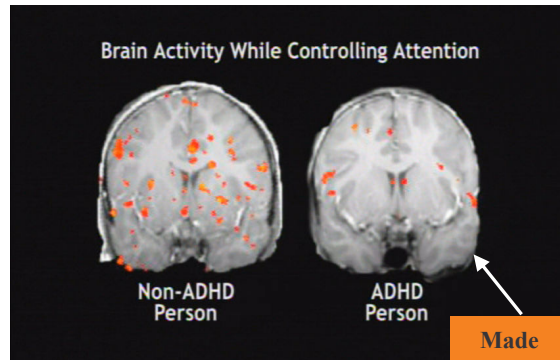
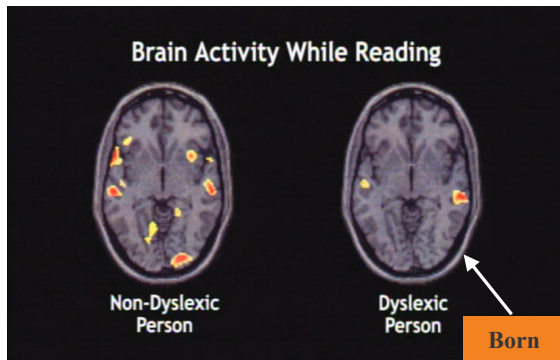


## COGNITIVE DIVERSITY — A HORIZONTAL APPROACH

### Maximizing Potential, Retaining Employees, Engaging a Workforce

#### BRAIN MATTERS: BORN OR MADE?

- A learning disability (LD) is a neurobiological disorder in which a person’s brain works or is structured differently.
- 30 million people in the workplace with LD’s have brains structured this “different” way.
- Gen X and Gen Y have been raised on the internet and with instant gratification causing their brains to learn “differently” than their predecessors.
- 45 million Gen X’ers are in the workforce now.
- 70 million people, or 20% of the total population, are between the ages of 14 and 20 (Gen Y) and heading into the workforce.
- By 2025, 40 to 60% of workers will come from Generation Y and younger generations.
- The causes are different but the “symptoms” are similar between people with learning disabilities and people raised on technology because for both groups, traditional means of teaching and communicating no longer work.



Source: [www.headstrongnation.org](http://www.headstrongnation.org)

Born with a Learning Disability	Shaped by Environmental Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific reading/phonics processing challenges</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Millennials processing ability is shaped by gaming, internet and cell phones/texting</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brain centers are not active or stimulated when processing text or sounds with symbols</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brain centers for reading and math are not developed, and therefore, not “working”</li> </ul>

Similarities Between...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bored easily, short attention span, restless mental energy, needs help focusing</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process and learn via pictures, motion, images, sound, participation, experimentation etc...</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traditional methods of teaching/learning/communicating do not register and are not effective</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading text “long-hand” or processing methodically and linearly is not a strong or developed skill</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Require activity and need to be challenged to remain engaged</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share similar needs in engagement and learning because a new language has evolved</li> </ul>



## THE BUSINESS CASE

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- Companies need to communicate and convey important information to all employees, not just some of them.
- The information age has changed the processing needs of Gen X and Gen Y to resemble those of people with learning disabilities from a cognitive perspective.
- Turnover can be reduced if companies learn to communicate with those individuals that were either born processing information differently or who have since been shaped to process in non-traditional ways, because people with learning disabilities will leave before disclosing, and Gen X and Y will leave because they have been taught that opportunity abounds and can be found elsewhere.
- In a company of 100,000 employees with an average salary of \$50,000 and a turnover rate of 20%, the cost of turnover is \$500 million and just a 1% reduction in turnover would result in a \$5 million dollar savings.
- Training ROI's can be more fully realized because the attention of a broader audience will be captured and thus reaping the benefits of learning back on the job.
- Technology has created a society with a propensity toward ADD and ADHD and its advancements will continue to change the way people learn and process.
- Companies need to learn to adapt their delivery beyond traditional means to accommodate the way people think, see, learn and process information.

## COGNITIVE DIVERSITY

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- Diversity continues to be a focus because of the benefits it brings to bear on business results.
- The ultimate competitive edge will come from appreciating minds of all kinds.
- Currently, cognitive diversity is completely overlooked.
- Substantial gains are available that have so far been out of reach.
- Cognition is the most relevant asset in today's world of work.
- Accessing variations among individual thought processes is a direct path to new ideas, innovation and organizational improvement.