

## **Generational Overview** – Who are they, What motivates them and Volunteer opportunities

**Traditionalists:** Born between 1918-1944 – currently 67 - 100 years

- Went through the greatest & fastest changes - Roaring 20's ( ), Depression (30's), WWII – 39-45, Space Age, Technology
- Traditional values – trust, respect, loyalty, breadwinner, community service, tried and true ways
- Hard working – pay your dues; jobs for life,
- Independent and dependable – quality workmanship, perfectionists,
- Frugal, waste not, make do
- Willing to learn

### **Volunteer Opportunities: How to attract Traditionalists**

- Identify how their contribution benefits the common good,
- Utilize their wisdom and knowledge
- Provide complete information and clear expectations
- Provide meaningful experiences including socializing opportunities
- Recognize and value their expertise and contributions
- Provide choices and a variety of work – independent, or part of a team – admin, leadership, 1on1
- Appeal to their need to “give back” to an organization that they have benefitted from.

### **Practical Considerations:**

- They are not as mobile, which implies that transportation may need to be addressed. Good for activities that they can do on their own time, best suited to administration activities. Prefer daytime activities. Should be utilized for their skill and knowledge sharing and tend to be more patient with youth. They want to contribute in a meaningful way. You will also need to provide opportunities for social improvising, making friends. They can be counted on to get it done.

### **Example Activities for Traditionalists:**

- Opportunities to share their skills ie cooking, wood working, mechanical, food production, green movement, -recycling, composting, local,
- Minimalist movement – let's make do with what we have.
- Hobbies sharing, experiential, hands-on, experts, outings ie. Rock collecting, cars, scrapbooking, sewing, photography – take them on experiential outings
- Church opportunities (worship, choir, charities ie Christmas hampers music and sports events, missions)
- Administration duties – phone calls for recruitment, reminders, forms, licenses, follow-up calls etc.

## **Baby Boomers:** Born between 1945-64 – currently 47- 66 years old

- work, work and work –long and hard, putting in their time, sacrifice family and friends , hard wired to work – especially good in teams
- define themselves by their job and is equated with a sense of self-worth, hard to say “no”
- highly motivated, competitive, climbing the corporate ladder, money, status and position, physical comforts and luxuries
- non-conformists
- reflective: meaning and purpose in life, philosophy of life
- frustrated with younger outspoken younger generation
- fear being cast out, no longer of value,
- commitment to making a difference – driving focus – make the world a better place, fulfill unrealized dreams; contribute to organizations that have had a significant impact on them or their family
- loyalty to companies
- recognition of contribution – celebrating successes

## **Volunteer Opportunities: How to attract Boomers**

- Provide leadership roles – training & mentoring – acquisition of skills and personal status
- Demonstrate how your product, project or organization is making a meaningful contribution to community or society
- Provide new and exciting opportunities for giving back
- Provide opportunities for learning & growth – skills based, hands-on to acquire additional skills
- As an organization, be open for new ideas, suggestions and initiatives
- Provide variety of jobs and activities – especially working in teams
- Provide a FUN atmosphere for all activities that include socializing and refreshments
- Ensure that there are evaluations and recognition for projects, events and contributions – organizational, community and media recognition
- Include competitive elements within activities and events

## **Practical Considerations:**

- Good organizers, leaders, hard workers, mentors, and hands on, They need to take these kinds of roles. Your organization has to demonstrate that it has meaning for both the community and the individual. They are looking for new opportunities to give back and being acknowledged for it. Good at delegating. Also need fun and socializing.
- Church opportunities (worship, choir, charities ie Christmas hampers, music and sports events, food drives, foreign mission projects )
- Environmental projects – tree planting, trail maintenance, bird banding,
- Skills development and status for Not for Profit Boards – Board Director,
- Leading community initiatives - Planning festivals or Conferences, community gardens, fund-raisers (car washes, art-auctions, golf tournaments, dances) group outings
- Share personal skills and hobbies: antique cars, rock collecting, horses, crafts, sewing, painting, music, dancing, gardening

**Gen X: (Latch-Key) - Born between 1965-1979 – currently 32-46 years old**

- Work to pay the bills and get ahead BUT... work-life balance
- Learn new skills – technology, job related and management, for current of future jobs
- Loyalty to people, not to company – skeptical – 1990 layoffs
- Independent and responsible workers – (latchkey) – not team players
- Test out people in leadership, words and actions
- Independent workers - just get the work done, on time, in a quality manner – (flex time, choices)
- Move as required – not satisfied - move on – pragmatists
- Value family and children (many from divorced families)
- Work should be FUN, engaging and fast paced (sesame street kids)
- Little respect for title, rank or position – respect for accomplishments, knowledge, and effectiveness

