

*The young Generation Y demands its place in the working world, which is characterized by Generation X – conflict inevitable.*

## ARGO study 2013

# Engagement across Generations: The XY-Challenge

*“Young people have a completely different attitude towards work – how do I deal with that? How do I find good young people, and what do they want? Which role models do they want to learn from? How do I motivate them to acquire a taste for the ‘old’ rules? What does it take to keep them in the ‘war for talents’? How can I deal with the arguments that come up between old and young? How do I get my older colleagues to deal with new approaches?”*

Questions like those are asked again and again during many of our projects. A good reason to examine this topic with the ARGO study 2013.

We addressed the following three topics and the questions were answered by 529 persons of all generations:

1. What are the different perceptions of the generations with respect to expectations, work attitudes and approaches?

2. Which sensitivity to the topic of Generations is there in companies, and how is this issue taken into consideration in the company?

3. Which aspects should special attention be paid to in the future in order to enable good cooperation characterized by learning from one another?

Let's pick some significant results:

1) The results regarding attitudes and expectations associated with work were surprising. Representatives of both generations agree on an unexpected number of aspects, for example that further training possibilities are an important concern (X: 83%, Y: 85%), or that compromises must be made in self-fulfillment in the context of work (X: 63%, Y: 59%). Two aspects in which there was a significant difference between

Figure 1: Attitudes to work and approaches - Self-descriptions of Gen X and Gen Y



Gen X and Gen Y also came as a surprise: A substantially larger part of Gen X considers quickly bringing about change that makes sense (X: 49%, Y: 37%) and being able to freely express their personal opinion (X: 65%, Y: 51%) justified concerns. Gen Y confirms willingness to compromise signifi-

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cantly more often on both topics (X: 47%, Y: 52% and X: 28%, Y: 39%, respectively). A possible explanation for this result may be found in the different classification: What is deemed to be a realistic demand or quick change by Gen X, is an expression of compromise for Gen Y.

When it comes to self-descriptions regarding their attitude towards work, surprisingly enough, Generations Y and X are more alike than they stand apart: differences in line with hypotheses are shown in gradual nuances, but not in opposite characteristics (Figure 1).

There were hardly any differences in the approach towards leadership: both generations show comparable motivations. The appeal of a management position lies especially in the opportunity to develop oneself further; lack of time for family and friends is experienced as the main obstacle.

2) There is only little awareness of possible areas of tension: only 19% see tension which is openly discussed; 26% perceive tension which is, however, not talked about. The generations agree on these views. The types of tension that were most frequently named spontaneously occur in discrepancies in attitude towards work and a lack of fairness: Gen X experiences unfairness in income despite their expert knowledge and their experience; in contrast, Gen Y criticizes that performance and commitment are not sufficiently taken into account in remuneration. When it comes to working attitude, what bothers the young generation is primarily the older generation's great need for security; in turn, the older generation is annoyed by the young people's looking for the meaning of an activity and their constant desire for feedback: 39% of Gen X consider an active feedback culture well implemented; for 32% of Gen Y it is non-existent.

Both generations have a similar view on dealing with change: both confirm that change is much easier for Gen Y and that their attitude towards new things is a lot more positive. The two generations also agree that mutual respect is missing; a lack of confidence in the young ones versus little acceptance of the experience of the older generation.

3) For good cooperation between the generations, a number of topics will gain importance in the opinion of both generations (Figure 2). Generational differences in these views are shown insofar as Generation Y puts an emphasis on the possibilities of personal development, transparent decisions and a healthy workload. Generation Xers assume that the reputation of the company and exemplary managers will become increasingly important.

Figure 2: Current and future importance of topics for good integration of Gen Y



Members of both generations perceive many possibilities of learning from each other, both for themselves and their counterpart. Members of Generation X are aware that they can learn from the younger generation how to deal with new technologies and new media, as well as flexibility and willingness to change; from the Gen Y point of view, creativity and lateral thinking can also be added. It is interesting to see that Generation Y mainly benefits from the experience of Generation X and the related technical and system knowledge. Other topics such as calm, serenity or patience clearly lag behind as useful role model effects in the view of both generations.

The combination of the results of the study, literature and what we experience in our everyday work creates a clear picture, which we will increasingly take account of in our way of working. There is less difference between the generations than expected on many topics. A discrepancy is created where different associations and frames of reference regarding the same topic. For example: Feedback is important to both as a topic. Gen X strongly associates feedback with "pointing out mistakes", while Gen Y, with the background of Social Media, considers it as constant confirmation. Meaning is also important to both. For Gen X it tends to be a superordinate abstract term; for Gen Y it is a direct claim which anyone should express in their activities.

To investigate these connotations, identify differences rather than live them as an unspoken reservation and to create understanding of it across the generations – that's the task of both generations. Then there's nothing in the way of the willingness to mutually learn from each other and to assume management responsibility.



