



Managing Across Generations

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Managing Across Generations

Two views of generational differences:

1. Generations are distinct
2. Employees are “generic”

Managing Across Generations

Traditional and Silent
generations
(c. 1922-45)

Baby Boomers
(c. 1946-1962)

Generation X
(c. 1963-79)

Millennials
(c. 1980-2002)

Limitations to this approach

Traditionals (1922-1945)

“Greatest Generation”

Passed childhood in roaring 20s

Came of age in great depression

Parents of baby boomers

Responsible for prosperity after WWII

Silent Generation (1932-1945)

Cusp of the
Traditionals and
the Baby Boom
Generation

Born around Great
Depression and
World War II,
fought during the
Korean War

Often neglected or
placed with
"Greatest",
Generation

Traditional Workplace Characteristics

Value frugality and hard work

Value contributing to common cause

Sense of faith in government and big business

Loyal to companies

Accurate and dependable

A photograph of a man in a blue t-shirt with the words "may I help you?" printed on the back. He is standing in a store aisle, looking towards the camera. The background is slightly blurred, showing shelves and other store elements.

Traditionals
More than Just a
Greeter

Smallest portion
of workforce-
8%

Not just Wal-Mart
greeters!

Traditionals Management Techniques

A photograph of two people in a workshop or laboratory setting. A woman in a red long-sleeved shirt is in the foreground, smiling and working on a wooden surface. A man in a grey shirt is standing behind her, also smiling. The background is slightly blurred, showing shelves and equipment.

Accommodate their
needs

Help them adapt to
and embrace new
systems

Provide them with a
fulfilling
experience

Make them mentors

Traditionals Managing Volunteers

Give appropriate
titles

Explain job
contribution and
importance

Lavishly express
appreciation

Traditionals
Bottom Line

Easy to write off,
but don't!
Help them adapt
Accommodate,
Modify, Mentor
Recognize
achievements



Baby Boomers
(1946-1962)

**Post War
Affluence**

“Special”



*Baby Boomers
What Shaped the
generation?*

Modern
marketing

Rock music,
transistor radio

Viet Nam war,
Watergate

Baby Boomers In General

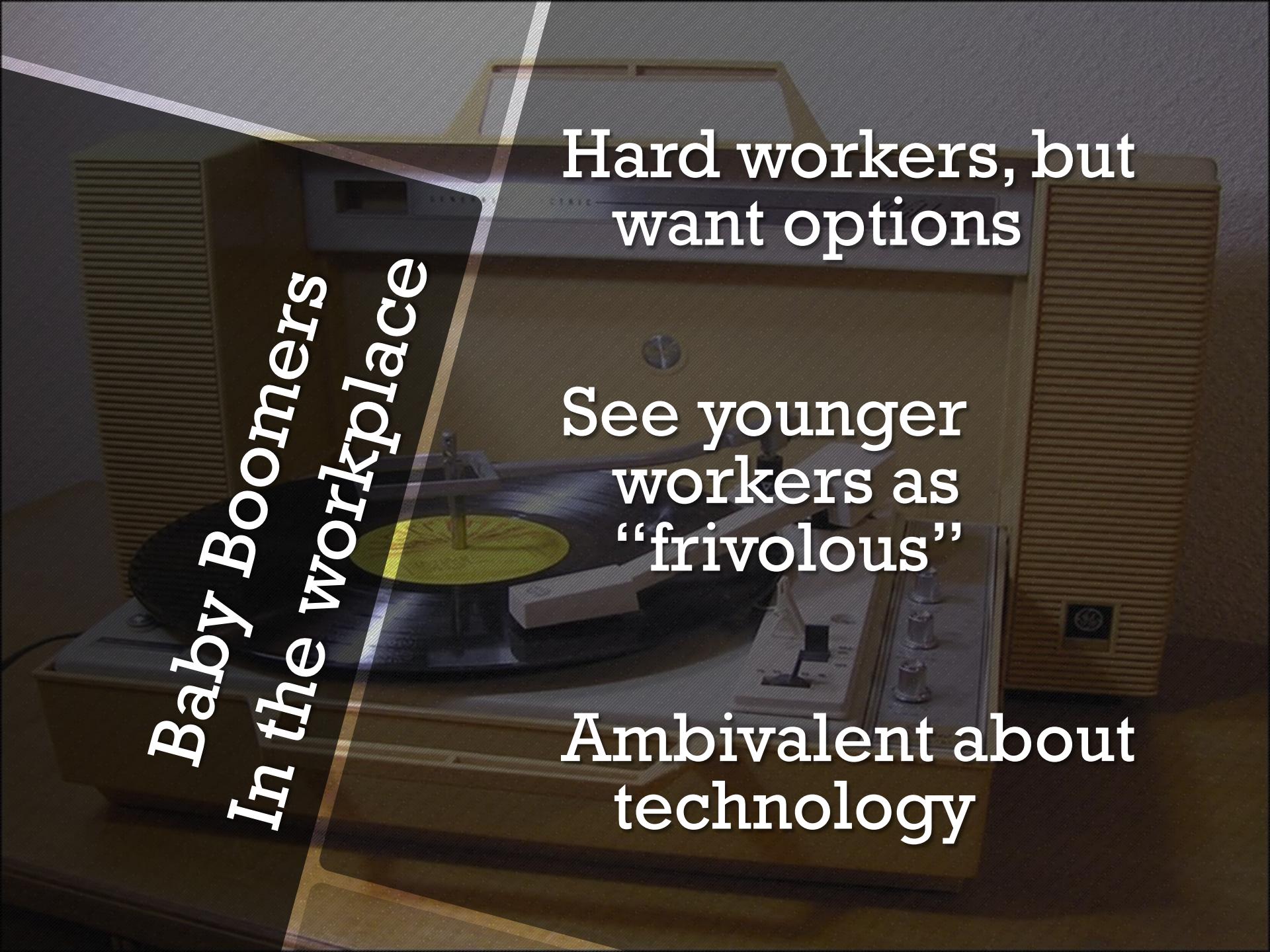
Mistrust of authority

Company
commitment and
loyalty

Sacrifice for success

Creativity and
adventure

Independent
judgments

A vintage GE stereo system is shown in the background, featuring a turntable with a yellow record, a central speaker cabinet, and two large rectangular speakers on either side. The system is made of dark wood with a light-colored horizontal grain. The turntable has a black mat and a silver tonearm. The central speaker has a circular logo on it. The overall aesthetic is mid-20th-century.

