



**Friedman, Steven M.**  
**I LOST MY BLACKBERRY  
DOWN THE TOILET:**  
*And Other Generational  
Challenges in the Workplace*  
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A compact guide to managing intergenerational sensitivities in the real-estate workplace.

Today's managers, says the author, are often faced with four generations in one office: traditionalists (born before 1946), baby boomers (1946–1964), Gen Xers (1965–1980) and Millennials (1980–present). Each generation brings particular skills and expectations to the job, and each has to be handled with the appropriate managerial control to assure their positive contribution to the organization. The real-estate business, says Friedman, can find a beneficial use for all generational resources: the years of hard-won experience offered by the traditionalists; the team-playing, quality-consciousness of the baby boomers; the extended skill set of the Gen Xers; the technological savvy of the Millennials. In his experience, Friedman has learned that they also possess certain sensitivities that, if trod upon or left unaddressed, will cause many employees to jump ship. As he outlines salient characteristics of each generation, he points out contentious perceptions across the generational landscape—baby boomers misreading the Gen X work style as slack-

ing, Gen Xers thinking baby boomers are self-righteous and too political, traditionalists thinking neither exhibit proper respect—and offers generationally appropriate feedback tools. Friedman displays native good judgment (“Never talk down to anyone...respect the speed factor of each generation...seek to understand, then to be understood”) but while his raw, direct style is appealing, its expression is often amateurish: “Her educational background does not truly exist as she married at 19”; “The concept of having a virtual tour to sell a house is just in her mind silly.” This kind of garbled syntax seriously undercuts the otherwise effective, real-life strategies for implementing promising ideas.

Grammar aside, Friedman offers sound, operational advice.

