ACE THE FACE TO FACE: COMMUNICATING WITH GENERATION Z
KELLY DAUBER
DISCUSSION OVERVIEW

Who is Generation Z?

What are the communication strengths and weaknesses of Generation Z?

What are unique considerations for communicating with Generation Z?

What methods and styles of communication are most effective?

What kinds of exercises can help Generation Z to develop communication skills?
THIS WOULD BE EASIER...

—Kids! I don't know what’s wrong with these kids today!
—Kids! Who can understand anything they say?
—Kids! They’re disobedient, disrespectful oafs!
—Noisy, crazy, dirty, lazy loafers!
—Kids! You can talk and talk until your face turns blue!
—Kids! But they still do just what they want to do!
—Why can’t they be like we were? Perfect in every way!
—What's the matter with kids today?!?

--from the song, “Kids”, by Lee Adams
Coaching is an art and I'm not going to let anyone change me.

— Marty Stern —
“the ability of individuals to understand and read the contexts in which they work”

No guarantees when working with humans!

The science of coaching/teaching focuses on the use of general principles

The art of coaching/teaching is recognizing when and how to individualize these general principles
GENERATION Z

- AKA: Digital natives, iGen, App Generation, Selfie Generation, Homelanders, Generation Bubble Wrap
- Generation Z born between mid 1995 and 2012 (ages 7-24).
- Make up 32% of the US population
- Most educated and diverse generation in history
YOUR PERCEPTIONS OF GENERATION Z?

Characteristics?

Interests?

Strengths?

Weaknesses?
GENERATION Z AWESOMENESS!

- 100% digital native
- Competent in technology
- Skim read & digest bite-sized amounts of information at an incredible rate
- Highly educated
- Highly industrious & collaborative
- Good at multitasking; across 5 screens
- Entrepreneurial: 72% own business, 76% hobby job
- Global – borderless world
- Want to make a difference
- Mature, self-directed, resourceful (self-educate, find info)
CHALLENGES

- Slightly distrusting, but looking for stability
- Acquired Attention Deficit Disorder 8 sec (easily bored)
- Stunted social skills
- 79% display emotional distress when kept from personal electronic devices: (FOMO)
- Used to being “liked”, or easily “delete” friends
- Need work on self-confidence and risk taking, fear of failure
- Impatient, used to quick results, fear of length, abbreviations
- Less competent in physical activity due to screen time
CHALLENGES (JONES ET AL., 2007)

Lives encompassed by the internet

May require increased stimulation, creating a disinterest with traditional teaching methods (Jones et al., 2007)

Verbal skills, expressions, confidence, and personal skills may falter due to technology reliance (Jones et al., 2007)

Spend more time indoors

Youth spend 6 hour average on electric devices (tv, video games, computer)

They embrace technology, but it has the potential to adversely affect them (especially in HPE and leading a healthy lifestyle!)
EFFECT OF TECHNOLOGY RELIANCE ON WORK SKILLS...WHAT’S MISSING?

1. Critical thinking/problem solving (54%)
2. Professionalism/work ethic (44%)
3. Written communication (41%)
4. Leadership (39%)
5. Teamwork/collaboration (36%)  
5. Oral communication (36%)

Great amount of knowledge and skill, employers having a hard time finding workers with the above life skills.

(Kick, Contacos-Sawyer, Thomas, 2015)
IN THEIR OWN EYES...

Survey results:

40% of Gen Z are self identified technology addicts.

55% of Gen Z indicated they need to improve **face to face communication**.

48% indicated they need to develop skills for **communicating in a professional manner**.

47% indicated a desire for skills of **resolving conflicts**
LET’S HEAR FROM THEM...
HOW DO THEY COMMUNICATE?

In one word…**INSTANT.**

Availability and immediacy of information

“I can simultaneously create a document, edit it, post a photo on Instagram and talk on the phone, all from the user-friendly interface of my iPhone….Generation Z takes in information **instantaneously**, and loses interest just as fast.”

SO WHAT DOES THAT MEAN FOR US?

Communication with Generation Z needs to be **concise** and **visual**.

Their attention spans are getting shorter, hence the need for **videos** and **images**.