# SOCIALS

## HR Arena 2012:

In September 2012, the HR Arena 2012, the largest national HR Conference, took place in Zagreb. ARGO zagreb was invited to participate in two panel discussions: Tomislav Bekeć moderated the panel on the topic Talent Management. HR Managers from different industries – from the Croatian post to IBM Croatia – discussed the expectations of top management regarding the topic of Talent Management, the role of executives in this context and the impact on the operating result.

Mislav Spajić participated as an expert in the panel dealing with Corporate Culture and discussed the approach of ARGO. The discussion focused especially on the importance of the commitment and role model effect of Top Management regarding the shaping and change of culture and was met with great approval.



## Christmas present

In 2012 it was the turn of ARGO munich to choose an organization which would receive the Christmas present of the ARGOnauts, a donation of € 4,500.

Managing Director Johannes Neuner chose the association "Horizont e.V.". The association, founded in 1997 by actress Jutta Speidel, helps homeless children and their mothers. The organization supports the children not only on school issues, but they and their mothers also receive support in developing confidence, courage, self-esteem and self-confidence. The objective is for them to leave the "Horizont" house, where they find a temporary home, with a great deal of perspectives for the future.

## Aboard



**Alan Ramić** who has addressed the topics of Leadership and Sales in a long-standing cooperation, has joined ARGO zagreb as an employee.

**Olha Pashko** Olha Pashko has supported ARGO lviv since December 2012 with a focus on management training in business and public administration.

ARGO vienna also has a new colleague: After Oliver Bender, **Claudia Attar** joined as the second Junior Consultant as of 2013. With a lot of international experience, the psychology graduate is gradually growing into our projects.



## Five Paths to Sales Success: Sales Approach Model

What kind of Sales issues does your company face in the turbulent markets of today?

Better informed customers?

Greater competition?

Even lower margins at the end of negotiations?

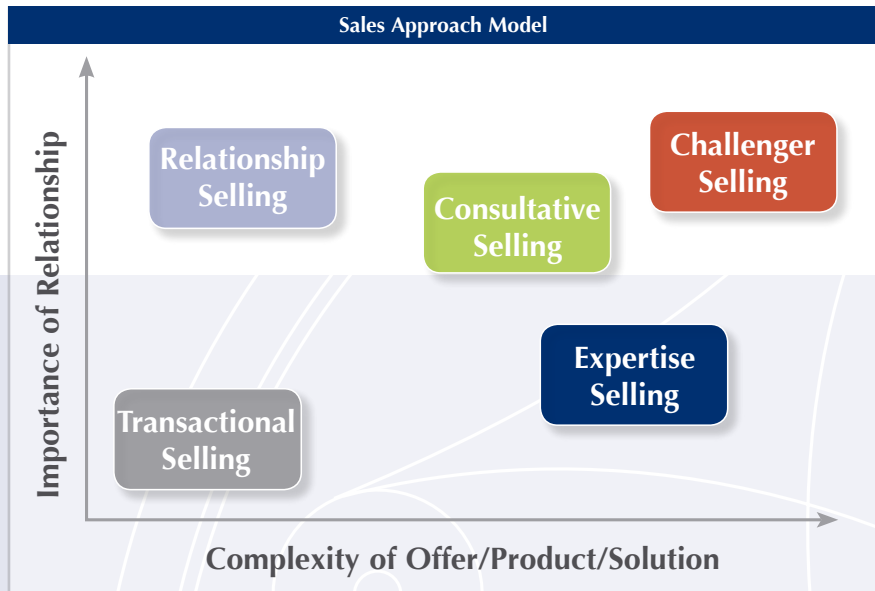
Sales people that sell only a fraction of your product portfolio and usually the less profitable ones?

Big turnover in your Sales force – the best Salesman leaving?

Whatever issue you have within your Sales organization, the root of problem very often lies in not using the appropriate path of selling.

That is why ARGO has developed a framework to help organizations with those Sales issues they face. It is based on differentiating five different approaches to Sales, which show great differences in competency, style, planning of Sales people and also how to lead them: Transactional Selling, Relationship Selling, Expertise Selling, Consultative Selling and Challenger Selling.

We have often experienced that organizations are either not aware of these five ways to achieve Sales targets, or they do not change their usual approach according to market changes.



Sales success nevertheless depends on choosing the right path due to complexity of products, knowledge of customers, competition situation and so on. Get more information about this from our experts and use the corresponding questionnaire to evaluate your Sales approach!

It can help you discover root causes of your Sales issues and initiate a Change process which empowers your organization to take the right path to sales success.

We would like to facilitate your challenge!

### Outlook

- On **September 5 and 6**, ARGO talktime takes place again at Baumschlagberg Berg this year. Invitations will follow.
- In the **summer of 2013** many new things will happen on board of ARGO, ranging from topics to office, from concepts to layout – be surprised!



### Editorial

Barbara Thoma  
 ARGO Personalentwicklung GmbH  
 Cobenzlgasse 32  
 1190 Vienna  
 tel +43-1-369 77 00  
 mail b.thoma@argo.at

*I look forward to hearing from you!*