

Cooperation and Communication Across the Generation Gap

Sigma Kappa National Housing Corporation
CONVENTION 2008



Presented by:

Lisa Humenik

NHC Vice President

Workshop Objectives:

- Identify the four generations, and understand the factors that shape how each generation views its role in the world and the expectations its members bring
- Assess our own behaviors, skills, values, and needs
- Address perceptions/misperceptions about different generations
- Compare the communication styles of each generation and identify strategies for effective communication

Can Someone Please Define the Generations???

Builders/Traditionalists/Veterans	1922 - 1945
Baby Boomers.....	1946 - 1964
Generation X.....	1965 - 1980
Generation Y/Net Generation/Millennials	1981- 2000

Personal Values Assessment

<p>1. Which would best describe your beliefs about family relationships?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Families should stay together at all costs.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> If family relationships aren't working for you, get out of the relationship.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> You can't count on families staying together – whoever is close to you becomes family.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Keep families together – but if not possible, accept whatever family you have.</p>	<p>Other: <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>2. Which best describes your beliefs about marriage?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Marriage commitments are forever.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Marriages are for as long as they are fulfilling and meet each others' needs.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Marriage is optional for those living together and commitment levels are uncertain.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Marriage commitment is important, but if divorce is necessary, don't judge.</p>	<p>Other: <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>3. What best describes your feelings about sex?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Sex is for married partners only.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Sex outside of marriage is somewhat acceptable.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Sex outside of marriage is common but dangerous. Use caution.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Abstinence until marriage is a good option – but at least practice safe sex.</p>	<p>Other: <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>4. Which best describes your attitudes toward your parents when you were a teenager?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Respected and obeyed them.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Thought I knew more so I challenged their authority and did my own thing.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Felt abandoned by them, so I did what was best for me and looked for other significant relationships.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Respected them and wanted their advice for my life.</p>	<p>Other: <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>5. How do you typically respond to people with a background or lifestyle vastly different from yours?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Uncomfortable being around them, try to avoid them.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Try to be sensitive to their differences, but prefer to be separate and with people like me.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Treat them in politically correct ways – enjoy building relationships with them.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Hardly notice the differences – enjoy the differences – don't judge.</p>	<p>Other: <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>6. If you received an unexpected bonus of \$1000, what would you most likely do with it?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Save it for a rainy day.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Spend it on something fun and exciting now.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Pay bills with it.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Save some and spend some on clothes, music, car, etc.</p>	<p>Other: <input type="checkbox"/></p>

7. In addition to making a living, which factor do you find most motivating in your work?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Financial gain and security.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Self-fulfillment and meaning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Meeting financial needs without too many demands on personal time.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Having fun while doing helpful, meaningful work.	Other: <input type="checkbox"/>
8. When it comes to longevity in careers, which best describes your expectations or preference?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stick with career – few career changes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Willing to change careers to find better or more meaningful job.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Expect to change careers several times.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Looking for a career. May need to change in order find the one best for me.	Other: <input type="checkbox"/>
9. Which best describes your top priority in your job?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Loyalty to the company.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Loyalty to my own personal needs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Loyalty to my family's needs and my own personal beliefs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Loyalty to my need to do something I enjoy.	Other: <input type="checkbox"/>
10. Which best describes your preferred work style/ environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Team work: self-sacrifice for the company goals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Doing it my way: individualistic, competitive.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fulfill the basic requirements of the job.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Networking: working in cooperation with others, sharing knowledge and ideas.	Other: <input type="checkbox"/>
11. Which style of clothing would you consider to be appropriate for an office work environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sports coats and ties; dresses.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nice casual.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Comfortable casual: jeans and t-shirts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Anything comfortable for you: jeans to dressy.	Other: <input type="checkbox"/>
12. Which of the following best describes your relationship to the current high-tech society?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Seems good, but I find it somewhat intimidating.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Important part of our current lifestyle, both at home and work. But it's a challenge to learn.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Important to daily life, both for work and entertainment. Feel comfortable with technology.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hard to imagine life without it. Use it for entertainment and to connect with people.	Other: <input type="checkbox"/>
13. Which best describes your feelings about the absolutes in our lives?	<input type="checkbox"/>	There are many things in life that are definitely right and wrong.	<input type="checkbox"/>	In some cases there are absolutes, but you have to do what's best for you.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Everything is relative – no real absolutes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	I have my beliefs about what is right and wrong; others are welcome to their own beliefs.	Other: <input type="checkbox"/>

Core Values:

<u>Builders/Traditionalists</u>	<u>Boomers</u>	<u>Xers</u>	<u>Millenials</u>
Dedication/ sacrifice	Optimism	Diversity	Optimism
Hard work	Team orientation	Thinking globally	Civic duty
Conformity	Personal gratification	Balance	Confidence
Law & order	Health and wellness	Technoliteracy	Achievement
Respect for authority	Personal growth	Fun	Sociability
Patience	Youth	Informality	Morality
Delayed reward	Work	Self-reliance	Street Smarts
Adherence to rules	Involvement	Pragmatism	Diversity
Honor			

