

Information Seeking Behavior and the Generations

Generation	Traditionals (Silents, Veterans)	Boomers	X-ers	Millenials (Nexters)
Approximate dates of birth	1922-1943 (Pre-WWII)	1943-1960	1961-1980	1981-1999
Characteristics that influence information seeking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accustomed to top-down flow of information • Formal • Learning environment that is stable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal feedback • Interactive and non-authoritarian 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly independent • Entrepreneur • Comfortable with change • Raised with instant access • Want frequent, immediate feedback • Self-directed • Sample and learn by doing • Not attracted to classroom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Globally concerned • Diverse • Cyberliterate • Media savvy • Collaborative • Multitaskers • Teamwork • Technology • Multi-media
Information Seeking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Like materials that are organized and summarized. • Example: Reader's Digest • Dewey Decimal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to scan format. • Example: Business Week; USA Today; People 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prefer fewer words. • Don't read as much. • Visual stimulation – headlines, subheads, quotes, graphics, lists. • Example: Spin, Fast Company, Wired, chat-room dialogue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readers. • Lively and varied materials • Chat (Instant Messaging) • Search engine (Google)

Source: Zemke, R., Raines, C., and Filipczak, B. (2001). Generation Markers. *Across the Board*. 39(4):20; Zemke, R., Raines, C., Filipczak, C. (1999). Generation Gaps in the Classroom. *Training*. 36(11):48-54; Lancaster, L. C. (2003, October 15). The click and clash of generations. *Library Journal*, 36-39.