



*Mo Collins* is a New Economy specialist with more than 20 years of public sector, non-profit and entrepreneurial experience. She has launched and scaled multiple tech-based economic development initiatives, earning both national and international awards and is a published academic and online author, writing on topics associated with technology innovation, networking and entrepreneurship. Look for her upcoming book *WE: Women Entrepreneurs*, for release in spring 2017.

## Bridging Generations: Who Will Lead Us?

### SUMMARY

There are three distinct generations of leadership in the workforce today. As we enter the New Economy, conflict between these generations has ramped up in unexpected ways, and suggests a different leadership paradigm is needed.

Current leadership is dominated by Baby Boomers. They have been slow to retire in the face of uncertain economic times and as many as 25% report they do not intend to retire at all. Boomers have economic wisdom and tremendous leadership expertise, but their collective value is diminishing as economic rules are rapidly changing in the face of a global, technology-driven world economy.



The shift to the New Economy has accelerated the leadership value of Millennials; their tech skills and core values are a perfect fit for the New Economy. Millennials are eager to 'get on with it' and are poised to implement technology innovation and new workplace culture across industry. Change however, is hard.

Generation Xer's are squeezed in the middle of these two heavy-hitting demographics. Generation Xer's are sitting on their hands on the sidelines; there is little room at the top until Boomers retire, and many feel usurped by changing culture and business practices which cater to the leadership skills of Millennials.

In the midst of our current economic shifts, the leadership assets of all these generations are needed to guide our communities forward. A new paradigm which extracts the leadership skills and expertise brought by each generation will move our business and communities forward, but differently than in the past.

Learn from multiple communities who have built new, collaborative leadership models around flatter organizational structures, collaborative leadership and lattice vs. ladder career paths.

### KEY POINTS AND TAKEAWAYS

- Intergenerational leadership conflicts have emerged in public and private sector organizations as our economy and culture have experienced unprecedented, rapid change.
- Each generation (Boomers, Generation Xer's and Millennials) bring leadership skills and expertise that is needed to guide communities and industry forward in this global economy.
- Learn from communities who are experimenting with flatter, collaborative leadership roles; taking advantage of the skills, expertise and cultural assets of the various generations in the workforce to navigate the shift to a New Economy.