Baby Boomers In the Workplace

Hard workers, but
want options

See younger
workers as
“frivolous”

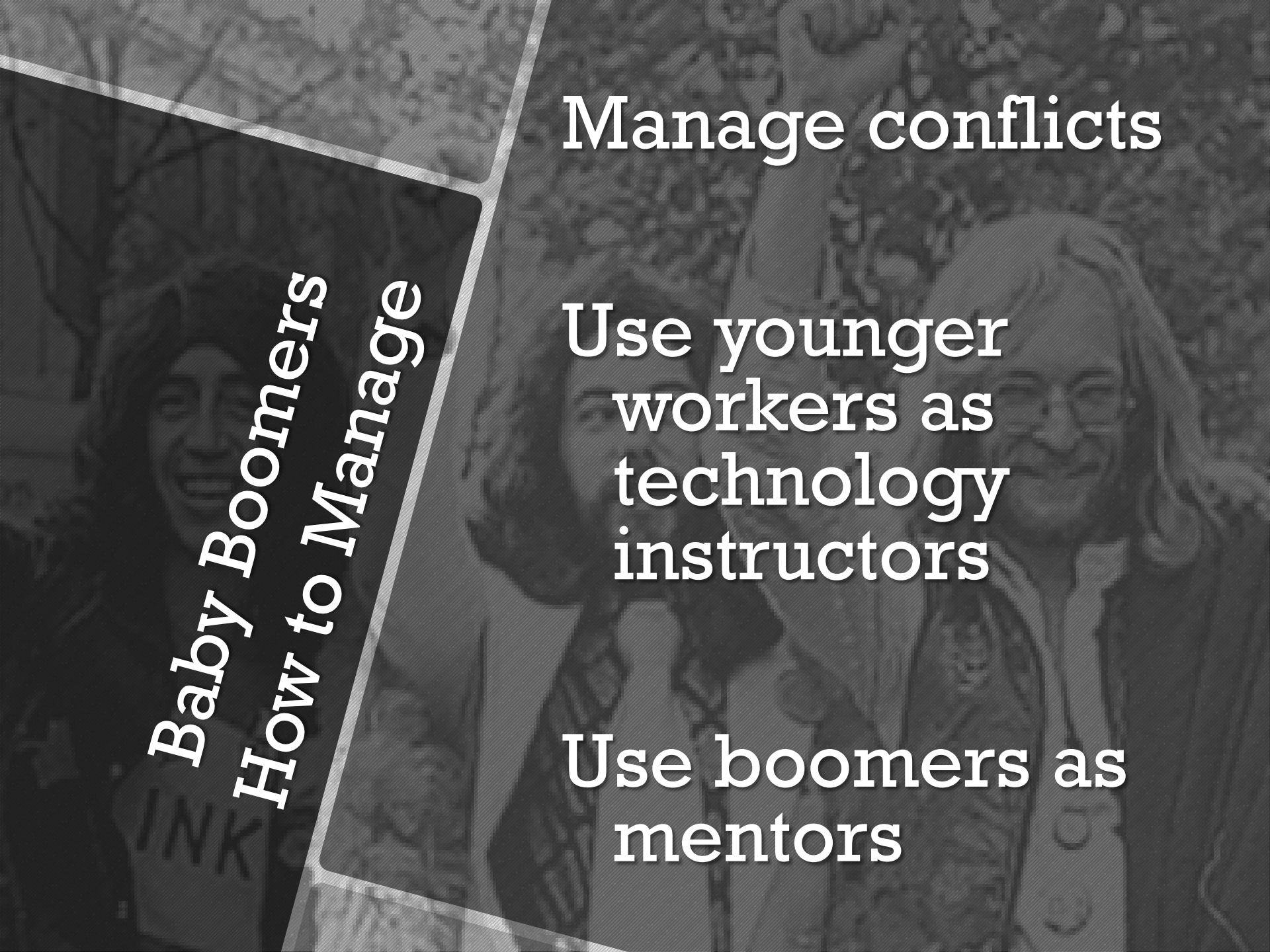
Ambivalent about
technology

A woman with blonde hair, wearing a blue and white patterned top and blue shorts, is sitting on a beach chair. She is looking down at a book she is holding in her hands. The background shows a sandy beach and some beach umbrellas.

