

MTNA

**GENERATIONAL ISSUES FOR
ASSOCIATION VOLUNTEERS**

Washington State Music
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Music Teachers National Association

- Our homogeneous associational membership is giving way to increased generational and multicultural diversity
- Generations: Silent, Boomers
Generation X, Generation Y
- Multicultural



Introduction

- Most associations in the 21st century will have at least three distinct generations present in the membership
 - Pre-Boom (born prior to 1945)
 - Baby Boom (born 1945 – 1965)
 - Post-Boom (born after 1965)
- Each generation:
 - Has different views of the world, values, interests, and needs than the other.
 - Is making significantly different demands on the organization.
 - Has different demands related to delivery system preferences and decision-making processes.
- Multicultural Diversity
 - Our communities are growing more culturally diverse
 - Significant differences exist within multicultural groups regarding expectations, values, and behaviors.
- Leading an association in this multigenerational and multicultural environment is the **greatest challenge** we will face over the next several years.



Why are generational issues important

- Each generation has its own values, needs, beliefs, attitudes, emotions, and interests that influence their decisions and behaviors.
- Associations must prove their relevance to older members while still appealing to younger audiences.
- Thus, associations like MTNA and WSMTA must identify and understand the similarities and differences between generations in order to develop, communicate, and deliver advocacy programs that are relevant to generationally-diverse audiences.



Who we are

- **Pre-Boomer (born prior to 1945)**
 - Strong sense of duty, tradition and loyalty.
 - They value personal ties and relationships.
 - They require time to get to know a person or organization.
 - They are brand loyal
 - They are far less “technology savvy” than more recent generations.
 - They prefer print communication and face to face interaction.
 - They spend time to save money.
 - Guilt is a motivator.
 - Discipline is a way of life and they are not swayed by simple enticements.
 - Entertainment is not a basic need.
 - They tend to be participants rather than spectators.
 - Giving is a core principle
 - They place society ahead of self and can’t understand why others don’t.
 - They prefer fair process more than issue
- **Key motivators: Stability and Security**



Who we are

- **Baby Boomers (born 1945 to 1965)**
 - They were born in a period of prosperity, low unemployment, and greater access to education.
 - Self-absorbed, materialistic, and externally-motivated — appearances matter and possessions count.
 - As they approach mid-life, they are becoming more introspective and subjective.
 - Advances in medicine and health are helping them maintain an active lifestyle. They are the largest group of association membership.
 - Weak instinct for social discipline but want to infuse new values into the institutions they are inheriting
 - Not interested in group goals or motivations and are willing to sacrifice others needs to meet their own.
 - Prefer issues to fair principles or process.
 - Very independent and overwhelming persuasion from others means little to them.
 - Spend rather than save, and give to a need rather than to the organization. They must see why the money is needed and where it goes before they give it.
 - They will spend money to save time.
 - Entertainment is essential
 - They are not loyal to associations, institutions, or government.
 - They prefer to lead an organization (or observe it) rather than participate as others lead.
- **Key Motivators: Respect and Success**



Who we are

- **Post-Boomers/Generation X (born after 1965)**
 - Often raised in single-parent or working-parents homes.
 - Grew up with corporate downsizing and layoffs, AIDS, environmental concerns, publicized violent crimes.
 - Tend to be skeptical, realistic, responsible, pragmatic, self-confident, independent thinkers, and are not intimidated by authority.
 - Value honest and straightforward communication and are fairly immune to commercial hype.
 - Place greater value on flexibility than others.
 - View quality of life as more important than a successful career. “Working to live versus living to work.”
 - Opposed to rigid environments and place little value on chains of command.
 - Tend to be non-traditional and interested in new concepts and new products.
 - Are enthusiastic, creative, multidimensional, diverse, highly educated and computer dependent.
 - Global mindset.
 - Group directed and more interested in group goals; however, they are committed and loyal to their friends, not to institutions, organizations, or even older adults. Groups of peers are vital to involvement.
 - Give to persons or needs rather than organizations.
 - Are blunt and often express cynical realism on issues.
 - Computers are your competition. Post-boomers are interactive and are spontaneous. You cannot rely on poor speeches or poor visuals to hold their attention. You’ve got three minutes.
- **Key Motivator: Enjoyable Experience**

Who we are

- Baby Boomlet (born 1977 – 1995)
 - AKA Generation Y
 - Children of the Boomers comprise 21 percent of the population now and are expected to exceed the Boomers to represent one third of the U.S. population by 2020
 - Born into affluence and tend to be materialistic like their Boomer parents rather than their Gen X older siblings who value experience and honesty.
 - Consumers and have part-time jobs to support their spending.
 - Brand-conscious and brand must reflect their lifestyle.
 - Computer dependent and most buy online.

What do we do?

- Know your members
 - Determine the ratio of generations and which groups predominate
 - Determine if your volunteer governance structures reflect your profile
- Develop generational-brand practices
 - Understand Pre-Boomers
 - Understand Baby Boomers
 - Understand Post-Boomers
 - Prepare for the Future

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Questions?

This presentation is available online:
<http://members.mtna.org/WSMTA09.pdf>