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# Special Report for HR Professionals

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## ARTHRITIS: WHO CARES MORE? FAMILY OR CO-WORKERS?

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May is Arthritis Awareness Month. And, since arthritis is one of the leading causes of disability in the United States, it seems appropriate to review a new study on disability awareness.

More than 50 million Americans find they have one form of arthritis or another. The disease takes many forms: Osteoarthritis, Rheumatoid arthritis, Psoriatic arthritis, and several others. Today one in five Americans is living with the pain of arthritis according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). That agency projects that by the year 2030, an estimated 67 million people in the U.S. will be affected by arthritis.

When you consider the bigger picture, arthritis affects a much larger population of people. Consider all the spouses, siblings, children, partners, neighbors, co-workers, friends and other extended family members who all share a part in assisting, helping or simply supporting someone living with arthritis. "When you take all this into account, that 50 million number is easily multiplied several times over," said Tamer Elsafy, CEO and founder of Flexcin International.

Last month, Flexin, a maker of arthritis treatment medications, conducted a survey to get a better picture of what type of support people receive while they are coping with the disease. With almost 1,350 participants, the survey pointed out that over 78% of women said they feel very little support when it comes to others being aware of their arthritis. Over 65% of men, on the other hand, said they are satisfied with the level of support they receive.

A very interesting result of the survey was the determination of what source of support is greatest. **56% of survey participants said they feel co-workers offer a higher level of support and overall awareness compared to that of family members.** "It has been well-documented that in some jobs, people actually spend more time with co-workers than they do their actual family in a given week," said Mr. Elsafy. "This closeness and bond that develops among co-workers can carry over to areas such as helping others in a variety of life situations like having arthritis." 67% of survey responses said other members of the household are never aware of their arthritis, or just sometimes aware.

For more information go to: <http://www.flexcin.com/blog/?p=1001>

## The Age of Entitlement: Gimme, Gimme, Gimme! Is The New Generation Only Thinking of Themselves?

By Karsten Jonsen, Ph.D.

Many generations have said “today’s young people only think of themselves,” but this time around it may be true.

In the United States, over the past decades researchers<sup>[1]</sup> have measured narcissism – the inflated grandiose view of oneself, lack of empathy and need for admiration and self-enhancing experiences. This has led to the worrisome conclusion that youngsters are increasingly focused on maximizing the “I” in a new age where many people look out only for the wellbeing of themselves – often at the expense of others. The personal habits and behaviors of the young have implications for the future of business and the interactions between employer and employee.

### Where does this leave business leaders?

The consequences related to human resources and to the leaders responsible for managing future corporations are complex. If the new generations entering the work force are indeed more narcissistic and increasingly feel entitled to rewards without an honest day’s work and long term effort, we are looking at a challenging time ahead with more conflicts and “screw you” attitudes. And, because in some parts of the world there will be more work demand than supply, who will be calling the shots? Jobs will be increasingly individually crafted – mostly by the employee! And by those organizations that fully understand career customization. The boundaries between work and life will be increasingly blurred or even non-existent, as people are connected 24x7. Some even argue *overconnected*.<sup>[2]</sup> Moreover, the switching between employers and projects will increase exponentially. A newcomer to today’s labor market is expected to have three times as many employers (if not more) in his/her lifetime than previous generations did.

Is this all bad news? No. Not if the negative effects can be minimized, for example by increasingly focusing on group goals and group awards. New rules must be established that allow for zero tolerance when it comes to bullying, greed, or any form of narcissistic behavior. The balance between employer and employees will shift and corporations need to be on their toes to stimulate their workforce continuously and to figure out new flexible ways of engaging and contracting with their employees. This means increasingly interesting and dynamic roles for HR managers who need to responsibly instigate less monitoring and control and more coaching, mentoring and sparring. It’s a hard sell after a financial crisis.

Though some of the entitlement effects may seem disturbing, asocial and inappropriate, the new generations bring many advantages. We will see a generation of employees that are engaging, prone to taking initiatives and living more by their values rather than group-norms. Companies can expect people who are globally connected, completely tech-savvy and who can thus function as reverse mentors. In some ways, we are entering the first time in human history when the “student” is actually the more skilled person and the master needs guidance from below.

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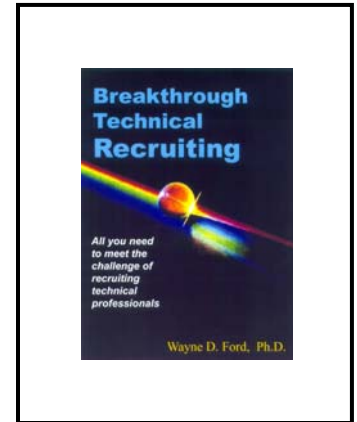
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## POTPOURRI

- **USCIS Launches I-9 Central on USCIS.gov**

The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has unveiled its new I-9 Central, an online resource center dedicated to the most frequently accessed form on USCIS.gov ... Form I-9.

[www.uscis.gov/i-9central](http://www.uscis.gov/i-9central)

- **More Collaboration in the Future for Civil Rights Enforcement Agencies**

On February 8, OFCCP, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division hosted a webcast to discuss increased collaboration among their agencies in enforcing federal civil rights laws. The meeting, which was transmitted to field offices for all three agencies, represents the first time in history that these agencies have met to discuss joint enforcement efforts.

Agencies cited ways they will leverage resources and increase their collective ability to hold employers accountable for employment discrimination, including developing joint protocols, sharing information and best practices, and coordinating training and litigation strategies. "We need to start talking to each other, to start sharing information, and to put our egos and turf issues aside to really prioritize what's in the best interests of workers," OFCCP Director Shiu said.

<http://www.dol.gov/ofccp/OFCCPNews/LatestNews.htm#news2>



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Foremost, this generation will look for jobs with high autonomy, where they will achieve dynamic and experimental learning and continuous development<sup>[3]</sup> as individuals.

As paradoxical as it may sound in the context of narcissism, younger generations increasingly seek organizations that are socially and environmentally responsible and companies who emphasize and operate on values – those who walk their value talk. It's sort of like donating to charity and not giving to one's extended family or community in need. Oddly, perhaps, this represents a simultaneous combination of high individualism and high collectivism. For the businesses and organizations of tomorrow there may be a unique chance to "repair" this disparity by catering to *individual* needs, as well as providing a *collective* and communal altruism.

<sup>[1]</sup> Twenge, J.M. & Campbell, K.W. (2009). *The Narcissism Epidemic*. New York: Free Press. <sup>[2]</sup> Davidov, William, H. (2011) *Overconnected. Where to draw the line at being online*. London : Headline Publishing Group. <sup>[3]</sup> *Generation Y : Realising the Potential*. ACCA & MERCER, 2010. [www.accaglobal.com](http://www.accaglobal.com) .

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