Baby Boomers How to Manage

Flexible working
arrangements

Retirement
options

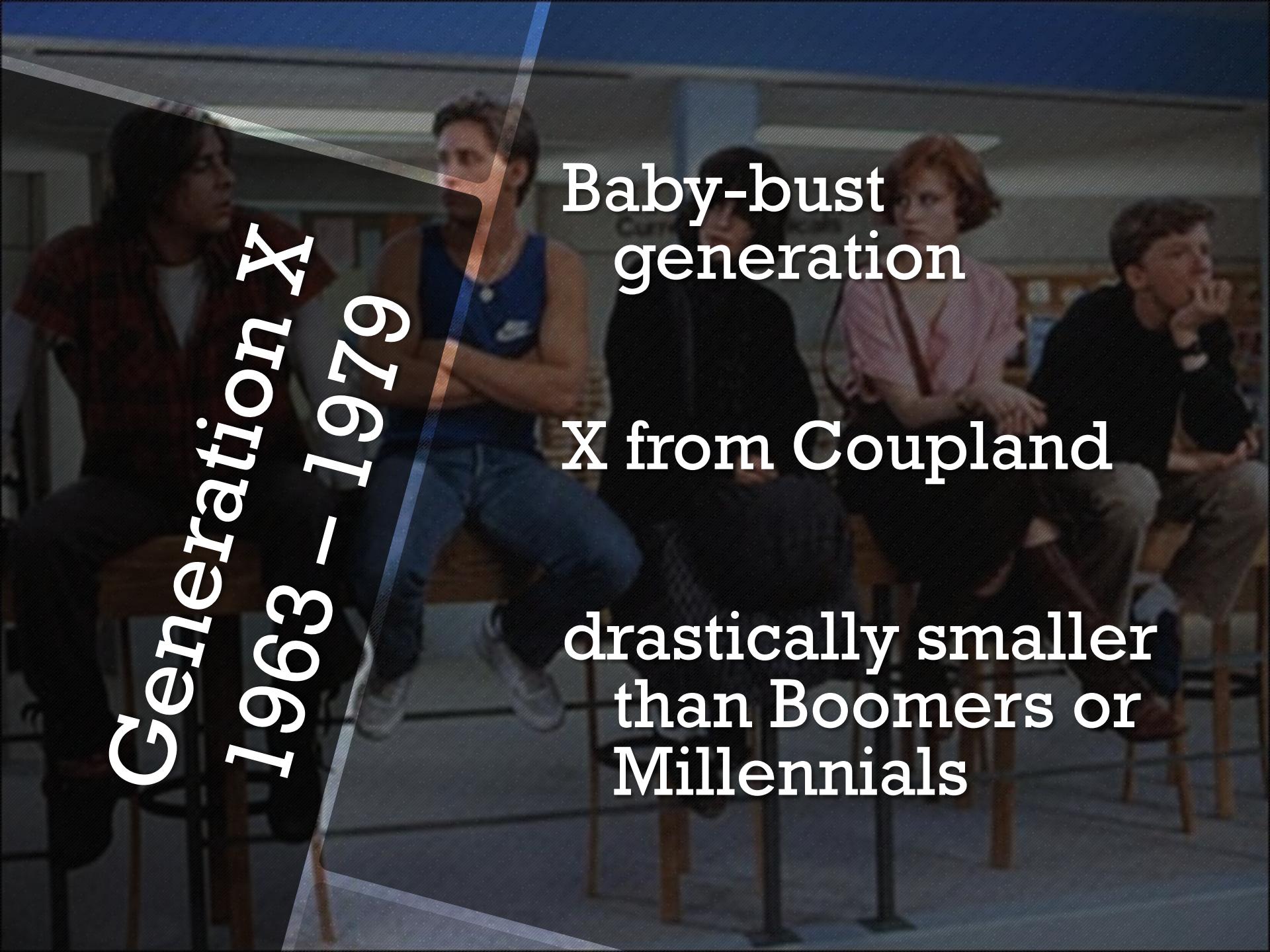


Baby Boomers How to Manage

Manage conflicts

Use younger
workers as
technology
instructors

Use boomers as
mentors

A photograph of a group of young people, likely Generation X, sitting in bleachers in what appears to be a school or sports arena. They are looking towards the right side of the frame. The image is partially obscured by a dark diagonal band containing text.

Generation X
1963 - 1979

Baby-bust
generation

X from Coupland

drastically smaller
than Boomers or
Millennials

A black and white photograph of a man with a mustache, wearing a dark suit and tie, looking slightly to his left with a neutral expression. He is positioned in front of a vintage Donkey Kong arcade game. The game's marquee is brightly lit with the title 'DONKEY KONG' in large blue letters, with 'Nintendo' written below it. The game's artwork features the iconic Donkey Kong character and a monkey. The background shows a dark, possibly indoor, setting with some other arcade equipment visible.

Generation X
What kinda \$h*! did
they see?

Watched parents
work long hours

Divorce & single
parent
households

Grew up as “latch-
key kids”

Generation X
What kinda \$h*! did
they see?

Corporate
downsizing

Watched parents
get laid-off from
long term jobs

Were working
during dot-com
boom/bust

*Generation X
What kinda \$h*! did
they see?*

Arcades, Pac-
Man, Atari

MTV sound-
bytes

AIDS

Generation X
What do they care
about?

Value autonomy &
independence

No "paying dues" -
Competence

Seek to acquire
skills & expertise

Generation X

How do they work?

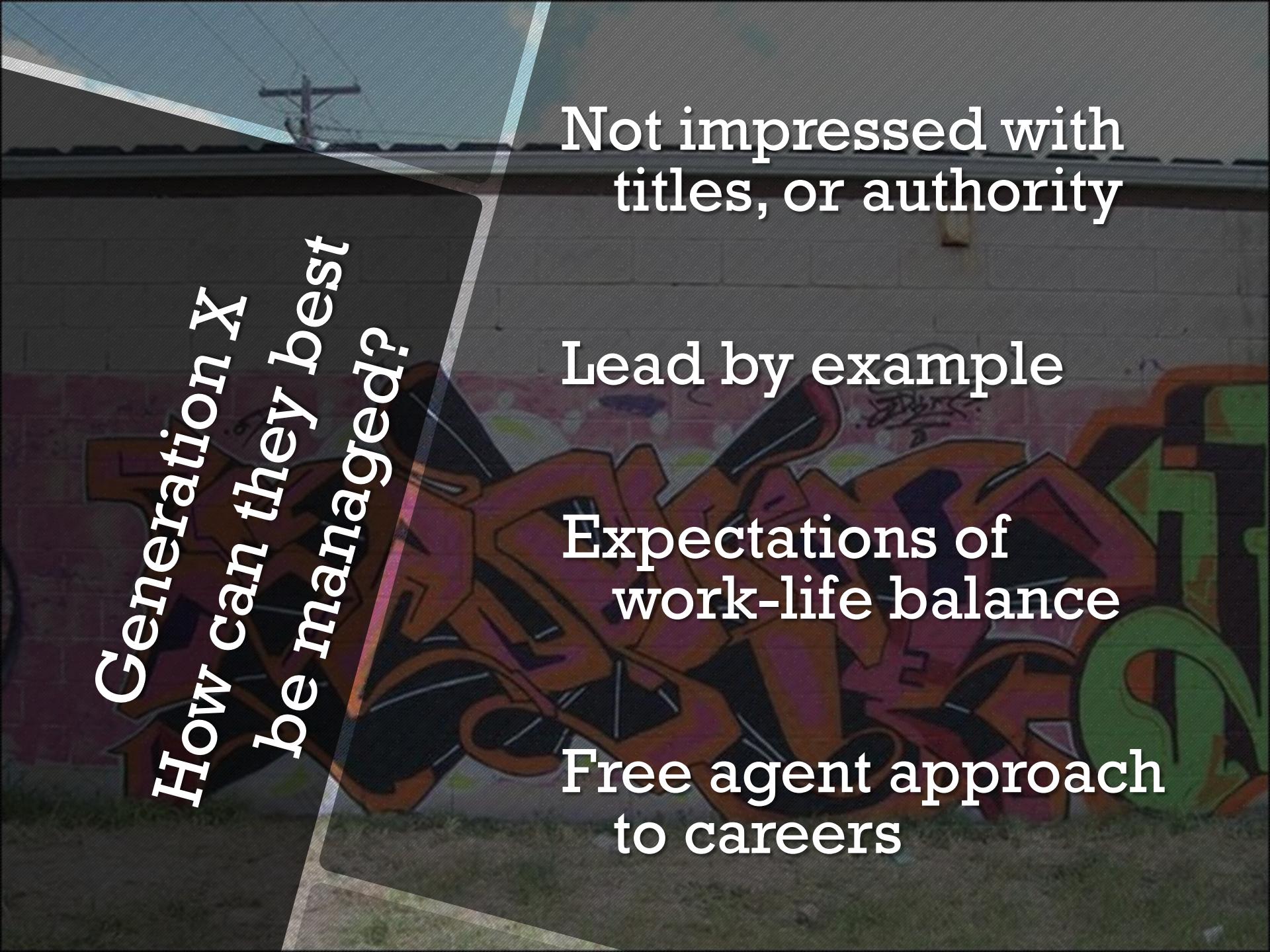
No company loyalty, but
loyal to individuals