Defining Events and Trends:

Patriotism	Prosperity	Watergate, Nixon resigns	Computers
Families	Children in the spotlight	Latchkey kids	Oklahoma City bombing
The Great Depression	Television	Stagflation	Busy, overplanned lives
WW II	Suburbs	Single-parent homes	Technology
New Deal	Assassinations	MTV	Columbine
Korean War	Vietnam	AIDS	Multiculturalism
Golden age of radio	Civil rights movement	Computers	Clinton/Lewinsky
Silver screen	Cold War	Challenger disaster	McGwire and Sosa
Rise of labor unions	Women's liberation	Fall of the Berlin Wall	Enron
	The space race	Desert Storm	9-11

Cultural Memorabilia:

Kewpie dolls	The Ed Sullivan Show	The Brady Bunch	Barney
Mickey Mouse	Fallout shelters	Pet rocks	Virtual pets
Flash Gordon	Slinkies	Platform shoes	Beanie babies
Wheaties	TV dinners	The Simpsons	American Girl dolls
Charlie McCarthy	Hula hoops	Dynasty	Oprah & Rosie
Jukeboxes	The peace sign	ET	The X Games
The Lone Ranger		Cabbage patch doll	

Inventory

How Cross-Generally Friendly Is Your Sigma Kappa Local Organization?

1. There is no one dominant “type” in our organization: advisors, corporation board members, alumnae leaders are a mix of ages, collegiate chapters, backgrounds.

1	2	3	4	5
Completely false	Somewhat false	Somewhat true/somewhat false	Somewhat true	Completely true

2. When a project team is put together (e.g., decorating committee), members of different ages and with different backgrounds, experiences, skills, and viewpoints are consciously included.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Usually	Always

3. Our members are treated like customers.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Usually	Always

4. There is lots of conversation - even some humor - about differing viewpoints and perspectives.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Usually	Always

5. We take time to talk openly about what different groups - and the individuals within them - are looking for in the organization . . . What makes it rewarding . . . What types of interaction and activities work best.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Usually	Always

6. There is behind-the-back complaining, passive-aggressive behavior, and open hostility among groups of members.

1	2	3	4	5
Always	Usually	Occasionally	Rarely	Never

7. Our atmosphere could be described as relaxed and informal.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Usually	Always

8. There is an element of fun and playfulness about most endeavors.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Usually	Always

9. Corporation board members and advisors adjust policies and procedures to fit the needs of the individuals and the team.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Usually	Always

10. Corporation board members and advisors are known for being straightforward.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Usually	Always

11. Corporation board members and advisors give the collegians the big picture along with specific goals and measures, then then turn them loose to develop strategies.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Usually	Always

12. We assume the best of the collegians and our alumnae colleagues: we treat everyone as if they have great things to offer and are motivated to do their best.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Usually	Always

13. We are concerned and focused, on a regular basis, on retention of both our collegiate and alumnae members.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Usually	Always

14. Volunteer assignments here are broad, providing variety and challenge, and allowing each member to develop a range of skills and have a range of experiences.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Usually	Always

15. We market internally, “selling” the organization to members and continually looking to be the volunteer involvement of choice.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Usually	Always

If your score was:

- Under 52: The organization could definitely improve in being generationally friendly.
- 52-59: You’re typical of most organizations. Although you’re doing some good things, you must make improvements if your going to survive and thrive.
- 60-67: You are doing a good job, but there is room for improvement.
- 68-75: Congratulations! The atmosphere you have created is, most likely, attractive to members. Good job.

Resources

Gipsy (2008). Millenials join boomers and gen-xers in the work place. Retrieved from http://www.associatedcontent.com/pop_print.shtml?content_type=article&content_type_id.

Hicks, R. and Hicks, K. (1999). *Boomers, xers and other strangers: Understanding the generational differences that divide us*. Wheaton, IL. Tyndale House Publishers.

Lancaster, L.C. and Stillman, D. (2002). *When generations collide: Who they are, why they clash, how to solve the generational puzzle at work*. New York. Collins Business.

Oblinger, D. (2003). Boomers, gen-xers and millenials: Understanding the new students. *Educause Review*. July/August 2003.

Raines, C. (2002). Generations at work: Managing millenials. Retrieved from <http://generationsatwork.com/articles/millenials.htm>

Zemke, R., Raines, C., Filipczak, B. (2000). *Generations at work: Managing the clash of veterans, boomers, xers and nexters in your workplace*. New York. American Management Association.

