

GROWERTALKS

Inside Look

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Left Behind in Lingo Limbo

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I never thought it would happen to me, but it's official: I got old.

I've tried very hard to resist. I can still hang out late into the night (as long as I have a day to recover). I can (easily) sleep past 9:00 a.m. if in my own bed and left alone. My music tastes have kept up with the times. Modern cosmetics help fool some people into thinking I'm younger than I actually am.

But I've realized that no amount of hair color or expensive eye cream can stop me from being left behind on the latest lingo.

I have a teenage daughter, so I'm reminded of this constantly. And when I'm driving Olivia and her friends around, I hear how they talk. In a lot of ways, they're similar to how my friends and I were when we were in high school. We cared about how we looked and boys and what so-and-so said about so-and-so and boys and which teacher was the worst and boys. But, as you would expect, the vernacular has changed.

Every generation is defined by their own culture and terminology. I'm a slacker Gen Xer, so we made "whatever" and "chill pill" part of our verbal repertoire. Now, my Gen Z daughter and her friends are saying "low key" and "I gotchu." In annoying situations, where we Gen Xers would roll our eyes and insert a dead-panned "dude," Olivia's generation has replaced it with "bruh."

It's the same in business—new terminology comes and goes. During the 1950s and '60s (think "Mad Men" era), phrases like "paradigm shift" and "task cycle" were being thrown around after a bunch of business leaders and researchers wrote books that led to new business jargon. Now we hear "company culture" and "return on investment."

Another one that we throw around a lot is "lean," which is a simple word for a set of practices that help a business be more efficient and effective by eliminating waste. But it doesn't seem to be one of those buzzwords that's gone away. In a few videos I've watched from other companies about their sustainability initiatives, lean practices are almost always mentioned.

It's become a common practice in many greenhouse operations, too. When I'm out and about visiting growers and ask them what's new, they often tell me they've just improved one of their systems using the lean flow model. That's why we like to check in with Gary Cortes from FlowVision once in a while to see what's new in lean. See what some of your peers have been doing to be more efficient and alleviate those bottlenecks.

Speaking of efficiencies, we also have info on knowing your light levels, monitoring your greenhouse climate remotely and rethinking how you mix fertilizer in your growing media.

It's funny that I ended up mentioning Gen X and Gen Z in this column because there's been a lot of talk about the different generations around Ball Publishing lately. During our last editorial meeting, we got into a discussion about all of the generations and how our industry should/could be catering to each one. Bossman Beytes writes about it in his column, so make sure you give it a read.

In the meantime, I'll continue to pay attention to what my kid and her friends are saying. I like taking their terminology and dropping it in conversation while I'm driving them around, which immediately makes the word completely uncool and cringy. And this amuses me. I've realized that, as a parent, my lot in life is to embarrass my kid as much as possible and I'm here for it. I guess it's what gives me that rizz. **GT**