

*Building a World-Class Workforce: Two Case Studies*  
Conference Board, July 29, 2006

Today, the corporate competition in hiring and retaining high-end knowledge workers is especially keen. Why? For starters, not all high-tech/high-skill jobs can be outsourced or sent offshore, and there are far fewer generation X (born in the 60s and 70s) and Gen-Y workers (born between 1979 and 1994) than there were baby boomers a generation ago. Consequently, for companies of all kinds, winning today's recruiting and retention wars have become an increasingly intense and competitive effort.

Second, many younger workers today (those in their 20s to late 30s) are different—in their attitudes and approach to work—from their baby boomer parents. Many of them (blackberries and laptops notwithstanding) see work/life balance and free time for personal pursuits as more important goals than job security, big salaries, fat bonuses or a corner office. Others are turned off by authoritarian bosses, too much hierarchy, and the prospect of working for years to climb the corporate ladder to achieve career success.