



Sheraine Gilliam

University HR Business Partner
City University of New York

Recently, I had an idea pop into my head and I decided to get a senior level leader's view and support. During the conversation the statement that made time stand still was, "Oh, you millennials!" And I immediately said, "I am not a millennial." In that moment I felt like I had steam coming from my nose and ears. What did that actually mean? The statement validated a thought I've had — looking younger can be held against me, especially in higher education. Unfortunately, today's popular view of generations arises from stereotyping, over-generalizing and widespread prejudice toward older and younger employees. I used my disappointment and frustration as motivation to tell my story and to bring attention to the impact that generational perceptions have on workplace culture. Then, I created a presentation called "Perceptions Divide, Not Generations" and I have since presented at two CUPA-HR regional conferences as well as two campus professional development conferences, with more ahead. I chose to use my experience as a catalyst for change and an opportunity to educate others on the importance of self-awareness. The response has been both overwhelming and truly humbling. I will continue my crusade!