Objectives




- Identify the four generations, and understand the factors that shape how each generation views its role in the world and the expectations its members bring
- Assess our own behaviors, skills, values, and needs
- Address perceptions/misperceptions about different generations
- Compare the communication styles of each generation and identify strategies for effective communication

Generational Groups

- Builders/Veterans 1922-1945
- Baby Boomers 1946-1964
- Generation X 1965-1980
- Generation Y/Millennials 1981-2000

Value Development

In different age periods, value development has different areas of focus

Imprint by Observation or Patterning 	 Modeling by Heroes or Identification	Socialization by Peers or Significant Others 	Significant Emotional Event by Changing or Replacing Values
Ages 1-7	Ages 8-13	Ages 14-20	21+

Values, Defining Events & Memorabilia

Veterans

- Dedication/sacrifice
- Hard work
- Conformity
- Law & order
- Respect for authority
- Patience
- Delayed reward
- Adherence to rules
- Honor
- Patriotism
- Families
- The Great Depression
- WW II
- New Deal
- Korean War
- Golden age of radio
- Silver screen
- Rise of labor unions
- Kewpie dolls
- Mickey Mouse
- Flash Gordon
- Wheaties
- Charlie McCarthy
- Jukeboxes
- The Lone Ranger

Values, Defining Events & Memorabilia

Boomers

- Optimism
- Team orientation
- Personal gratification
- Health and wellness
- Personal growth
- Youth
- Work
- Involvement
- Prosperity
- Children in the spotlight
- Television
- Suburbs
- Assassinations
- Vietnam
- Civil rights movement
- Cold War
- Women's liberation
- The space race
- The Ed Sullivan Show
- Fallout shelters
- Slinkies
- TV dinners
- Hula hoops
- The peace sign

Values, Defining Events & Memorabilia

X'ers

- Diversity
- Thinking globally
- Balance
- Technoliteracy
- Fun
- Informality
- Self-reliance
- Pragmatism
- Watergate, Nixon resigns
- Latchkey kids
- Stagflation
- Single-parent homes
- MTV
- AIDS
- Computers
- Challenger disaster
- Fall of the Berlin Wall
- Desert Storm
- The Brady Bunch
- Pet rocks
- Platform shoes
- The Simpsons
- Dynasty
- ET
- Cabbage patch doll

Values, Defining Events & Memorabilia

Millennials

- Optimism
- Civic duty
- Confidence
- Achievement
- Sociability
- Morality
- Street Smarts
- Diversity
- Computers
- Oklahoma City bombing
- Busy, overplanned lives
- Technology
- Columbine
- Multiculturalism
- Clinton/Lewinsky
- McGwire and Sosa
- Enron
- 9-11
- Barney
- Virtual pets
- Beanie babies
- American Girl dolls
- Oprah & Rosie
- The X Games

Veterans

Assets:

- Stable
- Detail-oriented
- Thorough
- Loyal
- Hard working
- Reliable

Liabilities:

- Dislike change
- Wait their turn for leadership
- Uncomfortable with conflict
- Believe they know what's best

Messages that Motivate:

"Your experience is respected here"

"It's valuable to the rest of us to hear what has- and hasn't-worked in the past"

"Your perseverance is valued and will be rewarded"

Boomers

Assets:

- Service-oriented
- Driven
- Willing to go the extra mile
- Good at relationships
- Want to please
- Good team players

Liabilities:

- Not budget minded
- Uncomfortable with conflict
- Hesitant to go against peers
- Puts process ahead of results
- Overly sensitive to feedback
- Judgmental of differing opinions
- Self-Centered

Messages that Motivate:

"You're important to our success"

"You're valued here"

"Your contribution is unique and important"

"We need you"

"I approve of you"

"You're worthy"

X'ers

Assets:

- Adaptable
- Technoliterate
- Independent
- Unintimidated by authority
- Creative

Liabilities:

- Impatient
- Poor people skills
- Inexperienced
- Cynical

Messages that Motivate:

- "Do it your way"
- "We've got the newest hardware and software"
- "There aren't a lot of rules here"
- "We're not very structured, hierarchical, etc."

Millenials

Assets:

- Collective Action
- Optimism
- Tenacity
- Heroic spirit
- Multitasking capability
- Technological savvy

Liabilities:

- Need for supervision and structure
- Inexperience with handling difficult people
- High customer service expectation
- Helicopter parents

Messages that Motivate:

- "You'll be working with other bright creative people"
- "You and your peers can help turn this organization around"
- "You can be a hero here"

Millenials – Common Myths

- Today's kids are violent
- In the last two decades, teen violent crime has declined dramatically
- Teen pregnancy is up
- The rate is falling at the fastest rate ever
- Kids' use of drugs is up
- Compared to adults, they are using milder drugs in lesser quantities

Millenials - Communication

- Positive
- Respectful
- Respectable
- Motivational
- Electronic
- Goal-focused

The Information Age Mindset

- Computers aren't technology
- The internet is better than TV
- Reality is no longer real
- Doing is more important than knowing
- Learning resembles a video game
- Typing is preferred to handwriting
- Staying connected is essential
- There is zero tolerance for delays
- Consumer and creator are blurring

Diamonds in the Rough

Be prepared for . . .

- High expectations
- Possible involvement of parents

Don't . . .

- Expect them to pay their dues
- Throw a wet blanket on their enthusiasm

Do . . .

- Encourage and mentor them
- Learn from them
