



Generational Volunteering

In the workplace
and community



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Program Objectives

1. Identify the **definition and components** of a generation
2. Note the **challenges AND opportunities** of working with multiple generations of volunteers in the workplace and community
3. Understand how to support every generation as they volunteer



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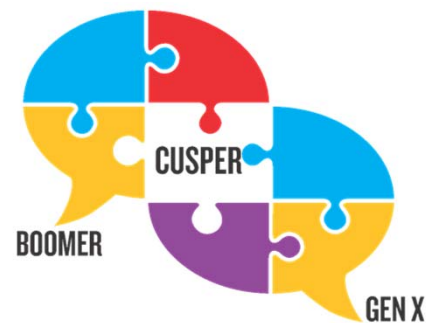
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Age-related Cohorts

1909-1928	Builders
1929-1944	Silents
1945-1963	Boomers
1964-1980	X'ers
1981-1996	Millennials
1997-2014	Gen Z (Post-Millennials)
??	Gen Alpha

Cuspers

- **Cusper** – person positioned between two generations
- Examples of Cuspers:
 - Silent/Boomer (born 1940-1946)
 - Boomer/Gen X (born 1960-1965)
 - Gen X/Millennial (born late '70s-early '80s)
 - Millennial/Gen Z (born late '90s)
- Can be naturals at mediating, translating and mentoring
- Less intimidating to new employees, yet respected among seasoned team members



Boomers

Born 1945-1963

75.4 million adults (23.6%)

(U.S. Census Bureau, 2015)

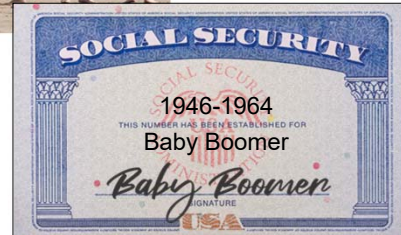
Characteristics:

- Educated
- Independent
- Desire quality
- Cause-oriented
- Fitness conscious
- Question authority
- Resourceful



Values:

- Work
- Personal gratification
- Focus on self (WIFM)
- Health/youthfulness
- Competitive



Gen X

Born 1964-1980

66 Million (20.7%)

(Pew Research Center, 2015)

Characteristics:

- Self-reliant
- Survivors
- Serious about life
- Stressed out
- Loyal to relationships
- Skeptical
- Highly spiritual



Values:

- Diversity
- Thinking globally
- Balance
- Techno-literacy
- Fun
- Informality



Millennials

83.1 Million (26.1%)

Born 1981-1996

(Pew Research Center, 2015)



Characteristics :

- Ambitious yet seek guidance
- Individualistic yet group-oriented
- Short attention span
- Overscheduled (busy)
- Optimistic/idealistic
- Multi-switch abilities

Values:

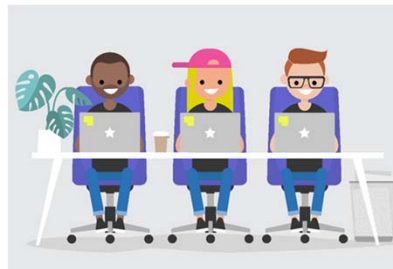
- Education
- Confidence
- Achievement
- Civic engagement
- Diversity
- Technology

Gen Z

Born 1997-2014

72.8 Million (25%)

(Pew Research Center, 2015)



Characteristics:

- Racially and ethnically diverse
- Well-educated
- Slower to enter labor force
- Digitally savvy
- Seek help for mental health issues
- Independent
- Competitive
- Skeptical but not doubtful

Values:

- Technology and social media
- Post-secondary education
- Innovation/Entrepreneurship
- Creative expression
- Social advocacy

Preferred Communication

Silents	Simple and straightforward; letters, phone
Boomers	Personal style to build rapport; phone, face-to-face networking
X'ers	Direct approach; email, voice-mail, social media
Millennials	Social networking websites, emails, texts
Gen Z	Social media and texting, but face-to-face for work



