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Season's Greetings





Generation Snowflake Will Soon Be Knocking At Our Door

I remember having a discussion with a few seasoned truck drivers and Owner-Operators regarding the ideal student to teach how to drive a truck. They all agreed that young men who were raised on a farm were by far the best and easiest to teach. I certainly agreed with them. After all, I knew that my husband was a natural when he started his own trucking business. He grew up on a farm and could easily operate, maintain and repair any type of equipment. As they fantasized about this ideal candidate, I reminded them that their fantasy is far from the reality of today's job market. Simply put... this dream student is a dying breed.

Since 1960 there has been a steep decline in the family farm. Today, with Canada's population at over 32 million, only 2% live and work on family farms. And sadly over half of this 2% are now over 50 years old. It's not easy to figure out that the pool of strong, able farm boys is quite shallow. Individuals interested in becoming truck drivers now come from varied backgrounds. Even if you thought that it was impossible to train a cook to become a truck driver, I can assure you it happens. The traditional farm boy has been replaced by other professions and it works.

But there's another demographic factor that may be more challenging than the loss of the farm boy in the training of truck drivers. It's the

clash of values driven by a multi-generational workforce. Core beliefs and entrenched behaviours can collide when members of different generations work and learn together.

It's what came to mind last week while I was watching a news panel. They were discussing the modern phenomenon of the new generation about to enter the workforce. They are referred to as the Snowflakes. This is the term that captures their dominant traits of being easily 'offended' and should be protected from anything that could make them feel 'uncomfortable'. This is the new generation that will soon be knocking on the trucking industry's door.

It got me thinking. How will this new generation fare during the rigors of truck driver training and eventually as employees in the trucking industry? This generation believes that they are beautiful and perfectly unique but they are also quite fragile and can melt under the tiniest bit of heat. There is a huge generational divide between the Snowflakes and our current aging workforce who dominate the trucking industry. It's important to also remember that the majority of our instructors are also part of this aging workforce. They are the ones who will be training these new drivers.

It's easy to see that there are fundamental differences in the belief systems between those of different generations. Understanding what

drives each generation may help us all to learn better and work together. Even if we don't always agree with the values of a generation, it is possible to appreciate their strengths. We can certainly refer to lessons learned from what is currently happening in the workforce. The Veterans and the Boomers (post war generations) have been successfully working alongside the Generation X (children of Boomers) and Generation Y (children of Gen Xers).

The older workers who are Boomers and Veterans are more private, work hard, want to accumulate wealth and have a great respect for authority and hierarchy. They are also more formal and prefer communication that is written or oral. They value formal dress and organizational structures. They are also proud of the fact that they can 'tell it like it is' and often forego political correctness.

The Generation X grew up in the shadow of their Boomer parents. They are the children of two working parents who became very self-reliant, individualist and determined. They watched their parents work hard for their company and for their personal wealth only to suffer downsizing and restructuring. As a result, they do not have the same loyalty to their employers and they are determined to maintain a work-life balance. This also makes them more entrepreneurial and focused.

Generation Y grew up where everyone was a winner. Their confidence has propelled them to become highly educated and socially conscious. They prefer a more collaborative approach in the workplace where differences are respected and their opinions are valued. Their most important feature is that they are the first truly digital generation. Laptops, the Internet and smartphones have always been part of their lives and drive all of their activities.

Bridging the generational gaps in the workplace has been a constant challenge but also a benefit. When Generation Y is present, they bring new technological solutions to the organization. They are also able to help develop these skills with the other 'pen and paper' generations. Both the Gen Xers and Generation Y benefit from the experience and real life approach that the Boomers bring to their workplace.

We have seen close relationships develop between our multi-generational workforces. We have been successful because we have made a commitment to constant education and training. It has also been important to accommodate generational values in which work life balance is a top priority. Successful carriers are also making important changes that motivate youth to enter the industry.

So this takes me back to the Snowflakes. In the next 15 to 20 years, the Generation X and Y will soon dominate the workforce and will step up into the leadership roles. It will be interesting to see how this plays out. They will have to harness the strengths of the Snowflakes and encourage them to learn from their experience.

From Wikipedia:

Generation Snowflake, or **Snowflake Generation**, is a term that refers to young people, typically university or college students, who seek to avoid emotionally charged topics or dissenting ideas and opinions.

Louise Philbin

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SPEAKING FROM EXPERIENCE

Ray J. Haight



Grow Your Fleet or Increase Your Margins?