**Volunteer Opportunities: How to attract Gen X's**

- See value in what they are doing and for what purpose
- Organization and project activities need to be meaningful, interesting and many of them
- Provide activities that are FUN, challenging and exciting with opportunities to learn and grow
- Provide opportunities at all levels – to lead, to follow, to organize – independently
- Value and acknowledge their input
- Focus on Family
- Provide a FUN atmosphere for all activities that include socializing and refreshments
- Ensure that there are evaluations and personal recognition for work well done -
- Include competitive elements within activities and events

**Practical Considerations:**

- Their time and resources are often limited. ie growing families, mortgages, etc. , however great time to get them involved in activities involving youth. They have many skills to contribute but limited time. Often will help if someone else organizes the project. They have lots of energy to commit if organization is in alignment with their goals in a manner that is fun, interesting and engaging.
- Usually need projects where “their children” can be involved in.
- Also need time for socializing and utilizing their technical prowess.
- Fundraisers i.e. 1 to 5 km walks, races, cycling, car washes, suppers, (Lions club story – everyone's vying for the same time – family activities take precedence)
- Leaders for youth groups such as Scouts, 4-H, Guides, Sports related - anything youth related.
- Instructors for technology related activities
- Fun activities – BBQ's, picnics, Holiday themed events, tech-related events

**Gen Y:** (Millennials): Born between 1980-2000 - currently 11-31 years old

- Balance: life and work – lost faith in institutions; work to afford a lifestyle, and pay for hobbies
- Leading Edge – technology – technical expertise, new skills
- Instant Contribution, meaningful
- Loyalty to an individual
- Stability – team member, groups of friends, learning opportunities,
- Support – need lots of feedback, support, encouragement, re-assurance, fearful of rejection
- Are open-minded and have little patience with outdated attitudes and biases.

**Volunteer Opportunities: How to attract Gen Y's**

- Make it meaningful to them; poised to contribute – (their needs were met)
- Organization with a Social responsibility – energy, environment, animals, child labour, the right thing for the community and society
- Must feel connected to people – opportunities to bond and build relationships –social component, belonging to a group
- Provide activities that are FUN with Flexibility and choices
- Provide opportunities that are Challenging, with learning opportunities
- Choices – options to choose from and their role in the organization and/or activity
- Provide coaching/leading, with clear instructions, the “whys” of the job/activity and feedback
- Utilize their skills – especially with technology
- Honesty – tell it the way it is – why are we doing it- vision – gains respect, follow-through
- Be in the now – past only to inform... learn from...

**Practical Considerations:**

- Must feel that they are being heard and valued. They don't take kindly to being reminded that “we tried that before and it didn't work” when they make suggestions. Utilize their leadership skills to run a project. Take advantage of their energy and enthusiasm. They are tech savvy. Need clear instructions on any activity. Inclusion of their friends.
- Fun activities such as i.e. Lions support dogs for the blind - Ducks Unlimited – Duck Detectives, duck banding, Health – using science experiments to teach health related subjects ie infra red and soap Arts Groups – cross pollinating, photography, painting, music, wood, workshops with professionals,
- Competitive activity i.e. texting competition, music and talent competitions, (skills based on what your organization stands for). Food should be a part of their activity.
- Team building and social activities and outings within your organization ie scavenger hunts, car/bicycle rally, field trips, socializing opportunities, games nights.
- Need meaningful activities that contribute to the environment, the community, or an organization .i.e. awareness of poverty, pollutants, chemicals, social activism, etc.
- Church opportunities (worship, choir, charities ie Christmas hampers music and sports events, missions, value based movies with opportunity for discussion).

# What is Intergenerational?

**Definition:** activities or programs that increase co-operation, interaction or exchange between two generations

- a sharing of skills, knowledge, experience or friendship
- a sharing of sites and services (long term care – nursery schools and residences for students, community centres shared space, community and social services for all generations,

## Intergenerational Goals

- to provide a social vehicle for seniors and youth to participate in fun, stimulating and challenging activities
- to form and sustain meaningful relationships between seniors and youth while respecting each other's life experiences (mutual acceptance of each other)
- to draw on the senior's wealth of knowledge and life experiences for the benefit of all
- to re-enforce the seniors' life purpose, and their value and contributions to the community
- to provide youth with positive role models and a healthy outlook on themselves and their future years
- to provide understanding and sensitivity to the process of aging and aging stereotypes – breaks down barriers
- to encourage volunteerism within the community
- to use the intergenerational approach to address some community and health concerns such as; senior isolation, elder abuse, crime, family breakdown, youth and seniors at risk (relating to mental, physical and emotional health)
- leadership opportunities for each generation
- creates more tolerant young people which helps enrich their adult lives Opportunity for inter-generational interactions beyond the family
- encourages life-long learning

“When the old are not allowed to share their stories and knowledge, the young grow up without a history. If the young are not listened to, we have no future!”