

# Company cellphone: Don't lose your password

We purchased new Samsung S7 cellphones for all the techs. We'd been waiting for this model, and were anxious to upgrade our S4 phones. Everyone moved their contact list with no issues, installed Slack, setup their email and we were off and running.

Then we wanted to swap my phone (I dropped my S4 and broke the screen) for one of the S7 phones that is not assigned to anyone right now. No problem; we'll set it back to factory defaults and transfer my stuff to the new phone. Wait! We can't get into the phone to make any changes; how can that be?

After a few long calls with our cellphone provider, I finally went to the local store. I explained that it was a company phone, on our company account. I explained that we had purchased the phones on that same account, and all I wanted to do was move what was on my broken phone, including my phone number, to the phone we bought.

No problem, all they need is the password to the gmail account that was used when it was first setup. Mmmm ...

So we went back to that person and asked for the password, but they didn't remember. We tried a few password suggestions but could not get into the



CATHERINE WENDT

gmail account that was originally used. I explained this to the provider, and they said this was a new security feature. They cannot get into the phone, and neither can we, without the password.

Just to clarify, even though this is a business account, and the business bought the phones, they cannot, I cannot use this phone, ever, until/unless we have the gmail account password; I can't swap numbers, reassign the phone, nothing. 'Yes,' he confirmed, I had the right conclusion.

I have to say I couldn't believe my ears. The security feature they're referring to is so that if the phone is lost or stolen, whoever 'finds' it cannot just clear it out and start using it. It also turns out that the recent iPhone models have a similar feature, tying the phone to a specific email account.

Of course, we didn't need this security feature because we use a Mobile Device Management agent for our cellphones. Also, when we distributed these phones, we were not aware of this new feature, so no thought was given to the implications of the gmail account setup.

Fool me once, that's on you. Fool me twice, that's on me!

So we have a new policy for our company

cellphones:

We will provide a generic gmail account and password to whoever will be using the phone, for the setup.

The gmail account and password will be kept in their personnel file.

Should their employment end, we'll need confirmed access, not only to the cellphone (which we already check for), but to the gmail account, too, before distributing the last check.

What about the phones already in use? We're going back to our staff and asking for the password associated with the gmail account on their cellphone, or if it is a personal account, they can change the gmail account on the phone, using the account and password we provide. Either way, the details will be in their employee file.

Considering how much money we spend on cellphones, not to mention monthly usage fees, finding out that a new feature by the vendor renders the device useless without specific information, is very frustrating.

Share this with whoever in your office tracks the company cellphones and find out where you are with this.

• Catherine Wendt is president of Syscon Inc., a technology solutions business based in Hinsdale.

## What are advantages of hiring a multigenerational workforce?

When many people think of diversity within the workplace what often first comes to mind is hiring employees of a different race, gender, or ethnicity. You are also able to achieve a richly diverse workforce by hiring employees from various age groupings.

Not only does multigenerational hiring enrich the work environment, it also provides a wider range of knowledge, skills, creativity, perspectives and work styles. With a broad range of employee ages working within your small business you get years of experience and maturity along with youthful enthusiasm.

A 2017 survey report was presented by Bridgeworks during SCORE national's virtual conference in March 2017 on "connecting with generational segments in the workforce." It produced key learnings that can be of benefit to your small business as it brings on new employees during its interviewing and hiring practice. Robust diversity and inclusion programs or initiatives are going to be critical in attracting and engaging Generation Z workers. Work-life balance continues to be very important for the millennial generation who also value working in a collaborative way with other employees. Financial instability is of primary concern for both millennials and Gen Z employees.

While generalizations don't hold true for all individuals, there are some common personality traits and behaviors within each of the generational age categories.

• Traditionalists (born before 1946): These employees hold respect for authority and have a



desire to preserve traditions, follow rules and enjoy a long term career. They value teamwork and are task-oriented.

• Baby Boomers (born 1946 — 1964): These individuals are resourceful and disciplined. They typically exhibit a strong work ethic and drive to achieve goals. They enjoy the ability to shine and be a star.

• Generation Xers (born 1965 — 1976): These self-sufficient workers are usually versatile and receptive to learning new skills while accepting of difficult challenges. They have a good grasp on using technology.

• Millennials (born 1977 — 1995): Employees in this age group are known for bringing a collaborative attitude and strong technology skills to the table. They tend to value openness of communication and candor. They have a very keen interest in advancing in their careers and shy away from boring jobs.

• Gen "Z" or Edger's (born after 1995): These individuals have strong self-reliance instincts. As early technology adopters they aren't afraid of trying new

approaches for fear of failure. They are aware that face-to-face communication will be a challenge so training geared toward building soft skills is important.

What can your small business gain from hiring inter-generationally?

The diversity in abilities and attitudes among employees of different age groups can create a more dynamic atmosphere within your small business environment. With a healthy mix of traditional approaches and innovative thinking, you can strike a successful balance without becoming frozen in your ways or too far out of the box. Across your sales and customer service efforts to your product & services development and operational processes, having diversity can help you better recognize deficiencies and make improvements to your business by tapping the unique ideas and frames of reference within your team.

Remember that during all your interviewing and hiring efforts you need to follow all the applicable federal, state and local anti-discrimination and labor laws. To understand the requirements, consider talking with a human resources consultant and/or an attorney.

• Fox Valley SCORE provides free confidential mentoring to clients in 17 locations throughout DeKalb, DuPage, Kane, Kendall, McHenry and Will counties. If you need help with existing business challenges, or are thinking about starting a new business, visit our website and click the red "Book Now" button. You can also click on "Workshops & Events" to register for one of the many free workshops throughout the year. The website is [foxvalley.score.org](http://foxvalley.score.org).