Welcome to Two-Minute Tuesday. I’m Audrey Savas. Our topic today is how five generations can work together effectively.

In the past, the workplace typically consisted of two groups:
• The old-timers who were stuck-in-the-past and about to retire.
• And the youngsters who were the big-idea intruders trying to climb the corporate ladder.

Today, the workplace mix is much more complicated with five generations working side-by-side. Each generation has been influenced by historical events and social trends and their workstyles reflect that.

Traditionals - the Depression Babies - tend to be loyal, independent, respectful of authority and dependable, with advanced communication skills.

Baby Boomers - the Woodstock Generation - tend to be well-educated, question authority, have excellent teamwork skills, and thrive on adrenaline-charged assignments.

Gen Xers – born after 1964 - tend to be independent, family-focused, intolerant of bureaucracy, hardworking, and socially responsible.

Gen Ys – born post 1980 - tend to be highly socialized, loyal, technologically savvy, socially responsible, and require a work-life balance.

Gen Zs - born after 1995 - tend to be technologically dependent, closely tied to their parents, tolerant of alternative lifestyles, and involved in social activism.

So how do you work with different generational groups? Here are 5 tips from the authors of the book, Generations.

Tip 1: Understand work styles. Traditionals and boomers don’t like to be micromanaged, while Gen Y and Z crave detailed instruction.

Tip 2: Consider generational values. Boomers value teamwork and cooperation, while Gen X prefers to make independent decisions and move on.

Tip 3: Find a generationally appropriate fix. For example a boomer who is frustrated by the lack of experience of a Gen Y can become a valued mentor.
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Tip 4. Find commonality.
- Traditionals and Gen Ys both tend to value stability.
- Traditionals and boomers both crave learning.
- Gen Xers and Ys place a high value on work-life balance, and
- Gen Ys and Zs are technologically adept.

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Tip 5: Learn from each other.
- For example traditionals and boomers have knowledge that younger workers need.
- Gen Xers are widely known for their fairness.
- Gen Ys are technology wizards, and
- Gen Zs hold clues to future business trends.

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While these findings are backed by research, they are stereotypes. But we can use this knowledge to help frame how we interact with others.

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