

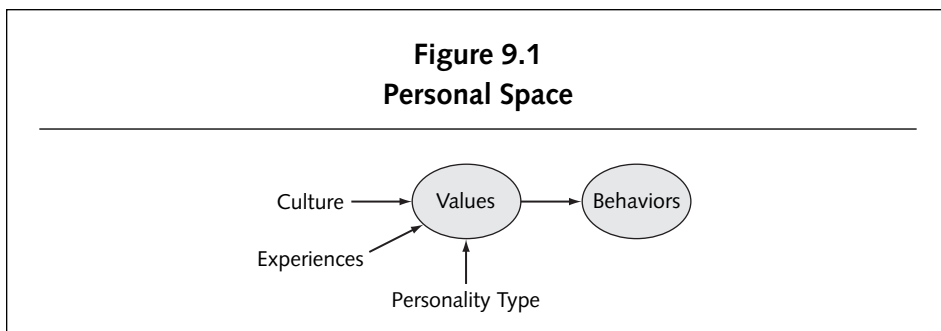
Personal Space

The goal of project management is to meet the project's objectives. It usually means completing the project on time, on spec, and within budget, the old mantra of project management. We have been taught that getting to that point requires strong skills in planning, execution, and control. Yet in today's competitive environment, getting results is not good enough. Superior project management is about getting desired results over and over again to sustain high performance over the long run. To be successful over the long term, organizations must be successful in meeting people's goals. It is the inspiration, motivation, and human energy of people who make or break projects, not plans, process, or control. We have learned from Chapters Three to Eight that content, process, and behavior are essential ingredients for good teamwork. However, individual motivation and inspiration require much more than that. We need to understand people's expectations and give them hope and confidence that their expectations can be met or exceeded. After all, we all want the same things in life: to feel needed, valued, and fulfilled. Believing that those desires can come true is a powerful force that motivates and inspires all of us. Knowing what our desires are and how to fulfill those desires reside in our third space of human factors: personal space.

Personal space is the most complex and least transparent of the three spaces. It is a space that defines who you are and what you do. I have defined personal space as the inner self, a place where internal interactive thinking occurs and human factors are formed. External information is internalized in personal space and intellectually and emotionally processed through internal dialogue. Internal dialogue occurs as people mentally process new information, interpret its meaning against their human factors, and express those perceptions in their behaviors. Personal space can generate enormous desire and human energy. Deep inside, it contains the things that people believe in: their personal values. Personal values guide their thinking, judgment, feelings, and behaviors. Values are at the core of human factors.

How people act with others may seem like spontaneous events, but they are actually a set of acquired responses driven by individual values. Every day people make value judgments about their environment, distinguishing what is good from bad, acceptable and unacceptable, and right and wrong. Some values are derived from genetics (personality type), while others are developed from culture and life experiences (Figure 9.1). Regardless of origin, values are inherent in human behaviors. They are engrained in how people think, learn, communicate, and work with others.

Because values are formed by a combination of genetics and environment, no two people are alike. A diversity of values exists within populations, organizations, and teams. Each of us acts and responds differently to situations, because we possess different individual values. In fact, all dimensions of individual diversity can be related to the three factors of genetics, culture, and experiences. Whether diversity is attributed to race, gender, ethnicity, family, sexual orientation, religion, education, profession, or abilities, they all help determine individual value systems and



set of behaviors. This is our personal space, which defines who we are and what we believe in. For some people, values are defined largely by their family, religion, and ethnicity. For others, they may be driven by internal beliefs of fairness, justice, and compassion for others. And the values of some people have been greatly influenced by childhood experiences, tragedies, and historic events, such as wars and natural disasters. Regardless of diversity and background, behavior flows from a developed set of values based on culture, life experiences, and inborn personality type.

