

INTERGENERATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Handout Prepared for Soroptimist International

TWO COMPONENTS TO INTERGENERATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Life Cycle Stage- The Life Cycle is a series of stages we all experience: Infancy, Childhood, Teenager, Emerging Adult, Adult, Older Adult. As a Teenager/Emerging Adult we are focused on building an *identity*. As an Emerging Adult/Adult we are focusing on *intimacy* (partnering). As an Adult/Older Adult we are working on *generativity* and *integrity*, building a life and leaving a legacy. Application: The perspective and considerations about having a child will be very different between an Emerging Adult and an Older Adult.



Life Cycle

Generation- Generation is the specific cohort a person grows up with. The Generation's values and world view is shaped by events and experiences of its time. Application: The perspective and considerations about having a child will be very different from a woman who grew up in the '40s than from a woman who grew up in the '70s.



Generation

THE FOUR GENERATIONS

The Veterans
1922-1945



Baby Boomers
1945-1960



Generation X
1960-1980



Millenials
1980-2000



Shaping Events: Great Depression, WWII, economic boon, automobile & highways (mobility), atom bomb	Shaping Events: Civil rights, space travel, cold war, sexual revolution, assassinations, music- Elvis, Beatles, Woodstock	Shaping Events: Women's liberation, energy/economic crisis, Iran-contra, Challenger explosion, MTV, Berlin wall fall	Shaping Events: 9-11, OK City bombings, school shootings, technology, Clinton Lewinsky, mega church (conservatism)
Values: Hard work, frugality, dedication, sacrifice, & rules	Values: Individual choice, community involvement, self-actualizing, health & wellness	Values: Diversity, techno literacy, fun & informality, autonomy, friends not family	Values: Marketing & branding self, lifestyle & flexibility, respect must be earned
Leadership style: Direct, command & control	Leadership style: Consensual, collegial	Leadership style: everyone is the same, challenges others	Leadership style: TBD
Communications: Formal/memo, one on one	Communications: In person	Communications: Direct, immediate	Communications: Tech based (cell or computer application)
Interaction: Individualistic	Interaction: Team player	Interaction: Entrepreneurial	Interaction: Participative, exceptional multitaskers
Other: Education was dream, save money, traditional family, sex on honeymoon	Other: Education is a birthright, divorcing, buy now pay later, affluent, sex in back seat	Other: Freedom is best reward, latch key kids, save \$, education to succeed, sex on internet	Other: Seek meaningful work, blended families, celebrate diversity, sex is protected
Life Cycle Focus: Integrity and Gerotranscendence- leaving a legacy & accepting old age. Retirement, managing income & expenses, medical issues	Life Cycle Focus: Generativity & Integrity- creating a life & legacy. Estate planning, Anxiety, depression dealing with life challenges, grandparenting	Life Cycle Focus: Intimacy & Generativity- creating a family & career. If parents, hyper focused. Relationships= urban tribe like the "Friends" tv show	Life Cycle Focus: Identity & intimacy- defining self and partnering. Work matters. Avoid emotional risks, financially dependent on family for now

THE GENERATIONS IN YOUR ORGANIZATION

- Veterans
 - Historians
 - Wealth holders
 - Keepers of founding goals and beliefs
- Boomers
 - Optimists
 - Confident
 - Team builders
- Generation X
 - Adaptable/resilient
 - Ethnically diverse
 - Autonomous
- Millennials
 - Tech natural
 - Want their work to matter
 - Prefer teams & diversity

MESSAGING ACROSS GENERATIONS

- Veterans
 - Seek no applause
 - No news is good news!
- Boomers
 - Give feedback, receive little
 - Feedback once per year & lots of documentation
- Generation X
 - Need positive feedback
 - How am I doing?
- Millennials
 - Feedback at the push of a button
 - Mistake silence for disapproval

Application example: Veterans and Boomers tend not to challenge authority/status quo which can confuse and cause resentment among Generation Xers and Millennials.

Application example: Generation Xers and Millennials have not experienced some life stages, but have had different life experience and which may cause them to fail in actively listening to Veterans and Boomers missing info and guidance.

APPLY THIS INFORMATION NOW!

Select one of the following areas and brainstorm how improving intergenerational communication can benefit The Soroptimists.

- Recruitment
- Social functions
- Fundraising
- Management/leadership
- Mission execution
- Other area of your choice
