Appreciating Generational Differences

FCL Group Process Lesson

2023 National FCE Conference

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Preparation

1. Preview the presentation.

2. Make copies of handouts number 1 and 2.

3. Make posters by labeling with the Generations: Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials and Generation Z.

4. Before the Presentation, place posters around the room.

5. Before the presentation, place on tables Post-It® Notes, markers and pencils.

LEADER GUIDE

Objective

The purpose of this program is to educate families and communities about the various thoughts and behaviors we develop based on our experiences while growing up. These thought patterns and behaviors can often be misunderstood or misinterpreted by others of younger or older generations, sometimes leading to conflict. This lesson is to provide the oportunity to learn about generational experiences, reflect on one's own, and discuss how to prevent problems and move forward.

Supplies

1. Posters or blank pages
2. Markers
3. Post-it® Notes
4. Pencils/pens

Copies

1. A copy of Handout #1, Summary of the Four Generations, Page 22 for every 4 to 5 participants.
2. A copy of Handout #2, The Impact of our Experiences, page 23 for every 2 people.
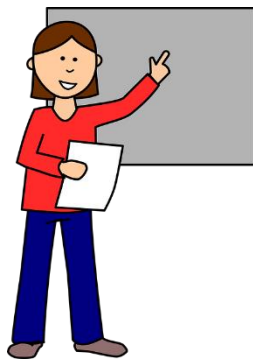
Presentation Overview

I. Looking at the past and present generational experiences.
Participants will write what they feel are highlights of the generations, on Post-it® Notes then attach the notes to the posters.

II. Considering the impact of our experiences.
Participants will work in small groups to discuss questions or topics, Revealing common and differing points of view.

III. Discussion: What can we do?
The group will consider steps that can be taken in order to achieve satisfaction for varying generations and individuals will consider how this information can be applied personally.

Leader Guide Presentation Notes

Introduction

Read or paraphrase the following:

This FCL lesson explores personality and decision making based on influences of the world around us. This is often referred to as *generational studies*. However, in studying the generations, we don't want to stereotype anyone.

Did you know that when each of these generations, Baby Boomers, the Gen X'ers and Generation Y (Millennials), were in their young adult stage that various sources have labeled them the "ME" generation?

This suggests that understanding generations goes beyond the age they are in. Generations are about what they have experienced. Life stages influence a person's personality and decision making as well. Therefore, when we communicate and interact with one another, we need to remember that their stage of life, present and past family life, and unique personal experiences shape who they are.

So, today's lesson is to look beyond weaknesses of a generation (those sharing common experiences) and to, instead, understand and appreciate those of a younger group and those that are older. To do this, we will allow for time to consider why understanding one another based on generational experiences is important. We will discuss information about reaching the youngest generations: Millennials (Generation Y) and Gen Z; and take some time to look at our generational experiences as members of FCE. Last, we will conclude with a discussion about how to apply these ideas.

Part I - Understanding the Generations

Activity I   10 minutes

Let's look at the generations. There are Post-it® Notes on your table. Take about 5 minutes to write some of your experiences or knowledge you have of these time periods.

Allow time for participants to write and post experiences and comments on the posters around the room or on paper at the table.

First, then, we will look at the common experiences of generations, examining the specific global events, technological background, social aspects, and common familial circumstances that have had an impact on generations.

Allow for a 10 minute discussion as you read some of the notes. Mention some ideas also in the lesson, Part I section. (See Part I in the lesson)

Part II - Impact of Experiences

How do you think these experiences influence us? What have you noticed?

Allow 1 participant to share a story and then ask the assigned person to share the story about Anna Liotta's mother. (This is on the top part of the handout, "The Impact of Our Experiences.")

- In groups, discuss the questions and facts that are on the sheet "Impacts of Experiences."
- Write down insights that you have; we will share these thoughts with one another.

Distribute Handout # 2: the Impact of Experiences.