They communicate in **bite sized pieces**.

“We tell our advertising partners that if they don’t communicate in five words and a big picture, they will not reach this generation” (branding agency managing partner)
DIFFERENT STROKES...

For different folks...

I’M SO GLAD I GREW UP

DOING THIS

NOT THIS
COMMERCIAL TIME...

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LmNzZf0996o
TIPS FOR COMMUNICATING WITH GENERATION Z

HOW TO SPEAK Gen Z

The alphabet according to Generation Z
[Born 1995 - 2009]

Gen Z

HARRO!! CRAY CRAY!!
WIN FAIL LULZ NOM JKS
(^_^) (>_<) (-_-;)
V RANDOM SELFIE
PROBS, DEFS, TOTES & HEARTS; LMS KGO!
TBH LIK34LIKE
PHOTOBOMB ONESIE YOLO
OMGOSH! #HASHTAG
WWW.WORDUP.NET.AU
TIP 1: YOU CAN’T FIGHT IT, SO JOIN ‘EM!

- Pedometers, Heart rate monitors, Health Trackers
- Apps (MapMyFitness, MyFitnessPal, Pokemon Go, Kahoot, GoNoodle)
- Videos (YouTube, Vimeo)
- Virtual reality (bikes, etc)
- Record scores or results on an ipad
- Exercise video game (Wii, DDR)

- What technology do you love to incorporate? How?
COMMERCIAL TIME . . .
GO TO KAHOOT.IT TO PLAY!

Kahoot!
TIP 2: RESPOND QUICKLY TO COMMUNICATION

Generation Z students are accustomed to having instant answers.

They don’t have a lot of practice with waiting.

Therefore, respond promptly to their questions.
TIP 3: GET A THUMB WORKOUT: TEXTING

75% of Generation Z would prefer to text than talk on the phone.

Digital presence seems to supercede offline interactions.

What is so preferable about text messaging?
TIP 4: ONE ON ONE IS BEST

39% say that one on one communication is the best way to reach them.

“I think in a world where we envision Generation Z being digital natives, we also envision them only being digitally competent and only preferring digital methods of communication. But in many communications they still like a personal touch. So, remember that the face-to-face thing is still very important to them—probably, more important than people are giving it credit for.”

Corey Seemiller, co-writer of Generation Z Goes to College

Take time to speak with them one on one, face to face.
Everyone has an invisible sign hanging from their neck saying, 'Make me feel important.' Never forget this message when working with people.

Mary Kay Ash
TIP 5: PERSONALIZE YOUR COMMUNICATION

The typical Generation Z attention span is approximately 8 seconds.

If you can personalize the communication to something that they are enthusiastic about, you are more likely to maintain their attention span and connect closer.

This requires: LISTENING

How do you personalize your communication with students/athletes?
TIP 6: E-MAIL IS GOING OUT OF STYLE.

Less than 20% like to use email for professional purposes.

Thus, use email selectively, other modes of communication may be better.
TIP 7: BE REAL/GENUINE

Generation Z upholds authenticity above all else.

Be honest, vulnerable, and express value beyond “likes”

Examples of times where you have shown your “realness” in the classroom and it paid off?
TIP 8: BE PRACTICAL

Generation Z individuals tend to be practical and frugal.

Therefore, focus on practical, reasonable delivery.
What purpose does the lesson, drill, meeting, etc., serve?

Because the attention span is on the decline, Gen Z students need to know why what you are saying is worthy of their attention.
TIP 10: INSTAGRAM IS THEIR LOVE

This is their #1 social media outlet (photo and video-sharing social networking)

Visual appeal

Short attention spans
THE FOUR R’S (MCCRINDLE, 2016)

Real
Relevant
Responsive
Relational
HOW TO MOTIVATE GEN Z?

Take a stand on an issue that’s important to them, such as human equality: gender equality, racial equality, and sexual orientation equality.

Show them you know them.

Value their opinions and input.

Treat them like people (not just kids)

Engage and inspire them, and let them inspire you.

Be completely transparent and authentic to earn their trust.

Operate with integrity.