Behaviors come from values. This is an important concept: truly understanding others' intentions and the basis for team behaviors requires fully understanding individual values. Values are powerful human factors that carry much emotional meaning. A good test of whether something is a personal value to you is to ask yourself, "What types of behaviors or circumstances set me off emotionally?" or "What things excite me or upset me the most?" These are things that you care most about—that stir your inner soul and trigger emotional reactions. Because values are unique to you, what may upset you may not upset others. Undoubtedly you have encountered a situation where someone was upset over an event that you did not find upsetting at all. For example, some people find it upsetting when someone cuts in line, yet others find it not offending at all. In fact, they could not care less. For many, cutting in line is considered a rude and offensive behavior because it violates personal values of honesty and fairness. Another strong value is financial security, which motivates saving first and spending later. People with this value are more motivated by employee benefits and a steady income than by professional impact and prestige.

If an organization's goals are to bring out the best in people, maximize performance, and build high-performing teams, then they must respect and understand individual differences in personal values. These values are the underlying human factors of behaviors, the hidden truths inside everyone and not apparent to other people. In some cases, they may not be even apparent to ourselves. A good visual image of values is the floating iceberg where we see only the behavior that appears on top and not the massive volume of values that exist underneath. Regardless of how well you know another person, his or her behavior is only the tip of the iceberg. Much lies beneath it.

The following sections discuss what personal space contains and how values relate to team space and then organizational space. We begin by looking at the three key components of personal values: culture, experiences, and personality type.

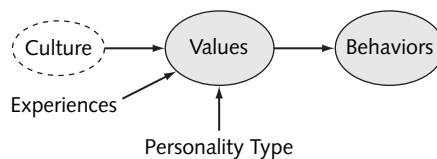
CULTURE

Culture is a key human factor in determining individual values and behaviors. It is defined as the shared ways in which groups of people understand and interpret the world. Culture consists of ideas, values, attitudes, traditions, beliefs, morals, and customs. Together, these act to drive personal behaviors and serve as filters to determine what form of behavior each of us considers normal to us. We interpret the environment from our own cultural viewpoint. Our cultural diversity comes from things that we grew up accepting from our family, friends, and community.

Culture is a reflection of our environment. We learn a language, a way of interacting with others, and our personal values. We learn very early in life what is right and wrong, and these early learnings stay with us for the rest of our lives. They become second nature to us. We do not fully appreciate how deep our culture is ingrained in each of us until we visit a different country or interact with people of different ethnicity. What is perfectly normal for an American driving on the right side of the road is perfectly abnormal to a British driver. Our culture defines who we are and how we behave. Let us review some cultural elements that teams frequently encounter.

Language

English may be the predominant global language, but often it is not the predominant native language for the people on a team. According to 2002 U.S. Census Bureau estimates, the nation's foreign-born population numbered 32.5 million, or 11.5 percent of the total U.S. population. Among this population, 52 percent were born in Latin America, 26 percent in Asia, 14 percent in Europe, and the remaining 8 percent from Africa and other countries. It is projected that Hispanics will become the nation's largest minority group and rise to 24 percent of the U.S. population by 2050.



With these changes in demographics, there will be a greater need to learn and understand different languages and cultures. Private industry and school systems alike will need to adapt to a population of professional workers who need broader language skills. Globalization demands greater fluency in languages.

One cultural feature of language is the use of idioms or slang in communications. Idioms are well-accepted expressions in a culture that have a different meaning from the literal words, so they can be confusing to people outside that culture. Idioms are most often used in verbal communications, but they can find their way into written communications too. The U.S. business culture freely uses idioms in their speech, and they frequently pertain to animals, the body, and sports, such as “chasing rabbits,” “fox guarding the hen house,” “tongue in cheek,” “shake a leg,” “gut check,” “time to punt,” “slam dunk,” and “ball’s in your court.”