Part III - The importance of understanding others' experiences

Read or paraphrase the following:

In general, the younger generation will always have more experience with technological advancements and appear to be more disrespectful to authority. This is because we are always questioning our world. Once we have established our own world, anyone that challenges it appears to be defiant or difficult to work with.

Additionally, younger generations also will have a unified cultural background that their predecessors will not be able to relate to; this, unfortunately, creates a natural barrier among groups.

We see life through our own experiences and naturally feel that our own opinions and perspectives are the most accurate. Along with this, we feel that opposing opinions or ideas are wrong and maybe even hostile. This is not to say anyone's ideas are either right or wrong.

Whether you are among those in a younger or older group, your opinions and feelings do matter. Everyone's opinion does- for the sake of discovering what is best. In fact, Art Markman and Bob Duke suggest in *Brain Briefs* that individuals working (thinking) *alone* first produces greater ideas than working as a group. This allows individuals to consider their own ideas without the influence of others. Some members of a group may, as Art Markman and Bob Duke warn, influence the ideas of others in the group. Typically, the first person that speaks guides the rest of the direction of the ideas. This can be problematic because the first idea is not necessarily the best idea.

Part IV - Examining the needs and perspectives of other generations

Read or paraphrase the following:

"Younger" is a relative term! Let's look at the two younger generations in the workplace today: the Millennials (Generation Y) and the Nexters/Zoomers (Generations Z).

Millennials are the first natives to the digital world. Generation Z has been immersed in it all their lives. Moreover, because of this prevalent access to the Internet, they have firsthand experiences with a global society. They have grown accustomed to access to the world and instant information 24/7. The information they consume is to the point. Communication via technology is efficient and cost effective. They are comfortable with sharing how they feel with the world on a moment-to-moment basis. Socially, Millennials (Generation Y) have had many optimistic building experiences.

Research suggests that Millennials want a purpose in what they do. They want balance in their lives between their personal life and the work they do. Millennials want more respect, shown by fair wages and a positive work environment.

Millennials are taking control of their lives. In short, today's rising generation into the work force isn't working "for" anyone. They may be employed by a company, but they are *working for* their own reasons.

Distribute Handout #2: The Four Generations of Your Clients

10 minute discussion

Allow participants to look at the handout and share what they have learned (on the handout or by experience) about younger and "more experienced" generations.

Application

How can the information about generational experiences be applied in your work, family, or organizational circumstances?

Note: For FCE communities, you can invite participants to look over the Appendix information for this discussion.

In Conclusion

As we mentioned in the beginning, generational experiences do not define a person or predict behavior or personality. This information helps us be more understanding, not more bias in perception. In doing so, we hope to fulfill our goal to promote a better way of living and working.

Family Community Leadership ®

fce
National Association For
Family & Community Education

Appreciating Generational Differences

Presentation Information

This FCL lesson explores personality and decision making based on influences of the world around us. This is often referred to as generational studies. In studying generations, it is vital to be cautious of generalizing and stereotyping persons born in a particular time period. As noted from research "members of older generations have tended to pan members of younger generations for being brash, egocentric, and lazy throughout history, whereas members of younger generations disparage members of older generations for being out of touch, rigid, and resource-draining (e.g., Protzko & Schooler, 2019; Rauvola et al., 2019)." In fact, various sources have called the Baby Boomers", the Gen X'ers, and Generation Y (Millennials) the "ME" generations when they were in the young adult stage. This suggests that understanding generations goes beyond the age they are in. Generations are about what they have experienced. Life stages influence a person's personality and decision making as well. Therefore, when we communicate and interact with one another, we need to remember their stage of life, present and past family life, and unique personal experiences shape who they are.

This lesson's purpose is to look beyond weaknesses of a generation (those sharing common experiences) and to, instead, understand and appreciate those of a younger group and those that are older (Part I and II). In addition, this lesson allows for time to consider why understanding one another based on generational experiences is important, (Part III). Finally, the lesson concludes with information about reaching the youngest generations: Millennials and Gen Z, (Part IV). As a resource, the generational aspects of the National Association for Family and Community Education is available to use with this lesson, (Appendix I).