Believe in balancing
work-life objectives

Reluctant leaders

Technologically literate

Change & diversity



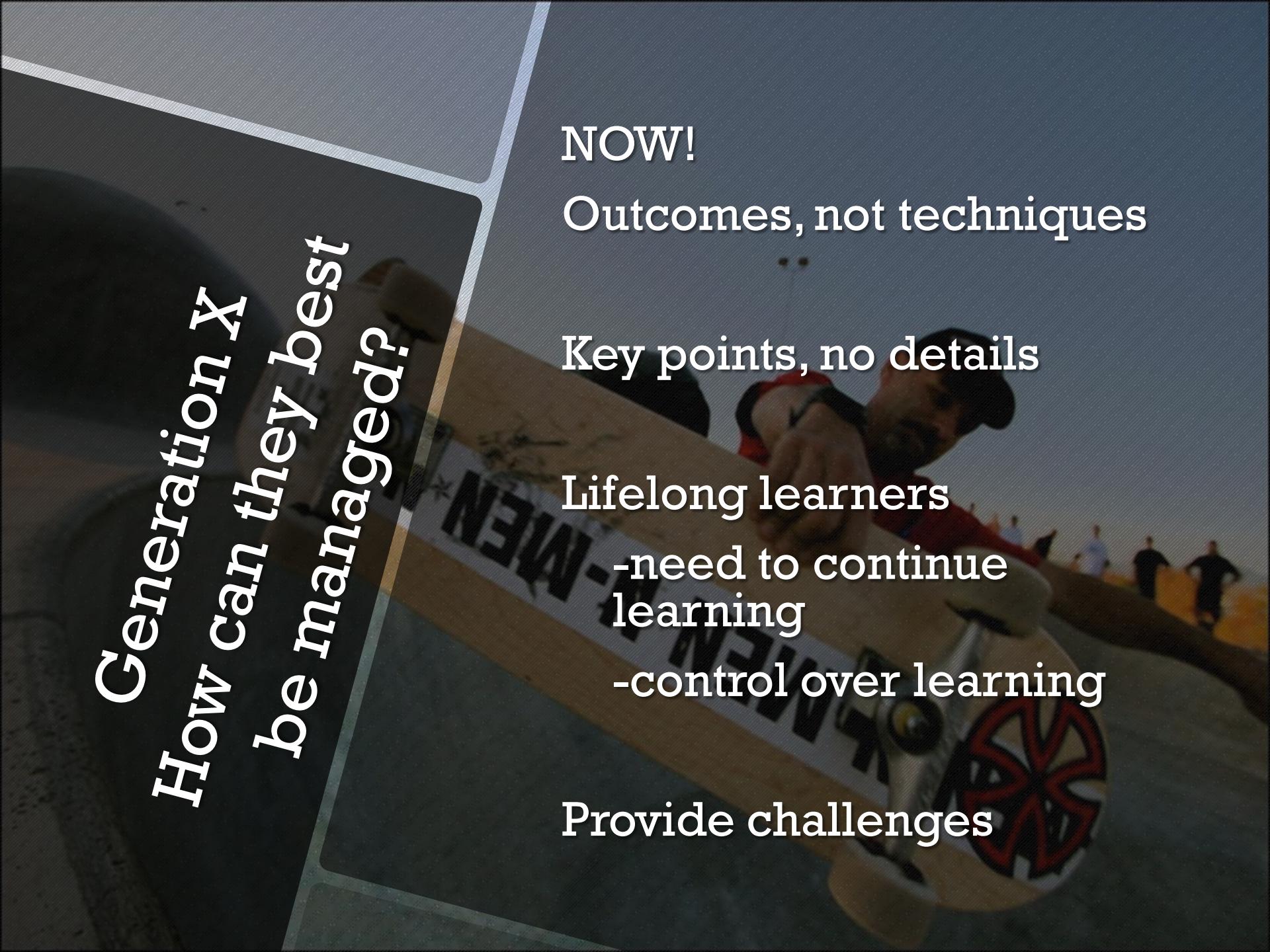
Generation X How can they best be managed?

Not impressed with
titles, or authority

Lead by example

Expectations of
work-life balance

Free agent approach
to careers

A photograph of a person riding a longboard down a ramp. The ramp has a large 'NEW' sign on it. The background shows a clear sky and some trees. The image is slightly blurred, suggesting motion.

Generation X How can they best be managed?

NOW!

