



**By Jim Peduto**

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## Who Is Generation Y?

**There is a new** (and huge) generation of workers invading the work force. They're ambitious, they're demanding and they question everything. Unlike generations before them, they have been pampered and nurtured since they were babies, which means they are high-maintenance. The good news is that they are also high performers.

I'm talking about Generation Y, the fastest-growing segment of the workforce and as baby boomers retire, business owners are going to have to learn how to manage this new generation of workers.

The first step in managing Gen Y is understanding who they are. According to the Census Bureau, Gen Y are those born between 1977 and 1995. Outnumbering the baby-boomer generation by 1.3 million, Gen Y will have a dramatic social impact and economic impact on the business world.

Employment analysts, generation experts and researchers have identified many unique characteristics of Gen Y to help employers better understand this segment of the work force:

might fear approaching the CEO, Gen Y workers go out of their way to get the CEO's ear.

- **Impatient:** Raised in a world dominated by technology and instant gratification, Gen Y does not have the patience to deal with outdated technology or slow-moving projects. This generation likes tight deadlines and fast-paced work.


- **Skeptical:** Generation Y grew up witnessing the scamming, cheating, lying and exploitation highlighted in the media, involving everyone from sports figures to politicians. They also watched parents and other family members lose their jobs to mergers and downsizing.

- **Adaptable, yet demand flexibility:** Gen Y-ers are used to adapting to various situations and are comfortable in a variety of work environments. However, they demand flexible schedules, work/life balance and put their family and friends before work.

- **Goal-oriented/ambitious:** While these workers usually put their non-work life first, they focus on output and getting the job done. Gen Y-ers are also efficient multi-taskers.

- **Technology-savvy:** Generation Y grew up in the age of technology and can't live without it. Surrounded by the latest gadgets, this is a "plugged-in" learning-oriented generation.

- **High expectations:** This generation has high expectations for themselves and for their employers. They aim to work better and faster than their colleagues and they expect respect, a decent salary and professional development in return.

Understanding and appreciating the qualities and values of Gen Y workers is essential if you want to successfully recruit and retain them. Next month learn how to attract and manage Generation Y, the workforce of the future. 

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## Outnumbering baby boomers by 1.3 million, Gen Y will have a social impact on the business world

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- **High-maintenance/needy:** Generation Y has grown up in a culture of praise, where every effort is rewarded. Their parents believed it was part of their job as a parent to build self-esteem and keep children at the center of the household. These children, now grown up, expect the same treatment from their college professors, managers and bosses.

- **Speak their mind:** This praised, self-confident generation favors self-expression over self-control. While generations before them