If I was to ask any trucking company this simple question I would expect or hope to expect to get the same answer from all of them. If, in the next twelve months you have only two options available to you: first you can expend capital and increase debt to grow your fleet by 10%; or you can concentrate all your efforts on ensuring that you are maximizing your operating ratio to its fullest, which will require next to no expenditure other than your time and effort. Which of these two options would you choose?

Some might say that they do both on an ongoing basis, which to a large degree most fleets would believe is close to the truth. But how do you know that? What is your benchmark? To what standard do you compare to ensure you are doing the right things right and getting the best in class available results?

Let's consider TCAinGauge. By now, most of the industry has heard or is aware of this new offering which is an online benchmarking management tool. It might look like a time consuming, highly technical platform that adds value to those carriers with a high-level expertise and with the people who gain familiarity with the service. So you think, the big carriers have an advantage, right? And to be honest, to capitalize on the offering to its fullest extent one would need to spend resources of people's time that might already be taxed to the limit. But that being said, allocating time to this effort pales in comparison to investing in additional rolling stock when you're not confident that your operating margin is where it should be.

What if in an hour of your time you could know how your fleet compares to carriers based in your geographical area, in your sector and of your size with expenses related to fuel cost, insurance cost, maintenance cost, driver expense and the whole of them all; operating ratio? If you were to find out that you were not best in class on all or any of these comparable, let alone the other sixty that are available to carriers subscribing to TCAinGauge, wouldn't you have to put your growth plans on hold until you were?

If this offering were available when I ran a motor carrier, a couple of questions would come to mind for me. First, am I threatening the future of my company by putting hard won capital or available credit in harm's way when I know there is competition out there that are making better returns than I am? Is this more important if they are in my own backyard? Secondly, exactly how much money am I leaving on the table because I am out of market on any of the items listed above? Should I concentrate on getting my house in order before I concentrate on growth? In other words, am I just spinning my wheels here? A third might be, how long before the carriers with higher margins start focusing on my customer base?

So here is a formula, as simple as it can be, to know where you stand. Simply do these calculations and submit them.

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Formula: $(\text{Fuel Expense Total}) / (\text{Freight Revenue Linehaul Total} + \text{Accessorial Revenue Total})$

INSURANCE COST

Formula: (Insurance Expense Total) / (Freight Revenue Linehaul Total + Accessorial Revenue Total)

MAINTENANCE EXPENSE

Formula: (Maintenance Expense Total) / (Freight Revenue Linehaul Total + Accessorial Revenue Total)

DRIVER EXPENSE

Formula: (Salaries, Wages & Benefits Total) / (Total Miles Driven Total)

OPERATING RATIO

Formula: (Freight Revenue Linehaul Total + Accessorial Revenue Total - Operating Profit Total) / (Freight Revenue Linehaul Total + Accessorial Revenue Total)

There are sixty other formulas you can compare yourself to. You can see them at <https://tcaingauge.com/metrics/>. I'll give you one formula answer for free that many carriers are interested in; the average aged, accounts receivable for the InGauge subscriber carrier base across the board is 42 days. How do you compare?

So, would you spend a couple of hundred dollars a month to know exactly how and where you stack up to the competition? Would you do this to gain the confidence that would come from knowing exactly how efficient you are in the marketplace and to also gain access to the latest management tools, education, strategy and goal setting platform which is specific to truckload, quarter load segments? Now investing in growth would make much more sense because you know you are not lagging behind those carriers that would love to grab your customers.

The knowledge that would excite me the most is to know my competitors average cost of insurance compared to mine. What great information to have when entering negotiations with your insurance provider and agent. What about your fuel expense? Are you in market; is your supplier giving you the right discount or are you missing the boat on some other item related to fuel expense? In the vast knowledge library there is a section solely dedicated to fuel management.

But I ramble. At the crutch of this is the simple basic principle of comparing ones cost in the market to yours and focusing ones efforts where the greatest return can be garnered for the effort given. Another simple fact is that people gravitate to what they are good at and what they're comfortable with. This might leave a lot of margin floating in the wind and it is also reasonable to think that many business owners work so hard on running their business that working on the business revenue becomes secondary.

Almost every other sector of business uses benchmarking to give them guidance about major business decisions and to enhance their bottom line. Most business sectors have results of larger operating ratios than trucking has experienced over the years. I wonder why?

Now trucking might be a little late to the game but here we are. Here's your chance to experience what most other business sectors rely on to ensure success. It is now available to you so don't be left behind!

