

Meet Generation NeXt
Testing Today's Students
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Generation NeXt 1982-1994?

- ✱ Up to 26 years old now
- ✱ "Baby Boom Echo"
- ✱ Huge cohort
HS graduation peaked in 2009
- ✱ Like the previous generation?
- ✱ Wanted, precious, protected.

Who are these students?

Are they different?

Are they really as different as they seem to be?

- Lifestage- like we were at that age?
- Developmental experiences
Physical
Neurological
Parenting
Social/ Cultural.
- Diverse- not all alike
- Social forces impact all
- All data/ "Modal traits"
- No stereotypes !
- No criticism !
- No blame !
- No excuses !
- How do these issues impact reaching goals?
- What are the implications for testing?

Implications for testing

- Have testing needs changed?
Different information/ feedback needs?
Are we testing for what matters ?

Workplace readiness, general/ specific?

- How we assess ?
Are we testing in ways/ times/ places that make sense today?
Sensitivity to different desired outcomes?
- Are we testing within functional systems?
Are processes and outcomes OK?
If not, what should we do?
And we should do something
- For we have data!

Very different parenting model- Reactive parenting

- “Parent as friend”
Counseling/ rational model
“authority”, consequences, experts
- Expect options/ choices
Value own opinion, self-importance, persistence
- Constant programming
External, self-supervision, initiative, relationships, reflection, imagination
- Supervision
Less at home, more out of home
Responsibility issues.

Self important

- Positive
Expect it to work out
Entitled
Expect to be taken care of
May expect academic success with little effort
- “Unlimited horizons” “Shallow optimism”, unrealistic, expect ease,
easily frustrated/ disappointed
- Self-esteem programming “Praise junkies”, limited feedback/ consequence,
sensitive/ defensive to criticism,
overrate own skills.

The Consumer Student

- Customer service expectations
entitled/ self-importance
immediate service/ impatience
preferences/ options/ choices

- ✱ Materialistic
 - acquisitive, not inquisitive
 - monetary/ lifestyle goals
 - not developmental goals
 - “get” not “become” (or even “do”)
- Utility calculus
 - cost/ benefit analysis for any “investment”
 - no effort without reward
 - no learning without utility.

AE- Academic Entitlement

If I have explained to my professor that I am trying hard I think he/she should give me some consideration with respect to my course grade.

66.2% of students agree, though virtually no faculty do

Fun loving

- Entertainment orientation
- “It is supposed to be fun”
- Limited expectation that they will ever have to do anything other than exactly what they want to do
- ✱ Possibly poor fit with traditional academic activities and workplace expectations.

The Talent Issue

- ✱ Want to “be able to”
- ✱ “If I had talent I could do that easily.”
- ✱ “Static” traits
- ✱ Effort is a sign of no talent
- ✱ “I’m just not good at that.”

Tech oriented/ High stimulation

- Generation Net/ Digital natives
- “Digital learners”
- Impacts all parts of life
- Prefer text to F2F
- Difficulty disconnecting
- Blur virtual and real
- Impacts their academic experience?
- Attention issues?

- Written a paper?
- Necessary for credibility
- Tech services engage.

According to ACT (and others)

- Core courses lack rigor to prepare students for college coursework success especially in math/ science
- Students identified as “college ready” often are not
- “Walk across the stage wearing a gold braid...”

Outcomes?

Many students who do earn degrees have not actually mastered the reading, writing and thinking skills we expect of college graduates.

Over the past decade, literacy among college graduates has actually declined.

Spellings Commission on the Future of Higher Education August 9, 2006

Graduates are underachieving in learning to communicate, critical thinking and problem solving, character development/ “moral reasoning”, citizenship, appreciation of diversity, ability to understand and participate in a global society, development of “broader interests” (lifelong learning) and in preparation for career.

- “Most colleges are seriously out of step with the real world in getting students ready to become workers in the postcollege world.” TIME
- Workplace issues “a pandemic of workplace unreadiness as today’s graduates are unable to think long term, handle details or delay gratification”
Mel Levine 2005 “Ready or not, here life comes”

Testing and Changing Generation NeXt

Improve Individual Appraisals

- Students tend to overrate skills
- Tend to be defensive to what they see as criticism; and challenge to their self-ratings
- Clear identifications of
 - interests- what they want to do
 - competencies- what they can do
 - aptitudes- what they may be able to do
 - expectations- be required to do
- Link to academic expectations
- Link to “real world”
 - Available/ needed
- Rely on

external
objective
quantifiable measures.

Testing for Change

- Part of the process
 - Formative and summative
- “Pre - post”
- Might look at what happens on between the pre and post tests
- Are students reaching desired goals?
- Student learning outcomes
- Are people using best practices?
- “Accountability”
- “Accreditation”
- Create a “testing” mentality culture
- When they ask you to do it...
- Partner with IR to rule the world!

Get Creative

Break out of old literacy, numeracy, communications paradigms

- “What does it take to be successful in school?”
- “What do workplaces really want?”
- “Critical thinking”
- Net literacy/ web competence
- “Emotional intelligence”
- Self-control, frustration tolerance, delay of gratification

Learning vs. learned

- In times of change, the learner will inherit the earth while the learned are beautifully equipped for a world that no longer exists.” Eric Hoffer

Questions/ Comments?
Resources?

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