Outcomes, not techniques

Key points, no details

Lifelong learners

- need to continue learning
- control over learning

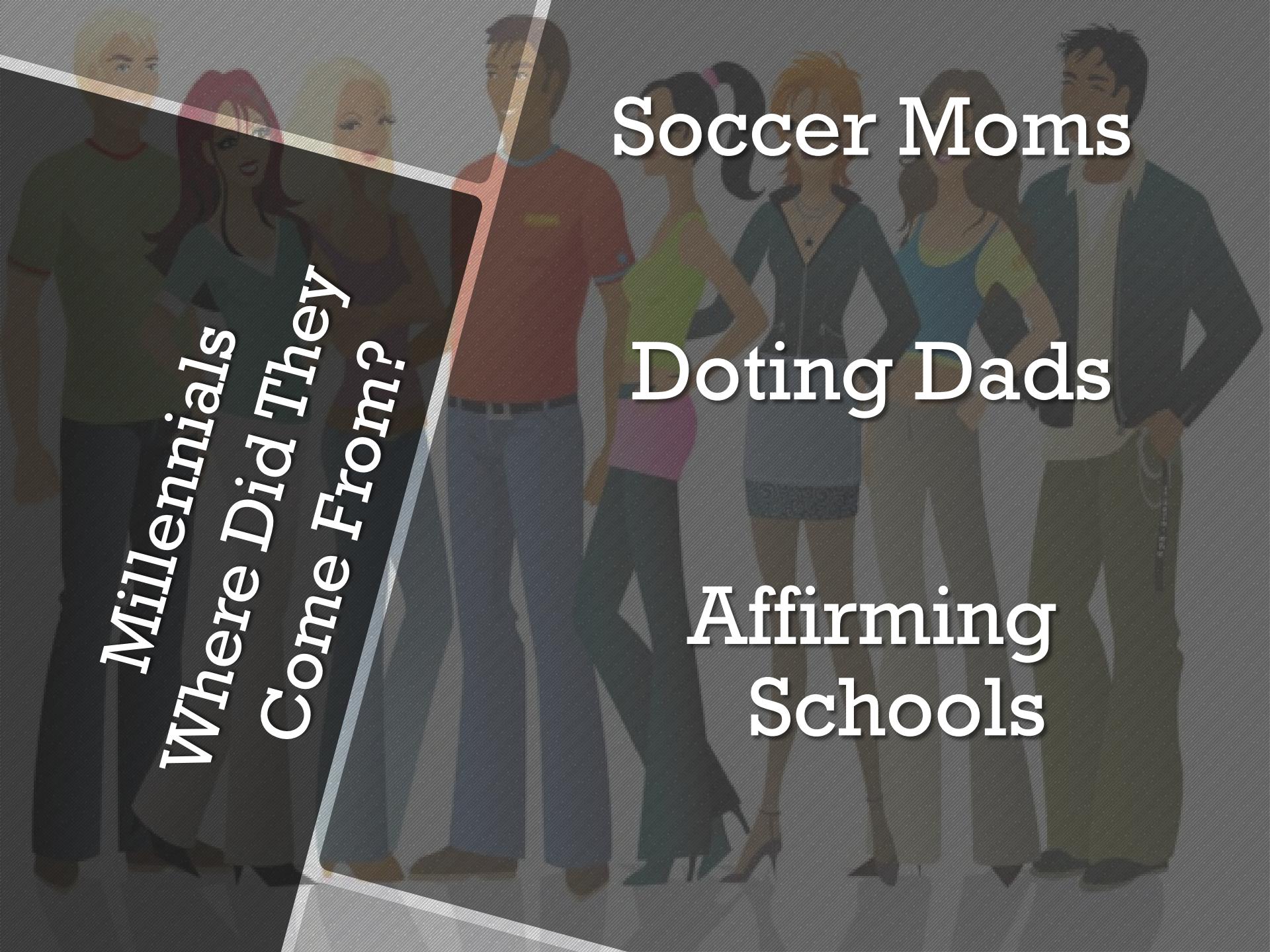
Provide challenges



Millennials
(1980-2000)

Echo-boomers

Immersed in
technology



Millennials
Where Did They
Come From?

Soccer Moms

Doting Dads

Affirming
Schools

A woman with a tattooed arm is looking directly at the camera. She has a surprised or intense expression. Her arm is covered in colorful, intricate tattoos. The background is a tattoo parlor with many framed pictures on the wall.

Millennials
Where Did They
Come From?