PART I

UNDERSTANDING THE GENERATIONS

Social generations are groups (cohorts) of people born in the same date range and who share similar cultural experiences. These specific historical events can cause young people to perceive the world differently than their elders (Jaeger, Hans (1885). *"Generations in History: Reflections on a Controversial Concept"*).

First, then we will look at the common experiences of generations, examining the specific global events, technological background, social aspects, and common familial circumstances that have had an impact on generations. We will begin with those in 1900. While these persons may not be living or an active part of our society, their influence has been felt in the workforce and in our families.
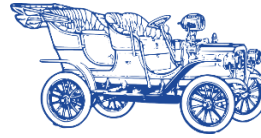
The G. I. Generation

Birth Years are 1900-1926 (also known as the Greatest Generation or WWII Generation). **In 2020, their ages were** 120 to 94 years. They came of age during the Roaring Twenties, Great Depression, and served in WWI. The economic events of this time had the most profound influence. This generation developed resilience in surviving hardship and solving problems. It forced many to a higher standard of personal responsibility, fostered modesty and hard work ethic. Many jobs were physically demanding and long hours. The motto of their time was "Use it up, fix it up, make it do or do without". For most of their lives, they were committed to one job and one marriage. They valued honesty and trustworthiness, which fostered the need to rely on one another. Millions self-sacrificed to defend their country or support the war effort.

Technology Innovations: Radio, Telephone, Electricity, Automobile.

Issues: Stock Market Crash, Great Depression, Child Labor Laws, Women Voters.

Family Beliefs: Obey your elders without question, save for a rainy day.

Events: World War I and II, Prohibition, Hooverville Shanty Town, Dust Bowl, Nazi Germany, Spanish Flu pandemic of 1918-1920, Manhattan Project (development of the first nuclear bomb), 1929 Stock Market Crash, Cold War (1947-1991).

Famous and/or notable people born during **1901-1927**: Queen Elizabeth II, Ginger Rogers, Malcom Forbes, John F. Kennedy, Orville Redenbacher, Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan, Fidel Castro, Emperor Hirohito of Japan, George H. W. Bush, Nelson Mandela, and Indira Gandhi.

Leaders: Adolf Hitler (born 1889), Winston Churchill (born 1874), Herbert Hoover (Served as president 1929-1933).

Popular: Disney, literature, arts, music and cinema, Golden Age of Hollywood, comic books (like *Doc Savage, The Shadow*, or *Superman*); Favorite music was jazz, blues, gospel and folk music. Popular radio shows were: *Amos 'n' Andy, Easy Aces, Ethel and Albert, Fibber McGee and Molly, The Goldbergs, The Great Gildersleeve, The Halls of Ivy, Meet Corliss Archer, Meet Millie, and Our Miss Brook*s and presidential "fireside chats".

Traditionalist or the Silent Generation

Birth years were 1927-1945. In 2020, their ages were 93 to 75. This group includes those who were born during the depression, were children in the years of WWII, and may have fought in the Korean War and later during the Vietnam War. Upon coming of age in the 1950s, they are noted as forming the leadership of the Civil Rights Movement as well as comprising the "silent majority" (*McLaughlin, Dan (February 16, 2016). ("Closing the Book on the Silent Generation") a*nd creating the rock and roll music of the 1950s and 1960s. (Menand, Louis. "*The Misconception about Baby Boomers and the Sixties*". *New Yorker*. Retrieved April 21, 2021). This was also the time of the McCarthyism era. Time of fear of enforced conformity, communist spies or sympathizers. Government trials were conducted to determine loyalty. Citizens were accused, lost jobs and some even imprisoned. It was this social turmoil during their early adulthood that they would try to keep their heads down and work hard, thus earning themselves the "silent" label. Their attitudes leaned toward not being risk-takers and playing it safe.

