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## The Next Revolution: What Gen X Women Want at Work and How Their Boomer Bosses Can Help Them Get It

**Charlotte Shelton**
**Laura Shelton**
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"It turns out that being young and educated with good health and your whole life in front of you isn't all it's cracked up to be," write the authors. "The whole wide world is before us, but we're feeling overwhelmed by the choices." According to this mother and daughter author duo, this dilemma is being called a "quarter-life crisis"—a new social trend affecting certain twenty- and thirty-something workers.

Similar to the more familiar midlife crisis, this predicament is but one of many concepts examined in this intriguing handbook, which deals with the up-and-coming generation of employees, especially females.

Charlotte is an author, management professor, coach, and consultant who teaches in Rockhurst University's Helzberg School of Management and is a member of the baby boomer generation (born between 1946 and 1964). Laura, from Generation X (born between 1964 and 1977), is an award-winning reporter for Fox television.

Laura's own quarter-life crisis at age twenty-six ("My life revolved around my work") prompted the development of a survey questioning career satisfaction and expectations of 1,200 Gen-Xers. The results are the basis of this book.

Daughter Laura writes the first four chapters, relating how her generation was shaped so differently than the previous one: they were latchkey kids, the children of divorce, and the first to deal with expanding technology. The authors hypothesize that these are some of the reasons that this generation expects specific things in their work environment, such as positive relationships with co-workers and supervisors, and interesting work with opportunities to learn.

Status and prestige aren't even on their radar, according to Charlotte, who handles the final four chapters as she compares her career and work experiences with those of her daughter and other Gen-Xers, and also examines the survey results. She highlights companies who've been innovative in areas (such as casual dress code and flex hours) that Gen-Xers have deemed important in the workplace. She also presents skills that employees can use to get what they really want.

The section in which Laura details how Xer moms are opting out of the workforce to stay at home and raise their children, succeeding in a more balanced life rather than having a career, is eye-opening. Her research works better here than in an earlier chapter in which talk of unfulfillment, disillusionment, and entitlement seems to come across as a bit whiny.

The creation of the term "Generation X" has been attributed to a 1991 fiction work by that title: "the characters are described as underemployed, over-educated, and unpredictable." However, that doesn't accurately portray the majority of these new-millennium workers who are just trying to figure what their next step is—same as generations before.

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