Challenger
Berlin Wall
Gulf Wars
Afghanistan
9-11



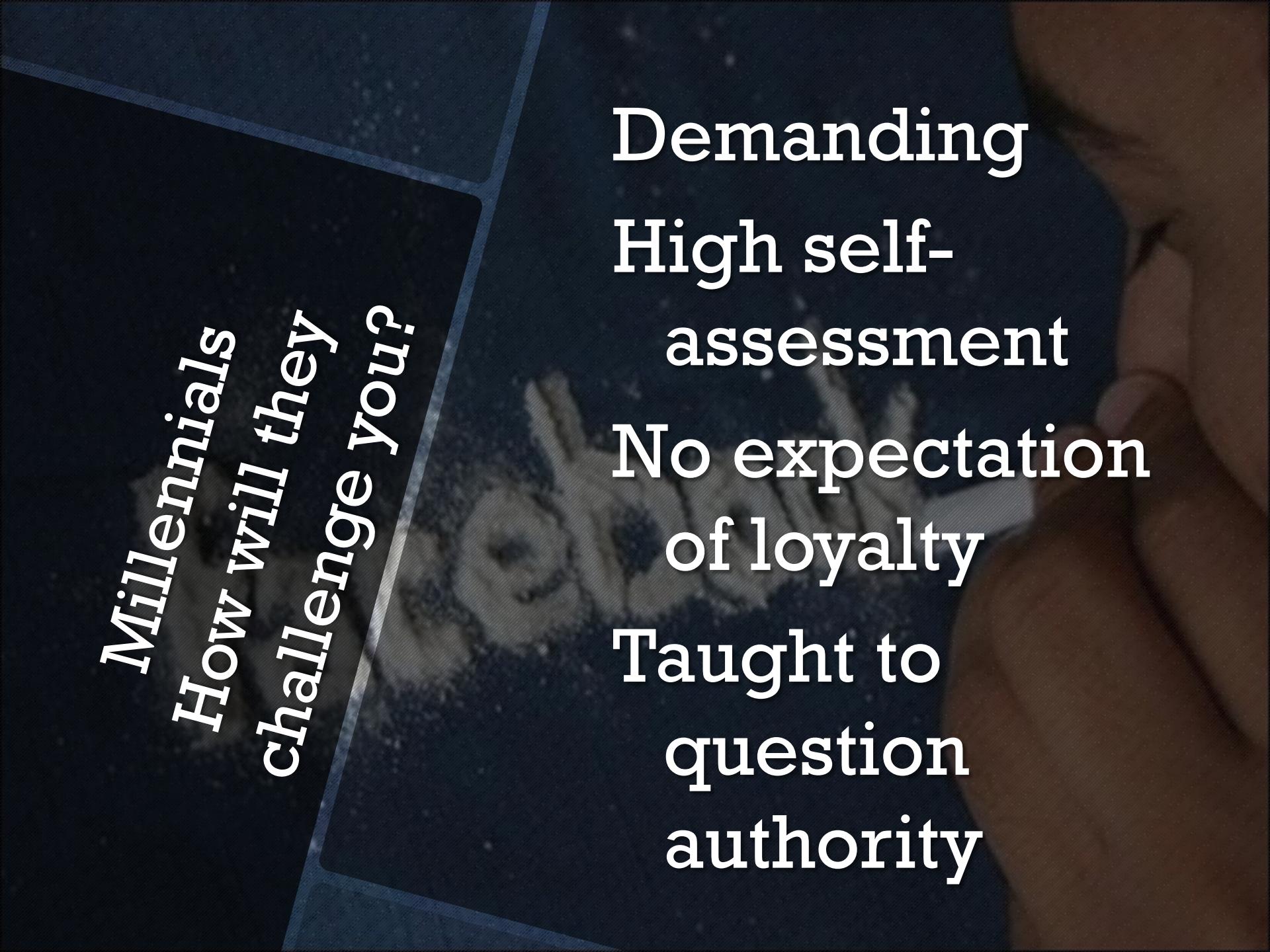
Millennials
What Are Their
Assets?

Technological
comfort
Cooperative
Accepting
Flexible



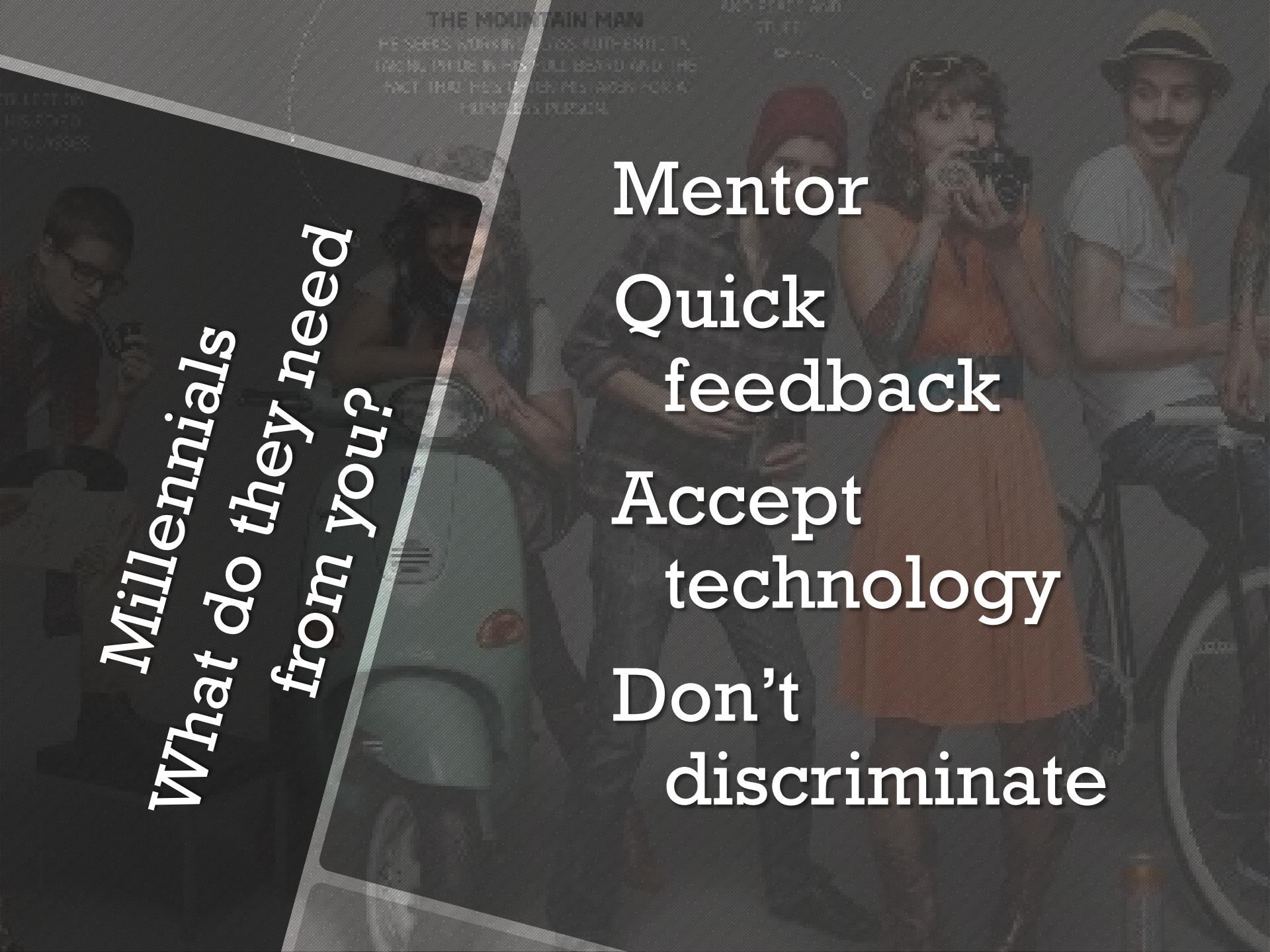
Millennials
What Are Their
Assets?

Optimism
Idealism
Independence
Balance



Millennials
How will they
challenge you?