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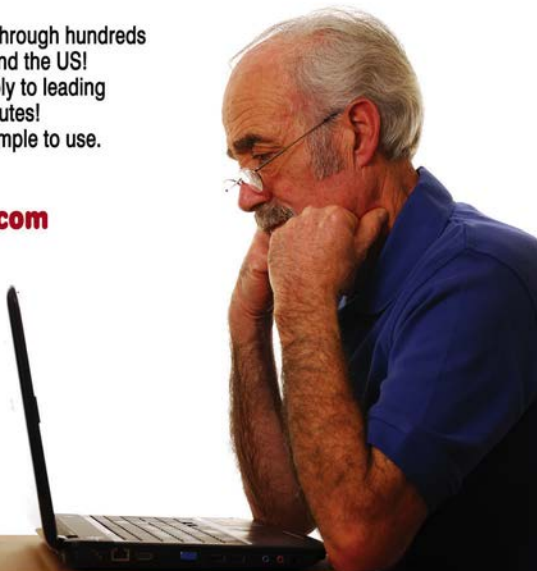
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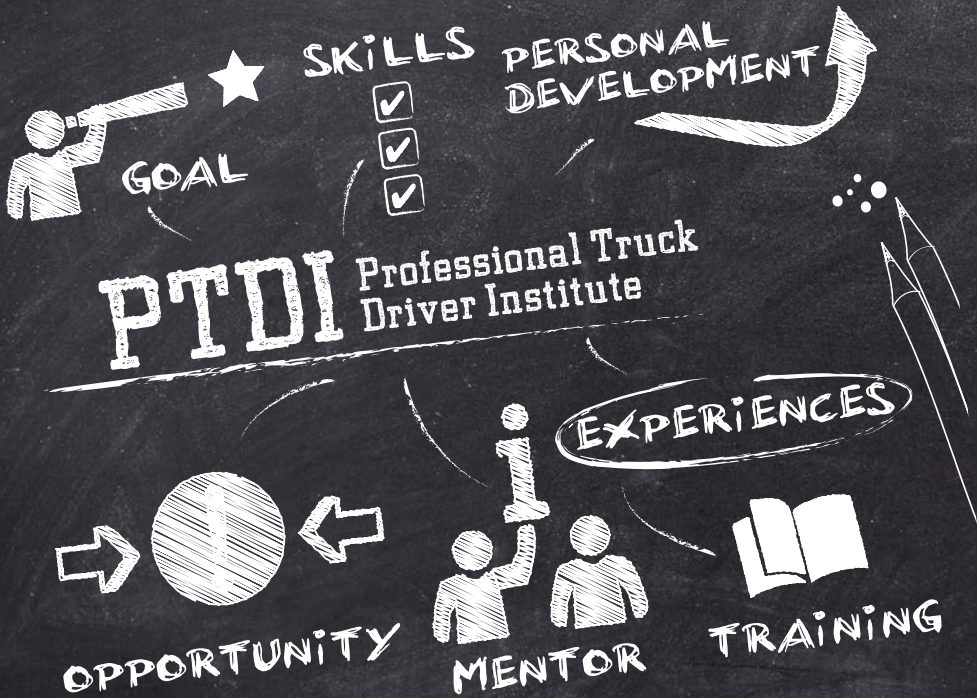
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SAFETY DAWG

Chris Harris



It's December!

Man Oh Man. It is Christmas Season already! This year has flown by. I wish you all the very best of the season! I know that I will enjoy a few days off before the New Year comes ringing in. Remember to enjoy and celebrate safely.

Driving at this time of the year can be especially dangerous. So please keep the following in mind. Many drivers are in a hurry. As the days get closer to the 25th, many drivers are distracted and thinking of other things. They are thinking about everything but their driving. So you need to compensate for them. You have to be especially careful and drive cautiously.

Also, some of your fellow truck drivers are in a hurry. They are trying to get in some extra

miles before the holidays. Or they may be in a hurry, trying to get home to enjoy the holidays with their family. Again, this is an extra reason to drive defensively and to be careful out there.

We all have many gifts to purchase. You might be tempted to make some purchases in the United States. While most items acquired in the USA are OK, remember that there can be no liquor or beer in the cab of commercial vehicles. Not at any time. Most of the duty-free shops are located on US soil and you need to remember that it is illegal to make a purchase and place the liquor into your cab. I know that the border is only a few meters away but if you are still in the USA and caught, you will receive a ticket and lose the liquor. It's just not worth it!



