

LMS e-Learning Implementation Podcast Transcript #30 *Leadership Communication Strategies for a Multigenerational Workforce.*

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Mary Kay Lofurno: Welcome to the next episode of the [SyberWorks e-Learning Podcast Series](#). I am Mary Kay Lofurno, Marketing Director for SyberWorks Incorporated and your host.

[SyberWorks](#) specializes in custom e-Learning solutions, [learning management systems](#), and custom e-Learning development for corporations, governments, and nonprofits.

Today, we are talking with Vicky Jarosz, a noted workforce development expert and Executive Vice President of I3Logic about leadership communication strategies for managing a multi-generational workforce.

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Mary Kay: And now we will begin our interview with Vicky Jarosz, a noted workforce development expert and Executive Vice President of I3Logic. Good afternoon, Vicky. It is great to have you with us today.

Vicky Jarosz: Thanks, Mary Kay, for inviting me to participate in this [e-Learning](#) series.

Mary Kay: Sure. Vicky, why don't you tell us a little bit about yourself, your background, and the company you work for, before we get started?

Vicky: I am currently a partner with I3Logic and function as the Executive Vice President of Operations. Our value proposition is: we accelerate business results through learning. We have a unique offering that integrates our expertise of change management, [training](#), and innovative technology.

Personally, my career began in information technology leadership, where I managed enterprise changes driven by technology. Before we developed our change management tool kit, I lived through many successful change adoptions.

All of our experience and research show that improving business results hinges on focusing on the people side of change with solid strategies for communication, [learning](#), and motivation. This is also true as we look at the changes in our workplace for leaders.

Mary Kay: OK, great, Vicky. Thanks. I am pretty excited about today's podcast because it is pretty timely and useful information. I know that we all strive to be better communicators in every area of our lives, at least I do, and it is particularly challenging for corporate leaders managing a multi-generational work force.

Can you give us some tips and strategies for communicating effectively with traditionalists, folks born from 1930-1945, baby boomers, people born from 1945-1964, Gen-X, people born from 1965-1980, and millennials, those born from 1980-1994?

Vicky: Sure. First and foremost, know your workforce composition. For the first time in history, we have colleagues from those four generations working side by side with us that cause challenges, and more importantly, opportunities for a vibrant workforce.

We always recommend that our clients start with a fresh look, an analysis of their organization's generational mix, then compare that inside reality to their customer base. The question to answer is: is the mix in alignment? The goal is to have an approach that balances the four generations and leverages the strength of each group.

Mary Kay: OK, that sounds good. Maybe you can just run through specific leadership communication strategies that work with each group.

Vicky: Certainly. Bennis and Thomas* have boiled down the generational differences to five basic values: career, speed, loyalty, balance, and heroes. Leaders need to be aware of and recognize the positives in each.

Here are some typical communication style examples. Traditionalists are more formal with protocol. They prefer a style that includes memos, letters, etc. Baby boomers are still formal, but prefer phone calls and meetings.

Gen-Xers have a more matter-of-fact preference that suit email and voice mail. Millennials are more casual but immediate, so [instant messaging](#), networking communities, etc., suit their needs.

We recommend that leaders take a blended and balanced approach to communication. The good news here is that content can be generated quickly and it must be, but with a solid strategy, it can be repurposed and in various forms. Then the colleagues can select or opt-in to preferred approaches.

One other note for leaders: the need for speed with the younger workforce is in alignment with our frenetic pace that we are all feeling. Just as the markets respond quickly, we must learn to embrace the need for immediate forms of communication. The more formal approaches will benefit for messaging that is already tested by members of the team.

Mary Kay: Those are terrific tips, Vicky. Are there any other important considerations in regards to communication strategies for working with a multi-generational workforce?

Vicky: Yes. Each generation has certain expectations for communication. Traditionalists really want to understand the long-term goals, what needs to be done, and how to accomplish them. Baby boomers actually want to shape what needs to be done and to know how important their contribution will be.

Gen-Xers want to focus on the needed results, what needs to get accomplished without details on how to get it done. They really want to work independently without supervision.

Millennials, however, want to know how the work fits into the big picture, with short-term goals and frequent feedback. They all crave clear vision and goals. That is a great focal point for leaders to consider.

Mary Kay: OK. Well, this has been great. Are there any other things you think that are important to share before we wrap this up today?

Vicky: One last thought: here a few things for leaders to keep in mind. We have more ways than ever before to listen to our colleagues, so continue to ask about their needs and preferences. Listen to them and respond. Encourage the awareness of differences, and encourage the positive benefits. Finally, model the behavior you wish to see in others.

Mary Kay: Excellent. I know you are a busy person, so I am going to let you go. Thanks for joining us today, Vicky.

Vicky: You are welcome, Mary Kay. Thanks for having me. Talk to you soon.

Mary Kay: This is Mary Kay Lofurno, Marketing Director at [SyberWorks](#). Thanks for listening to our podcast today about leadership communication strategies for managing a multi-generational workforce with Vicky Jarosz, a noted workforce development expert and Executive Vice President of I3Logic, here on the [SyberWorks e-Learning Podcast](#). Have a great day!

* W. Bennis & R. Thomas "Geeks & Geezers: How Era, Values and Defining Moments Shape Leaders"

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