

# TEAM-BUILDING FOR THE FANTASTIC FOUR

**T**oday's employers are faced with the challenge of bringing together people from four generations to meet the goals of their organisation. Each generation brings diverse perspectives, values, needs and expectations to the workplace. Changes in the workplace have made company and organisational structures very flat, with limited upward mobility, which causes people from different generations to compete for the same jobs.

The result is that in today's work environment, no job is safe and no career is assured. This causes managers and employees to identify more with their own generation and blame other generations for workplace problems. Because generational conflicts in the workplace are based on a difference in values, ambitions, views, mindsets and demographics, each generation is motivated by different messages in the workplace.

### BRIDGING THE GENERATIONAL DIVIDE

It is only natural to experience some conflicts in an intergenerational workforce. But how can organisations address these to limit division and maximise the benefits instead? The answer may be found in team-building programmes, according to Ms Vivienne Teo, Senior Consultant of Team Building Solutions at consulting firm macsimize.

Learning to blend the distinctive creative energies and accommodate the different working styles of these four generations

will create a dynamic team, says Ms Teo. Helping employees from divergent generations develop skills that enable them to appreciate their differences will also greatly enhance production, quality of performance and job satisfaction, she adds.

“What team-building programmes do is to really open the doors to more underlying issues of an organisation. We, at macsimize, encourage and give a wake-up call to employees by giving them a hint of what is best for them during team-building events,” says Ms Teo.



### THE RIGHT BALANCE

Generational differences are here to stay, never to be fully reconciled. But organisations can make an effort to acknowledge the validity of differences and focus on changing how they manage, motivate and work with differing generations.

In the meantime, organisations can reap the benefits of the diversity provided by workers of different generations. “Age differences bring balance,” reflects Ms Teo. “You have to bring balance to the workplace: younger workers, older workers, every organisation needs to have balance and it can be good or bad, depending on how the staff makes out of their working environment.”

Embracing your differences is key to the efficiency of your operation. Knowing and appreciating the differences is half the battle won. How about winning the other half of the battle? Team-building may just provide the winning edge.

### MACSIMIZING TEAM-BUILDING SOLUTIONS

Prior to embarking on any team-building exercise, macsimize trainers will perform a personality profile for each and every participant to help them understand themselves and one another better before activities begin. This is to get them to learn how to be more sensitive and tactful when picking up things along the way, says Mr Sunao Fujii, Director of macsimize.

The HR consultancy also debriefs participants after exercises and relates relevant themes to the staff's specific work duties and behaviours. “Debriefing may sound like a typical and easy thing to do, but we do differently is to work closely with our clients to ensure that participants will commit to taking the learnings from the team-building event back to the workplace, and this is what makes us different from other consultancies,” Mr Fujii adds.

macsimize is a training consultancy which also offers leadership and organisation development programmes on top of tactExchange, a team-building solutions for corporates. macsimize is also run by an international team of facilitators who come from different countries such as Japan, Malaysia, Scotland, Singapore and Taiwan.