Besides idioms, we need to be careful in how we use terms across cultures. There are numerous words that are culturally shunned such as referring to clothing as costumes, ethnic groups as tribes, Asians as Orientals, African Americans as colored, a group of men and women as guys, women as gals and chicks, and southerners as rednecks. In Europe, formal titles (doctor, sir, honorable) are commonly used. In Japan, san is added to the end of names, and in China, the family name is said first.

Being loud and boisterous are turnoffs for most cultures. A mild speaking tone is preferred, which shows modesty and respect for the other party. Self-aggrandizement is seen as selfish. In Asian and Middle Eastern cultures, communications are more contextual, indirect, and respectful. In contrast, the American culture admires people who speak directly, even bluntly. In many countries, conversations normally begin with a personal greeting or family inquiry. It is customary to start each day in the office with an exchange of polite and cheerful greetings, whereas in the United States, a family inquiry may be taken as an invasion of privacy. For most of the rest of the world, personal exchange should precede any business talk. Small talk is actually big talk in certain cultures. Having a personal interest in people can carry much more weight than the work.

Individual versus Community Orientation

American culture is built on individualism and independence. The strength of the U.S. business culture is derived from individual initiative, entrepreneurship, and freedom. Privacy is highly valued. People are recruited to serve on teams based on their individual skill sets and their ability to work with others on a team. Nevertheless, the

drive for individuality remains strong. In contrast, for most other cultures in the world, community and interdependence are more important than the individual. The interest of the community is valued much higher than the interest of individuals. The greater good should always prevail. On teams, the workload is expected to be equally shared. Someone from a community-based culture is more comfortable with team actions versus individual actions and would seek to understand how his or her work contributes to the team as a whole. Also, it may be more important to conform to the ways of the team rather than take an independent approach. Team loyalty and unity are traits that are highly valued by those who were raised in a community belief system. As such, they expect their organizations to reward team achievements over individual successes.

Respect for Authority

Many cultures have a deep respect for elders, status, and authority, such as governmental officials, military officers, teachers, law enforcement, senior colleagues, and company management. Some people may feel uncomfortable challenging the status quo for fear of disorder, punishment, or conflict. One does not openly disagree with a superior. Respect is reflected in their greeting, dress, position at the table, speaking style, and meeting protocol, such as elders being greeted or introduced first, and it is important to maintain formal behavior and rank within the hierarchy in the meeting. In teams, the norm is not to speak up unless spoken to, respect the authority of the team leader, await permission to talk, and expect work to be defined for them. Hierarchy is seen as necessary for maintaining order.

This respect for authority can bear on team decision making. For example, a silent yes may indicate respect rather than agreement. Some people may prefer to stay silent on their positions until they have had a chance to hear from a senior member of the organization. A team may not reach full commitment until there is endorsement from management.

Relationship with Peers

In most cultures, mutual trust and respect are held in highest regard, and any personal disagreements should be disclosed only in private. Relationships are highly valued, so no one should openly criticize or interrupt another person in a meeting. Public criticism, in fact, is a show of disrespect and dishonor. A Kazakh once said to me, “Never make someone look silly or stupid in front of others.” Causing someone to lose face is an ultimate insult. No one should ever point out shortfalls

in others to make a point. The first priority is to protect others, even if it means a personal sacrifice. How one looks in front of peers may be much more important than how the person looks to management. Interrupting a speaker, especially someone more senior, is regarded as extremely rude, and questions are reserved until the end. Sometimes questions are raised not in public but only in private settings.

Relationships are valued, and open conflict with peers is to be avoided. In fact, maintaining good relationships may be more important than project goals. In many cultures, people on work teams are also considered friends at work and home. Work colleagues are expected to socialize away from work; families, for example, get together to eat, drink, and have fun. So with this value, it is not surprising that a colleague may choose to change or withhold information in order to protect a friend. Protecting relationships is an important cultural value that may underlie certain behaviors. There is a common proverb in West Africa that says, “Always select the neighbors before you select the house.”