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— Safe and Happy Holiday Season To All —

I frequently see this violation on the CSA scores and the driver PSP reports. It makes it tough to hire a driver when on their PSP report it states "Under the Influence or In Possession of Alcohol." So purchase your alcohol in Canada and avoid the ticket and the loss of the liquor.

Lastly, I want you to remember how you make your living. Each year truck drivers lose their ability to drive a commercial vehicle because they were charged and found guilty of driving while under the influence.

In Ontario and the rest of Canada, the maximum legal Blood alcohol content (BAC) for fully licensed drivers is 80 milligrams of alcohol in 100 milliliters of blood (0.08). Driving with BAC over 0.08 is a criminal offense.

In Ontario, your BAC does not have to be over the 0.08 legal limits to result in serious consequences. If you register a BAC from 0.05 to 0.08 (commonly referred to as the warning range), you will face provincial

administrative penalties as this is a criminal offense. Yes and these penalties will show up on your Drivers' MVR (Abstract). This will likely make your personal car insurance rates skyrocket and might make you unemployable as a truck driver.

Please be cautious this season. I truly want all the very best for you and your family. Drive safe and take some extra caution this time of the year.

Happy Holidays and Merry Christmas.

Chris Harris

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Does Your Recruiting Ad Attract Women?

What makes a word relate better to a male or a female? According to Kat Matfield, who created a gender decoder for job ads (<http://gender-decoder.katmatfield.com>), "we all use language that is subtly "gender-coded" and this affects job advertising as well.

Matfield based her web-based tool on a study by professors from the University of Waterloo in Ontario, Canada and Duke University, Durham, North Carolina. Her goal is to remove gender bias in hiring, starting with the recruiting ads.

Before Title VII of the Civil Rights Act was passed in 1964, many job ads were grouped under headings signifying the specific gender of the applicant. For example, stewardesses looked under the job listings for women and truck drivers could find carriers hiring under the listings for men.

Today, this practice is unconstitutional and the sex segregation of advertising no longer exists in theory. Gaucher, Freisen and Kay looked at whether the "gender of the ideal candidate is still conveyed, but more subtly, through wording in the advertisement that reflects broader cultural stereotypes."

An example of a job ad in a male dominated occupation might use masculine language and claim the company has "dominance" in the market. A more gender neutral term, such as "excellence" in the market, could attract more women. The theory is that women use a more communal style of language and include more social and emotional words. They anticipated that women would find jobs with more masculine wording less appealing because it indicates less gender diversity and "signals to women that they do not belong in these occupations."

After coding nearly 500 online job advertisements from typically male (plumber, engineer, security guard, etc.) and female dominated (bookkeeper, early childhood educator, registered nurse, etc.) careers, their findings were somewhat surprising. As expected, ads from male dominated occupations DID contain more masculine related words. However, they did not find a predominance of feminine related words in the female dominated careers.

The researchers then looked at 3,640 ads from on campus job postings at Waterloo University and found the same results. The ads for male dominated jobs contained more

masculine words, but there was no difference in “female related” words for either type role.

The next step was in determining if women had less interest in jobs containing more masculine coded language. They interviewed 96 psychology students and asked them to rank job ads as appealing or not and whether the company might be a great place to work (or not). The result was that many more women did assume they would not “belong” in the role when masculine wording was evident. However, men showed no differences base on the way the ad was written.

What are the implications for the trucking industry? First, there is no evidence that gender-based wording is being included in recruiting ads intentionally. It does make it less likely that women will apply for the position because they do not feel it is inclusive. The study found that it “contributes to the division of traditional gender roles by dissuading women’s interest in jobs that are masculine worded.”

The authors did caution organizations to be careful in “feminizing” their ads, as it may also dissuade women who are less feminine to apply. This is sometimes the case within the trucking industry, where we have found female professional drivers to be more independent and often less stereotypical than their non-driving peers.

So, how can you be sure your recruiting ads won’t dissuade women, but are also appealing to men? Run them through Matfield’s gender decoder to make sure they will attract both men and women equally, at least through the initial contact.

If you want to hire more women, however, ask for the Women In Trucking’s Guide to Recruiting Female Drivers by calling 888-464-9482 or visit www.womenintruck.org. Our goal is to be a resource for you in helping us increase the number of women employed in the trucking industry. You can help us by becoming a member.

Ellen Voie

President/CEO/Founder of
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