Generational Volunteering

Silents	Focus on skills, experience, and legacy, create opportunities for mentorship, leadership, and networking
Boomers	Focus on work, skills and interests, how they make a unique difference, treat them like paid staff, align volunteering with education and part-time work
X'ers	Provide comfortable, flexible roles, schedules and environment, offer technology-centered tasks, use positive language
Millennials	Assign meaningful positions and responsibility, provide leadership roles, team them with others
Gen Z	Support opportunity for complex problem solving, instead of addressing symptoms, offer cross generational partnerships



Activity:

1. What **strategies** does your organization have for working with different generations' volunteers?
2. What can **you do** to strengthen your work with volunteers from different generations?
3. **Be ready to share** your thoughts with the large group.



Outreach Ideas – How Do You Find Them?

Boomers:

- High-profile media/technology
- Corporations and business associations
- Volunteer Placement Organizations
- Civic organizations
- Fitness/wellness centers
- Health care facilities



Outreach Ideas – How Do You Find Them?



Generation X:

- Internet (social networking sites, bulletin boards, websites, e-mail)
- Fliers: cafes, book stores, coffee shops, children's school events, sporting activities
- Employer volunteer organizations
- Graduate schools
- Ads at child-care centers
- Ads at pediatricians' offices
- Wellness centers and events

Outreach Ideas – How Do You Find Them?

Millennials:

- Young professional groups, civic engagement clubs
- Fitness/wellness centers
- Media: Internet sites, social networks, radio, and text requests
- College campuses
- Peer-to-peer recruitment
- Employer volunteer experiences



Outreach Ideas – How Do You Find Them?

- **Gen Z:**

- Social media sites: Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook
- Young professional groups and clubs
- College campuses/high schools

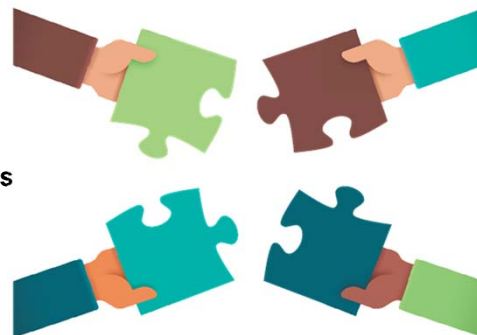


Volunteer Workplace Strategies

- **Generational competence –**

ability to *understand, respect* and *respond* to the specific needs and work styles of individuals from generations different from your own

- Accommodate volunteer **differences**
- Provide generational diversity **training**
- Offer **mentoring** programs
- Enhance **communication** methods
- Accommodate different **learning preferences**
- Consider volunteer workspace **design**



Design a Volunteer Experience Activity

- Use your notes worksheet
- Design an ideal volunteer experience for one generation including aspects such as:
 1. Role description
 2. Volunteer work hours
 3. Flexibility
 4. Dress Code
 5. Communication styles
 6. Environment
 7. Professionalism



Recommendations from Generational Volunteering Research

1. Make volunteering a social affair. Provide networking opportunities. Make it fun!
2. Demonstrate a need for volunteers. Be vocal. Position descriptions are key.
3. Manage your volunteer events and your office professionally.
4. Treat volunteers with respect, make them feel welcome, **avoid gossip and negativity at all costs!**
5. Recognition is key!



Like so many other things in life, success as a recruiter of volunteers is highly dependent on attitude. If you can't imagine that anyone will volunteer for you, they probably won't. On the other hand, if you approach recruiting with a positive set of expectations, you will find that people will indeed join up.



Susan Ellis
Volunteer Development
Theorist, Author, Educator



Key Takeaways for Generational Volunteering Opportunities

ACHIEVING THE EXTENSION MISSION THROUGH VOLUNTEERS Course

"This course opened my eyes to things that I had forgotten when I first started my work in Extension, it reminded me to look at the whole picture and gave me a lot of brand-new information. The lessons were amazing in teaching, repeating and practical experience." - Vermont

Achieving
the Extension Mission
Through Volunteers

When: January -
March, 2023

Cost: \$250

<https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/ncrvd/research/>



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