Nonverbal Communications

Body language and gestures can be just as important as verbal communications. For example, not looking people in the eye may be considered a weakness in one culture but a sign of respect in another. Back-slapping, tickling, and arm squeezing may be considered offensive behaviors. Physical affections like hugging and kissing may be acceptable in some cultures but inappropriate in others, especially across genders. In some countries, men do not initiate handshakes with women or even take pictures of women. Westerners tend to stand apart when speaking; in the Middle East, close exchanges are more common, and backing away may be a sign of disrespect. Hand gestures, thumbs up, and use of the left hand may be offensive. In many cultures, it is common to eat with the fingers. Also, in certain cultures, it is disrespectful to show your feet or the soles of your shoes to others.

With all of these don'ts, it may seem that anything we do can be potentially offensive to somebody. Fortunately, globalization has raised awareness and understanding across cultures, and people are showing more sensitivity to their own behaviors and greater tolerance of that of others. The way to minimize behavioral risks in different cultures is to be a good observer.

Here are three ways to improve your nonverbal communications:

- Pace others. Watch the behaviors of the other party, and use a manner consistent with it. If the person tends to speak softly, you should speak softly; if he or

she stands apart when speaking, give some space too. Being on an equal level with someone else sends a subtle but positive message to the other party.

- Look for cues. Watch how people react in certain situations, and adjust your behavior accordingly. For example, if you notice a person is uncomfortable speaking in front of a crowd, you may want to make an encouraging remark early in the talk to help the person relax, or if you noticed a person does not approach others well in social settings, you may want to accompany that person next time and introduce him or her to others.
- Be yourself. Pacing and adjusting your behaviors are good techniques, but you still need to be yourself.

I once attended a special concert in a small, lavish hotel. It was an audience of senior citizens from Europe and America, and the entertainer was a country singer from Tennessee. In the beginning, she tried to get the audience excited by speaking loudly (almost screaming), prancing around the stage, singing a couple of stale tunes, and telling people to “get excited.” She generated little excitement in that crowd. In fact, people were getting a bit annoyed. Her failure was trying to bring the audience up to her emotional level through physical and verbal cajoling that was common in her culture, but it was not motivating to this audience. You just cannot tell people to “get excited.” More important, she was too out of pace with the audience. Halfway into her performance, she suddenly switched to her natural talent of singing country western songs, and the crowd came alive. They started clapping and smiling, and by the second song, the clapping turned into cheering and loud applause. The performer was aglow. What I believe she realized was that this audience got excited by her genuine talent and passion for the music she enjoyed most, and it was also in pace with the emotional state of the audience. They just wanted to hear good, genuine music.

Openness

Establishing a team ground rule to speak openly and honestly may be culturally challenging to some people who have strong cultural beliefs against someone speaking out. These common beliefs include

- Speak only when spoken to.
- Always respect rather than oppose authority.
- Never impose your personal feelings or opinions on others.

- Keep your feelings to yourself.
- Expressing how you sincerely feel is a sign of weakness.

A strong preference in many cultures is to express opinions in an indirect manner, especially when conveying negative news. Indirect communications are meant to maintain group harmony. A person may be reluctant to speak up in a team setting but will open up in the safety of a private setting. Also, embellishments may be seen as dishonest and superficial. In many cultures, bragging is considered a dishonorable behavior. Modesty and humbleness are taught at a very early age.

The Value of Time

Westerners are seen as more time dependent compared to Asians, Africans, and Latin Americans, who view time as being more fluid. The American culture is fast paced: Americans eat fast, drink fast, and work fast. Most countries enjoy a more leisurely pace.

Being punctual has its virtues, but in many cultures being late is a common and accepted behavior. People who attend social parties and meetings on time may be seen as anxious, selfish, competitive, greedy, and hungry. In many Asian cultures, people are expected to arrive late. This same behavior is seen as extremely inconsiderate in the United States and Europe.