Angie Read, co-author with Jeff Fromm of Marketing to Gen Z: The Rules for Reaching This Vast—and Very Different—Generation of Influencers.
Everyone has an invisible sign hanging from their neck saying, 'Make me feel important.' Never forget this message when working with people.

Mary Kay Ash
TEACHING FACE TO FACE COMMUNICATION

What can you do?

- Model good and bad conversation skills (role playing or puppets)
  - Posture, volume, eye contact, listening, age appropriate, pace, etc.

- Have a classroom procedure for proper communication (Ex. SLANT: sit up straight, listen, answer and ask questions, nod for interest, track speaker)

- Consider a talking stick/item for young learners

- Presentations, speeches, tell/finish story, group assignments/projects

- Ask more open ended questions in class

- Give students time to talk, role play, problem solving scenarios.

- Critical thinking, reflective learning, teachable moments
TEACHING FACE TO FACE COMMUNICATION

What should they focus on?

- Empathy: Step in shoes of the other
- Promote respect.
- Pause, think, and ask questions. Seek first to understand, and then be understood.
- Practice active listening (paraphrase, nodding, eye contact)
- I statements
TEACHING PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION

1. Greeting
2. Appearance
3. 100% attention
4. Email
5. Non-verbal communication
6. Deadlines, prompt, prepared
7. Classroom translates to real world
8. Mock interviews with analysis and reflection
ACTIVITY BREAK SAMPLES...

1. **Draw a Bug Communication Activity**  
   (Listening and importance of asking questions)  

2. **“You Don’t Say” Activity**  
   (Non verbal communication awareness)  
   https://positivepsychology.com/communication-activities-adults-students/

3. **Professional Confrontation Practice Activity**  
   (Problem solving, delivery, listening, sandwiching)  
   Example on next slide
PROFESSIONAL CONFRONTATION PRACTICE

Working in pairs, select a situation to role play. Display empathy, sandwiching and active listening. When finished, switch roles and try another scenario.

A. Tell an athlete she has been cut from the team.

B. Inform a patient or client that he is overweight and has several health risk factors.

C. Inform a physical education student that he has poor hygiene and needs to shower.

D. Tell an injured athlete her career is over.

E. Tell a teacher that he will be laid off in the upcoming year.

Give each other feedback on how the situation was handled. Use the Dos and Don’ts when confronting worksheet for guidance.
Dos and Don’ts When Initiating Confrontation (Martens, 1987)

**Dos**

Do convey that you value your relationship with the person.

Do go slowly and think about what you want to communicate.

Do try to understand the other person’s position.

Do listen carefully to what the other person is trying to communicate.

**Don’t’s**

Don’t communicate the solution. Rather, focus on the problem. We are often overly anxious to tell others what they must do, instead of letting them figure it out.

Don’t stop communicating. Even if the confrontation isn’t going as you planned, keep communicating about the problem in a constructive manner.

Don’t use put-downs. Sarcasm and attacks usually alienate people. A confrontation is not a competition, and the idea is not to win it. The idea is to solve a problem together.

Don’t rely on nonverbal hints to communicate your thoughts. You need to be direct and forthright in communicating. Now is not the time for subtle nonverbal cues.
COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES CON’T

Quick Listening Classics:
Red Light, Green Light, Simon Says, Musical Chairs, Telephone

Messy, but entertaining and effective:
Toothpaste activity – think before you speak, respectful communication, bullying
Feed me applesauce – giving precise and clear directions

Cooperative Physical Education:
Human Square – teamwork, communication, feedback
Fitness Fun Mats/Titanic Challenge – cooperation, communication, problem solving
Pipeline activity – teamwork, communication
A COUPLE OF MY FAVORITES
WHAT WORKS FOR YOU?

How do you effectively communicate and “reach” the Generation Z students in your class? Or on your playing field?

Please share anything we may have missed!
REFERENCES


R. Martens, 1987, Coaches guide to sport psychology (Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics), 63-64.


QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, OR STORIES?

Please text them to 123-456-7890
Or
Email them to kdauber@bloomu.edu

LOL....JK! ;-) TYVM
QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, STORIES?