

Engaging Boomers and Future Generations as Volunteers

Statewide Foodshelf Conference
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Discussion

Identify symbols or images that represents:

- Boomers -born 1946-1964
- Gen X – born 1965-1980
- Millennials – 1981 & after



Plan for the presentation

- Generational differences and volunteering
- Best practices for engaging Boomers and future generations as volunteers
- Additional tips for recruiting Millennials
- Activity

Frame the Question

- Traditional volunteer management was designed for the generations born before 1946.
- Volunteer systems need to be reinvented for the Boomers and generations that follow.
- There is a wealth of resources for organizations who can reinvent to tap what Boomers and upcoming generations offer.

Frame the Question

The challenge

“...the articulation of a new vision for later life that includes challenging and dynamic volunteer opportunities is outpacing the construction of programs and institutions needed to realize that vision.”



Points of Light Foundation '50+ Volunteering: Working for Stronger Communities

The traditionalists generation

Born 1920 -1946, grew up during the Great Depression and World War Two.

- Sacrifice
- Hard work
- Respect for authority
- Duty before pleasure
- Adherence to rules



The Boomer generation

Born 1946 - 1964

- Social cause focused
- Hardworking
- Longing for personal growth
- Self-absorbed
- Team orientation



The Boomer generation

Boomers early life experiences very different

- Post WW II prosperity
- Idealism of JFK
- Experienced protest and change
 - Civil Rights
 - Women's Liberation
 - Vietnam War



Generation X – 1964 to 1980

As volunteers:

- Want flexible schedules
- Expect their time to be used efficiently
- More balanced between work and personal life than Boomers
- Recent "Volunteering in America" survey had them the fastest growing segment of volunteers



H-2(b)

Generation Y or Millennials – 1981 to present

Words often used to describe Millennials

- Individualistic
- Media-savvy
 - Loyal
 - Adaptable
 - Realistic
 - Connected
 - Team players
 - High achievers
 - Civic-minded
- Socially-conscious
 - Confident
 - Optimistic

Generation Y or Millennials – 1981 to present

As volunteers:

- Volunteering in record breaking numbers
- Seek leadership opportunities
- Seek challenges
- Like feedback



H-2(b)

Generational Comparison

	Traditionalists	Boomers	Xers	Millennials
Outlook	Practical	Optimistic	Skeptical	Hopeful
Work ethic	Dedicated	Driven	Balanced	Determined
Leadership by	Hierarchy	Consensus	Competence	Pulling Together
Relationships	Personal Sacrifice	Personal Gratification	Reluctant to Commit	Inclusive

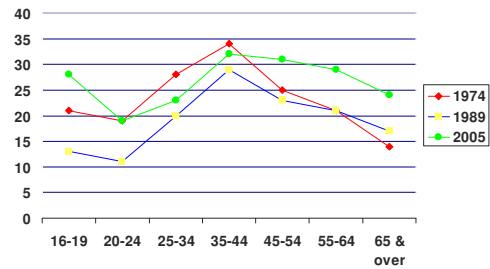
Zemke, Raines, Filipczak. *Generations at Work*, 2000.

Generational Clash Points

	Traditionalists	Boomers	Xers	Millennials
Career Goals	Build a legacy	Build a stellar career	Build a portable career	Build parallel careers
Rewards	The satisfaction of a job well done	Money, title, recognition, the corner office	Freedom is the ultimate reward	Work that has meaning for me
Job Changing	Job changing carries a stigma	Job changing puts you behind	Job changing is necessary	Job changing is part of my daily routine

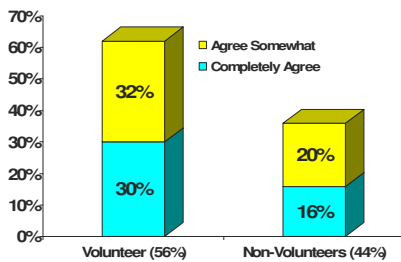
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Trends in Volunteering by Age (1974-2005)



AARP

Boomers Who Agree They'll Volunteer More in Retirement



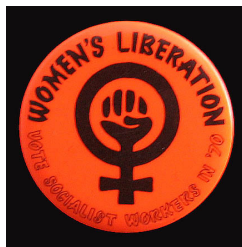
AARP

Best Practices

For Engaging Boomers and the Future Generations of Volunteers

Best Practice

1. Understand volunteers' deep-seated need to have impact.
2. Focus the volunteer interview on learning the prospective volunteer's passions, mutually designing his/her volunteer role.



Best Practices

3. Offer a wide choice of volunteer opportunities in all aspects of the organization's operations.
4. Include some short term and seasonal volunteer positions to align with Boomer availability.

Restructuring positions

Strategies:

- Substitution
- Job Sharing
- Rotation
- Segmentation
- Team Volunteering
- Telecommuting

From "Creating Boomer-friendly Volunteer Opportunities: Restructuring Existing Opportunities" by D. Scott Martin.

<http://www.nationalserviceresources.org/node/17770>

Best Practices

5. Offer skills-based volunteer opportunities.
6. Develop volunteer position descriptions that are engaging and show impact.



Best Practices

7. Move volunteers into project leadership roles.
8. Recruit Boomer volunteers by developing appealing recruitment messages, working networks and being highly visible on the web.



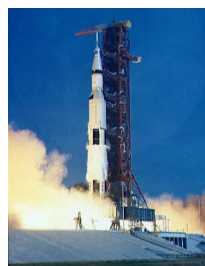
Best Practices

9. Change traditional volunteer supervision to leading volunteers and offering collegial support.
10. Reframe volunteer recognition to respond to the value Boomers place on having impact and being life-long learners.



Best Practices

11. Obtain organizational buy-in.
12. Become a learning organization.



Tips for Recruiting Millennials

Pinpoint Motivation

Why would a Millennial choose to volunteer their time?

- Opportunity to make an impact, see real results and be CHALLENGED
- See volunteering as a part of their Work Life Balance
- Professional development and resume building opportunities

Tips from the Field: How to Get Young People Involved

- Use multiple avenues to inform them of opportunities
- Convince them that their time is important to the success of the program
- Get them to see the cause as a personal one
- Simplify the volunteer process
- Offer a variety of time commitments

When Designing Position Descriptions...

- Choose your words carefully
- Emphasize benefits (flexibility, professional development, etc.)
- Get the word out

Rethink the structure of your position design.

- Do you allow for schedule flexibility and varied forms of commitment (episodic volunteers, seasonal internships)?
- Do you provide opportunities for Millennials to engage in leadership roles?
- Do you provide a continuous system of feedback and supervision?
- Do you allow for Millennials to gain ownership of project based assignments?

Activity

Pick a generation interested in.

Develop tips for:

- Recruiting
- Recognizing
- Communicating



Thank you

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