Having a highly structured, time-driven agenda may not be culturally favored. Being flexible and open with topics can send a better message. Many people are quite comfortable with a more spontaneous, subjective flow of the agenda. Some cultures expect meetings to start and end later than scheduled. In some countries, it is not unusual for people to wander in and out of the meetings.

Decision Making

In decision making, trust and relationships may be more important than content. It is important to respect how people make decisions. Pressuring for a decision does not demonstrate good relationships. It may be customary to have several discussions and meetings before decisions are made. Cultural superstitions can come into play and can pervade one's thinking, including beliefs in luck, fate, and bad omens, which are outside one's control. These behaviors can be read as avoiding risks and not taking responsibility for one's actions. Putting off a decision to gather more opinions may be commonplace in some cultures.

How to Value Cultural Diversity on Teams

There are a number of ways teams can show they value cultural diversity.

Create an Inclusive Team Environment Teams need to make a conscious effort to involve everyone as much as possible at meetings, presentations, teleconferences, planning sessions, and team communications. Everyone, not just the project leader or a handful of people, should feel success and mutual respect. It is too easy to let assertive individuals take control of the core project and allow the others to fade into the background. Cultural values and behaviors can be barriers for balanced participation on team projects. Always assigning the critical work to the most experienced person is a missed opportunity to stretch and develop others. Often people rise to the occasion and perform in ways that they thought were out of their reach. A large part of team success is allowing individuals to experience personal growth and achieve higher self-confidence and respect within the team structure.

Give Appropriate Recognition Nothing makes a person feel more valued than sincere praise and recognition. A high-performing team takes the time to recognize good behaviors. More important, it gives recognitions that are meaningful to the recipients. A public recognition may be a true honor for some but an embarrassment for others. A trinket may be a symbol of appreciation to certain people but an insult to others. To know what is appropriate, a good practice is to ask each person in joining the organization or team how he or she wishes to be recognized.

Make Your Intentions Transparent With so many different cultures represented on teams, words can be often misinterpreted. It helps to clarify the intent behind words. If you are kidding, make sure the person knows it. If you are being facetious, say so. Never assume everyone knows your intent. A misunderstood joke can quickly ruin a good relationship. Check for understanding, clarity, and buy-in, and watch for nonverbal indicators of disagreement or puzzlement.

Use Visuals Visuals increase the effectiveness of the communication. People of all cultures are aided by visuals, which usually speak louder than words. Also, we tend to remember pictures and visual stories much longer than we do verbal or written discussions. Visuals help convey abstract information more easily. People like road maps, graphics, diagrams, and images to help them see the bigger picture. Integrating complex information is always a special challenge for diverse teams.

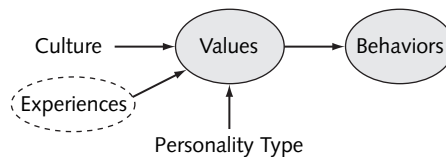
Avoid the Rush Americans are known to be fast talkers, fast movers, and fast consumers. In a gathering of people representing different cultures, it is best not to rush the process and get down to business too quickly. This is considered impolite in many cultures. The process of greeting and socializing is just as important as any topic on the meeting agenda.

Do Not Assume that Silence Means Agreement In Asian and African cultures, saying no is a sign of disharmony and disrespect. It is best to use methods that make it safe to say no, such as the fist of five and off-line voting (see Chapters Four and Eight). Good communicators are skilled in picking up verbal and nonverbal cues.

Inquire into a Person's Underlying Values and Thinking Some people are naturally inclined to let others speak first and wait for the right moment to speak. This is often a cultural behavior that demonstrates respect and cooperation. The challenge for the team is to avoid discriminating against these types of passive behaviors. Being quiet does not mean an individual is uninterested or incapable. Good teams seek out opinions in a positive way that builds trust. Balanced team participation does not just happen. It requires a conscious effort of talkers to switch off and listeners to speak up. Unbalanced participation can be avoided by taking the time to query others and invite participation. Quiet people can be the best listeners on the team and can pick up points that others miss. Team ground rules are a place to state that the team will seek balanced participation in its discussions and activities.

