers:

- Almost entirely rejected the work-centric belief of Boomers

- Raised in a time characterized by early technological developments (analog to digital), transformative socio-political change, and minimal adult supervision

- Values hyper-independence (with often both parents always working) and hyper-flexibility (from having to constantly adapt to the rapidly evolving status-quo)

- Workplace values are independence and self-sufficiency, healthy work-life balancing, flexibility and informality, and technological creativity

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Who Are They?

Gen Y or Millennials:

- Compose the majority of today's workforce, (approximately 35%)

- Raised at the turn of the millennium, serving as the last generation to see life before and after the complete digital takeover, witnessing extreme technological growth and development that spawned unprecedented levels of communication

- Millennials were old enough to understand 9/11 and its aftermath and grew up seeing the importance and benefit to the work-life balance; the first to integrate moral values into the workplace

- Workplace mindset is "*work hard, play harder, but try to only work where you can see yourself play*"

- Workplace Values: Personalized and frequent internal communication, diversity and inclusion, flexibility + remote options, teamwork, professional growth, and professional development (emphasis on learning new skills)

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Who are They?

Gen Z:

- Accounts for 30% of the world's population and is projected to compose about 30% of the workforce population in less than five years

- Grew up with emergence and proliferation of social media apps and the world wide web

- Ability to communicate openly and honestly about their thoughts, feelings, and experiences with tens, hundreds, thousands even millions of other people – thus, the first generation of global community

- Workplace values: Least regard for salary, and opt for: meaningful work, diverse and inclusive company culture, mental health prioritization, stability and balance, professional growth and development, collaboration, autonomy, and flexibility (emphasis on remote work options)

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Generational Differences

Me Generation (Baby Boomers)	Generation Me (Millennials, Generation X/Y and Z (Net Generation, IGen)
• Born between 1946-1964	• Born in 70's, 80's and 90's
• Free love	• Love of self
• Taught by gray-suit wearing teachers and thought that *Father Knows Best*	• Taught by teachers whose focus was on making the child feel good; got a sticker for trying
• Raised by parents who didn't take any lip	• Parents allowed children to be themselves
• Parents worried about sex in high school	• Parents worry about sex in middle school
• Duty before self	• Want to make a difference (volunteering)
• Did everything in groups, from seminars to yoga	• Obtained piercings and tattoos to express self
• Age of average bride: 21	• Expects to marry in late 20's
• DINK (double income, no kids)	• YO-YO (You're on your own)

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Let's practice with our new knowledge.......

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Diverse teams bring best solutions:

Employers use career assessments to hire candidates and compose work teams. They can help determine how someone is likely to behave *and* why.

People feel more fulfilled when their work aligns with their natural interests; this serves as intrinsic motivation to keep employees engaged with their roles and responsibilities.

Every individual makes a unique contribution to the team; but by leveraging the differences in team members and how they can complement each other, employees learn to lean on their own strengths *and* the strengths of their colleagues to bring the team's distinct purpose to life.

When leaders mismanage stress in the workplace; these stress behaviors trickle down to others, decreasing team morale and increasing conflict.

Helping manage stress better maintains team harmony, and resulting reduced burnout, higher engagement, and less turnover.

https://birkman.com/the-birkman-method

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What Questions Do You Have?

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