



Keeping Younger Members Involved

Recruiting, Involving, and Retaining Younger Members
Viewed From a Leadership Perspective

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Who volunteers in our culture?

Recent statistics tell us:

- Volunteering is not casual, it is part of the fabric of our lives.
- Volunteering is at a 30-year high.
- Volunteering among teenagers (ages 16-19) has dramatically increased since 1989.
- Baby Boomers are creating the highest mid-life (ages 45-64) volunteer rate in 30 years.
- Volunteering among older adults (ages 65 and over) has increased 64% since 1974.
- Episodic volunteering (99 or fewer volunteer hours per year) has increased between 1989 and 2005



Why aren't we getting new members, particularly Gen Xers and Gen Ys ?

- Are we asking?
- Do we know who they are?
- Do we know their likes and dislikes?
- Have we made a plan to attract them?

Insanity: Continuing to do the same things that we have always done and expecting different results.



Let's define who we are:

- Matures/Seniors – Born before 1946; We are 64 and over
- Baby Boomers – Born between 1945 and 1963; We are 47-65
- Generation X – Born between 1964 and 1977; We are 33 -46
- Generation Y – Born between 1978 and 1994; We are 16-32

We also call Generation Y the Millennials



Matures/Seniors

- Usually have had only one career;
- Have seen a lot of change in society, but usually don't embrace change easily;
- View volunteerism as a civic duty;
- Have a tendency to view age as limiting them in many ways.



Baby Boomers

- Usually have had only one career, working for one or two employers;
- Expect to live longer; planning for financial, mental and emotional security;
- Believe they have far more choices in terms of activities and lifestyles;
- View retirement not as an end to a career, but as an opportunity to begin a new one;
- Like the idea of upgrading skills and gaining new qualifications;
- Refuse to believe that age will limit them in any way.



Generation X

- Resourceful, self sufficient (latchkey kids);
- Skeptical, self-reliant, independent, pragmatic, entrepreneurial, anti-bureaucratic;
- The “Information Age” generation;
- Flexible, comfortable with autonomy, hate the endless meetings, bottom-line oriented, to the point, result oriented workers;
- Comfortable with leadership changes and a variety of leadership roles;
- Not interested in leadership positions that require additional personal and professional time;
- Will have at least three distinct careers and 12 employers.



Generation Y

- Have been wanted, valued, and coddled from birth;
- Have lived highly structured lives;
- Are the 24/7 generation;
- Will have more than 5 distinct careers, more than 20 employers, and be self employed by choice more than twice;
- Are open minded; highly tolerant to differences;
- Will work overseas several times, often for short periods of a year or less;
- Value education and training and see it as a significant tool in helping them to be more successful.



Summarize Gen X and Gen Y

Gen X

- May not connect with their grandparents' concept of volunteerism as a civic duty;
- May not buy into their parents' optimism about changing the world;
- Feel capable of helping one person;
- May prefer to focus on local, not global issues, on tangible results, not idealism.

Gen Y

- Look for variety, stimulation and “push button” action;
- Are searching for their causes;
- Exhibit a strong interest in volunteering.



What can we do?

Let's discuss your results:



Attracting Gen Xers

- Promote the value of changing the life of one individual;
- Make it local, not global;
- Talk about results;
- Encourage flexibility, creativity and freedom they need to reach the desired results;
- Identify what they will learn, gain from the volunteer experience.



Retaining Gen Xers

- Give them meaningful assignments;
- Listen for their preferences and concerns, respect their skills and opinions;
- Remember that they are very good at multitasking;
- Build in socializing, fun, celebrations, (food);
- Run tight, brief, efficient meetings;
- Have copies of all materials available;
- Make it easy for people to participate;
- Recognize individual contributions.



Attracting Gen Ys

- Promote the cause/mission or issue to attract this civic minded generation;
- Focus on issues that represent the interests of the community rather than individuals;
- Promote collaboration, team spirit and diversity;
- Talk about multiple options, parallel opportunities instead of asking them to commit to one thing;
- Offer a variety of exciting and challenging experiences.



Retaining Gen Ys

- Provide opportunities to be innovative and creative;
- Engage them quickly , keep them busy and give them on-going, immediate feedback;
- Clearly define tasks and expectations;
- Provide an atmosphere of collaboration and teamwork;
- Use technology;
- Treat the Gen Ys as a respected equal;
- Allow them to ask questions and challenge assumptions.



What about Baby Boomers?

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Let's discuss



How does all of this information affect leadership or vice versa?

- President's/vice president's responsibility;
- Membership Committee's responsibility;
- Sponsor's responsibility;
- Cabinet's responsibility.

What can we do as leaders?