EXPERIENCES: GENERATIONAL DIVERSITY

Our values are also shaped by our life experiences. One of the most significant human factors affecting people's values is the generation that we grew up with and the experiences that we shared (Lancaster and Stillman, 2002). The generations



can be divided into five major periods: traditionalist (born between 1900 and 1945), baby boomer (born between 1946 and 1964), generation X (born between 1965 and 1980), millennial (born between 1981 and 1999), and generation Z (born between 2000 and the present). Each of these generations is united by the events and emotions of their times: wars, politics, economics, civil rights, technology, art, music, and people. What gets retained are the indelible memories of conflict, human tragedies, social change, industrial conquest, and technological growth.

Traditionalists

The traditionalists represent a population of people who lived through the Great Depression, World War II, the Korean War, and the cold war and witnessed the greatest period of invention and industrial expansion in the history of the world. They have also been referred to as the greatest generation.

As a subculture, traditionalists can be described as the no-nonsense, get-the-job-done generation. Their behaviors reflect their faith and loyalty to authority, hierarchy, and institutions. They believe in the system, the establishment, and top-down authority. Social order means stability and safety, and security is always high on their minds.

Working on a self-directed, cross-functional team is not a natural environment for traditionalists. They were raised in a chain-of-command structure, and their behaviors are based on compliance, loyalty, and delayed gratification. They learned their job, stayed obedient, and earned their way up. On teams, traditionalists want leadership, well-defined roles and responsibilities, governance, goals, and respect. Motivation comes from their desire for security, money, rank, and seniority. They want the work completed on time and on spec. A team project is a mission for traditionalists. Their goal is to develop and execute a game plan that will satisfy management.

Traditionalists have a strong faith in their country, company, and social institutions. They do not challenge authority. They believe that rules are needed to maintain order and discipline; otherwise the system breaks down, and the mission will fail. Traditionalists believe people should pull their own weight, work within the rules, and take pride in a job well done. They were raised to conform to the system, not to reform the system. The system works by fitting the person to the system, not the system to the person.

Traditionalists enjoy working with people who respect them for their know-how and experience. They need to be recognized for their wealth of knowledge and

respected for their hard-won successes. They have a strong work ethic and respect others who work hard too. Traditionalists are concerned about content and solutions, not process and behaviors. This generation is not known as a touchy-feely generation. “Getting in touch with their feelings” is not high on their list.

Traditionalists grew up in a magical technological age, witnessing the invention of the radio, television, spaceships, and the computer. Yet they may not be current in digital and Web-based technologies. Do not assume that everyone is Internet savvy, can merge electronic files, and build PowerPoint presentations. Traditionalists are great at fixing things that are broken but are reluctant to “break things” for the sake of innovation. They behave to the adages of “let sleeping dogs lie,” and “if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.”

Baby Boomers

Baby boomers represent by far the largest proportion of the population and therefore have had the greatest impact on the workplace. Baby boomers are self-driven, ambitious, materialistic, and achievement oriented. Unlike traditionalists, they believe that the status quo needs to be challenged. Baby boomers grew up in the age of great movements: the civil rights movement, the environmental movement, the antiwar movement, and the women’s movement. On teams, they have an optimistic attitude and believe they can make a difference. This population lived through the long struggle of the Vietnam War and the shame of Watergate.

As a subpopulation, baby boomers are highly educated and seek to make a difference in the world. Baby boomers are driven to succeed, driven to compete, driven to make changes, and driven to make sure others know this about them. Life is a fierce competition and a zero-sum game. Boomers are much more process and change oriented than traditionalists, and with technology as an enabler, they actively use processes to facilitate their actions. They are obsessed by time: start time, cycle time, time management, down time, and, most of all, time is money. Because time is so important, they must work hard and play hard to get the most out of life. Their job defines who they are. This generation measures success by job title, professional status, and amount of wealth accrued. Where traditionalists want pride and security, boomers want wealth and prestige.