Demanding
High self-
assessment
No expectation
of loyalty
Taught to
question
authority

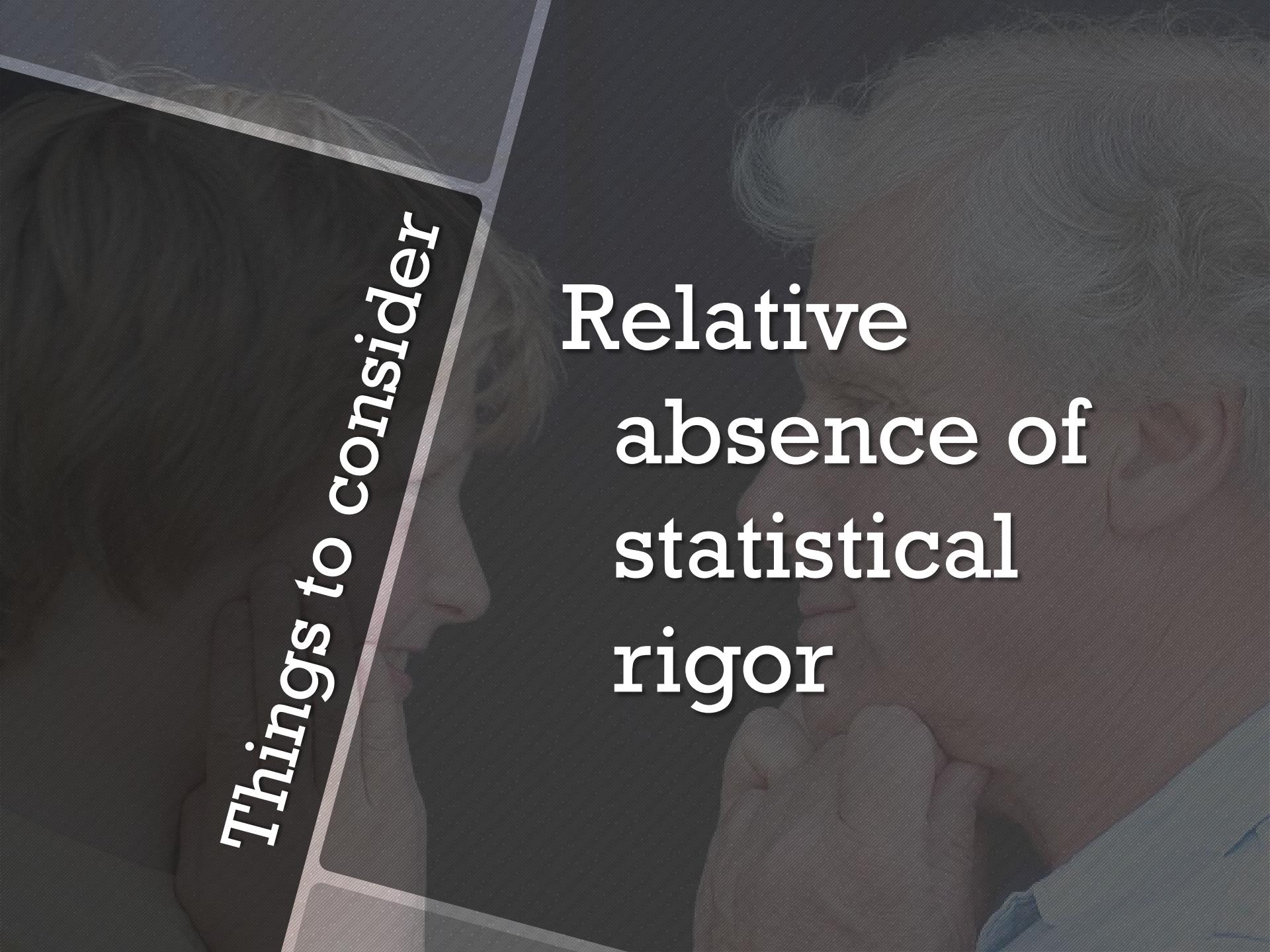


Millennials
What do they need
from you?

Mentor
Quick
feedback
Accept
technology
Don't
discriminate

Millennials
What do they need
from you?