This push for financial success fueled the eighteen-year bull market that started in 1982 and was one of the greatest runs in stock market history. It was also the first time that the middle class participated so heavily in the stock market. Boomers are now approaching retirement age, and many are reevaluating their status and

how they want to spend the rest of their working life. In their retirement years, they may continue to work part time, do volunteer work, or mentor others. They are now facing conflicts between a need to succeed and a growing desire to slow down, savor life, and contribute to their communities.

Baby boomers are valued for their great drive to succeed, willingness to challenge the status quo, and enthusiasm for lifelong learning. They are motivated by title, prestige, recognition, and rewards. Those who work with boomers must make sure the end game is clear: the deliverables, the value of the work to the organization, what they will get out of it, and the process for getting there. It is important to define the purpose, the goal, and the vision of success. Boomers need to understand the story behind the story. They want to know the objectives, strategies, milestones, key processes, success metrics, scorecards, and time lines. They want it all, and they want it done right away. Remember, that boomers have a title to live up to and a mortgage to pay down.

Generation X

Gen Xers are distinctive for their technological prowess, balanced view of work and personal life, and desire for career independence. The Xers follow in the shadows of the baby boomers and have inherited many good and bad lessons. Xers want success, money, and recognition but without the guilt of excessive materialism, ambition, and rebellion. They see baby boomers as a highly successful group but tainted in many ways by divorce, live-to-work syndrome, heart disease, stress, greed, and the high pace of life. They are not bent on a twenty-five-year corporate career with a corner office, an oak desk, a secretary, and country club privileges. The Xers have witnessed the elimination of the mutual commitment between employees and employer, where loyalty to the corporation is rewarded by the corporation's loyalty to workers. This unwritten agreement between employee and employer was broken in the late 1980s and 1990s by the chain of corporate downsizings, right sizings, rationalizing, and offshoring.

Where boomers learned to be skeptical about government, Xers have learned to be skeptical about corporate institutions. They have seen the desperation of older baby boomers trying to survive yet another round of layoffs. They do not want to put in twenty-five years and then hang on for company retirement. Xers want immunity from forced layoffs and seek strong control of their careers. Their success metric is always being in the position to go elsewhere if they choose to.

When I speak to Xers in corporations, they tell me that they do not expect to get retirement benefits such as lifetime health care, pensions, and social security. They accept the fact that they have to be responsible for their own well-being. They are not going to depend on their companies to take care of them.

The Xers shun fast food and the competitive lifestyle of the boomers and seek a more balanced lifestyle between work and family life and between materialism and spiritualism. They desire personal growth and want to grow in their skills, knowledge, and experiences. In a way, they shadow boomers in their drive to prove themselves and set a high bar in their careers. Xers want to establish a career that is invulnerable to corporate breakdowns. They want to be able to control their own careers, know where they are going, and choose their own paths where possible, and they are not in a mad rush to get there. They can wait to get married, wait to have a family, and wait for a big house. Xers want to be self-sufficient, self-assured, and self-managed.

The self-confidence of Xers stems from their broad reach. They are well connected to the world around them, have a network of colleagues and contacts, are Internet savvy and can access information instantly, and have the technology know-how to get smart quickly on any subject. While traditionalists are grateful for a stable job and boomers are happy with their competitive achievements, Xers take pride in knowing that they are mobile and have fungible skills that can take them into other sectors of business, government, or academia. They like to keep their options open. Because they have transferable skills, they feel less intellectually and emotionally attached to their current employer. They value freedom more highly than money or prestige.