Challenge
Professional
development
Internal
mobility



Things to consider

Relative
absence of
statistical
rigor

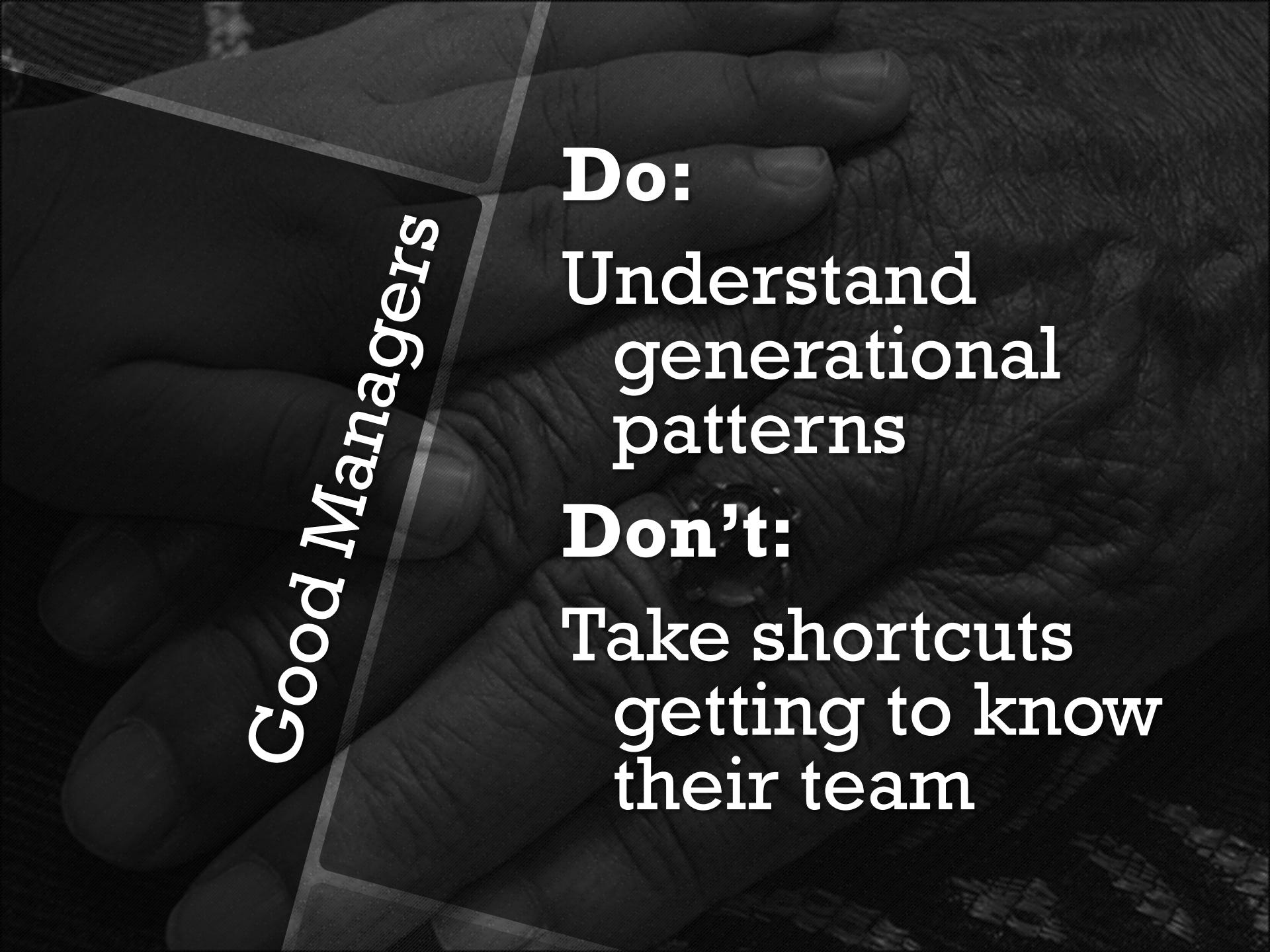


Things to consider

Differences
within
generations
are greater
than
differences
between
generations

Things to consider

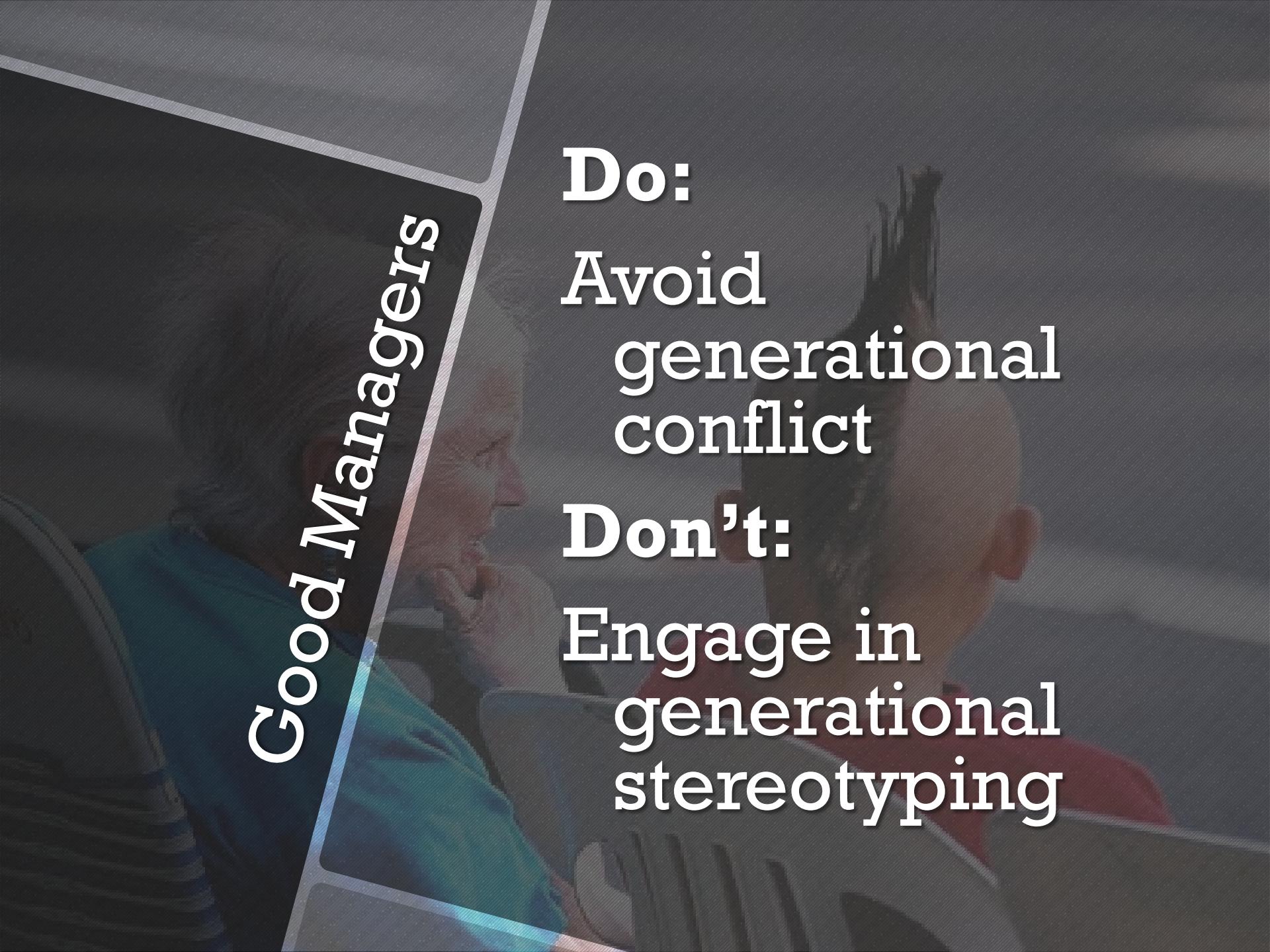
A generalization
applied to an
individual is a
stereotype



Good Managers

Do:
Understand
generational
patterns

Don't:
Take shortcuts
getting to know
their team



Good Managers

Do:
Avoid
generational
conflict

Don't:
Engage in
generational
stereotyping