Xers are motivated by personal growth, challenging assignments, and advancements. They shun the baby boomer mentality of working sixty hours per week and want work and family life effectiveness. They care deeply about their career track and wish to be recognized for the quality of their work. They have very little tolerance for people who are just putting in time and giving minimal effort. Job selections based on seniority or rank irk the Xers. Like all other generations, Xers seek recognition for their work. What sets them apart is their anxiety and assertiveness in seeking what they want. If Xers are not given responsible roles, they are willing to move on without regrets. It is best not to impose limits and outdated values on Xers. Give Xers a chance to demonstrate their skills, and trust them to take part in roles that were traditionally limited to more senior people. In a way,

they are much more impatient and relatively fearless compared to traditionalists and boomers. Basically generation X wants flexibility in what they do and how they do it.

The Millennials

This is the newest generation entering the workforce. It will be interesting to see what learnings they will carry forward from the boomers and Xers. The millennials arrived in a world where information is instantly available and have learned to seek instant gratification. This is the first generation that has grown up entirely with the Internet and can be called the Internet generation. These young people grew up with instant connectivity with the Internet, cell phones, PDAs, and iPods. Instant messaging, text messaging, video downloads, instant music, and e-mailing are part of the instant communications for millennials. Sophisticated video simulations such as the Xbox provide entertainment and immediate gratification. The work turnover rate is faster for millennials than for other generations. They are self-sufficient. The millennials have grown up in a rather sheltered, information-rich world. They have yet to establish a rich historical context.

In business, the millennials are tech savvy but also carry a demanding disposition that stems from their need for instant gratification. You may hear remarks like, “Why can’t I be given greater responsibility in the company now?” or “I do not want to wait for people to leave in order to move up or wait for my turn. Please use me now for my talents.” A consistent comment that I hear from millennials is that they find that their generation behaves as if the company owes them opportunities. I have heard terms such as “act spoiled,” “feel owed to,” and “expect entitlements” to describe their colleagues. The millennials bring speed, networking, and enormous capacity to the game, which will bring further changes to the workplace. Whereas Xers are well connected, millennials are multiconnected. They have a high-capacity, multitask view of life: they are able to use iPod, Wi-Fi, and videolinks all at the same time. They want a high-capacity work life and family life with a strong social network.

Due to the enabling force of technology, they have tremendous personal capacity to do more things and have an impact on others. This generation is more diverse in work, career, lifestyle, and family. The Xers broadened the pace of change, but the millennials will change the capabilities of society. It is possible that this generation will not only have the skills of Xers but perhaps even multiple careers. Like Xers, millennials assume responsibility for their own careers and manage their

own skills development. Money is important to them, but they also want rich experiences. This generation will take communications and the rate of change to a higher level. Information is not only accessible and fast, it will also take on much more functional forms in terms of interchangeability, transferability from one media to another, and sharing real-time information on a global scale.

The millennial generation values information, speed, networking, technology, globalization, and self-determination. This generation has high expectations and demands attention. Like the Xers, they want flexibility in their careers. They want to be used and respected for their performance, technological prowess, high work capacity, and global thinking. They are natural collaborators, team players, and quick integrators of information. Millennials expect instant feedback. They want speed, efficiency, and fast turnover, yet their work must also have depth and long-term meaning. Millennials want to be heard and want their opinions honored. On teams, they want to be treated as an equal and a peer. Rank, seniority, and hierarchy are not important to them.

PERSONALITY TYPES

All of us have natural tendencies in the way we think, learn, process information, and communicate. These individual preferences are defined by our genetic composition and expression and manifested in our temperaments and personalities.

The best known characterization of these tendencies was derived from the early observations of Carl Jung (1923), the Swiss psychiatrist who observed that people have consistent patterns of human behavior. Jung identified four primary functions of experiencing the world: thought, feeling, sensation, and intuition. His most famous concept is that people are basically introverted or extroverted in their behaviors. The extrovert has an external orientation, finding meaning outside self, in the surrounding world, whereas the introvert is introspective and finds it within.