Although named as the "Silent Generation", some were very vocal, who advocated for change and equality for the Civil Rights Movement. Their influential and inspiring leaders, such as Martin Luther King, Jr., were born of this generation. The Little Rock Nine Students, born in the years of 1940-1942, were the first to integrate schools.

Technology Innovations: Radio, Silver Screen.

Family Beliefs: Sacrifice for the greater good; hard work is necessary.

Parenting Experience: Parents were very protective because of the stock market crash.

Issues: Space Race, rise of Communism, fall of Nazism, the nuclear bomb.

Leaders: F. D. Roosevelt, Colin Powell, Sandra Day O'Conner, Martin Luther King, Junior.

Famous and/or notable people born during **1928 – 1945:** John Lennon, Elvis Presley, Wilt Chamberlain, George Harrison, Saddam Hussein, Paul McCartney, Bruce Lee, Muhammad Ali, Joe Biden, Martin Luther King Jr., Anne Frank, Mickey Mantle, Mikhail Gorbachev, Shirley Temple, Pope Francis, Johnny Cash, Stephen Hawking, Nancy Pelosi, and Desmond Tutu.

Events: Experienced both "Roaring 20s" and Great Depression. Two World Wars, Korean War, Vietnam War, Woodstock, Watergate, and assassinations of John F. Kennedy & Martin Luther King, Jr.

Communication: Because of their experiences (or lack of experience with technology), Traditionalists tend to prefer face to face communications.
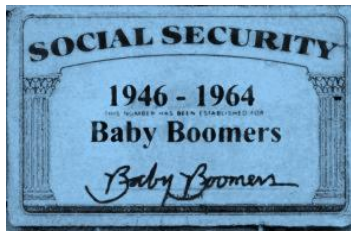
Baby Boomers birth years: 1946-1964. In 2020, their ages were 74-57. The post-WWII era observed a significant increase of birth rates, 3-4 million each year of 1946-1964, thus the name of Baby Boomers. In the developing countries, the Baby Boomers are the single biggest group. The economic turmoil's of the Great Depression and world wars were subsiding. Soldiers were returning home and offered economic and educational opportunities, thus allowing them to own homes and experience stability to start, raise and support family and children. New labor laws and economic growth led to more free time, time for building, developing and value relationships with family and friends.

During the 1950's and 1960's, their childhood witnessed great reforms in education, greatest technological advances in history and the period of the Cold War. Many older boomers fought in Vietnam War or participated in the counterculture. They expected that the world would improve with time. The most demanding of the betterment push were those who had a higher living and education standards. Of the resources available, they would use them, learning to fix things themselves. They were confident, self-assured, and believed in hard work thus able to achieve, pushing themselves towards the "American Dream".

Technology Innovations: Radio, silver screen, television.

Issues: Military Draft, Cuban Missile Crisis, Cold War, Vietnam War, assassinations of John F. Kennedy, Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Junior, Civil Rights Movement, environmentalism, women's rights and feminism, birth control, abortion, sexual revolution, increased drug experimentation, rising divorce rates, growth in population for schools, and women in the workplace.

Family Beliefs: Competitive work force; "Do Your Best and You Can Succeed!"

Family Experiences: Influenced by Dr. Spock, children were pampered. Optimism and self-confidence were encouraged.

Famous and/or notable people born during **1946–1964:** Donald Trump, Michael Jackson, Barack Obama, Princess Diana, Michael Jordan, George W. Bush, Osama bin Laden, Vladimir Putin, Stevie Wonder, Bill Clinton, Steve Jobs, Elton John, Jeff Bezos, King Charles III, Dorothy Hamill, Whoopi Goldberg, Mike Pence, Al Gore, Mitt Romney, and Condoleezza Rice.

Communication: Boomers' work experiences with communication was scarce because the methods for it were expensive.

Generation X birth years of 1964-1979. In 2020, they were ages 56-41. Why the name Generation X? The X was used to give the idea that the generation following the Baby Boomers resisted being defined, with reference to the variable "x" rather than some other characteristic label.

This part of our history shows a shift in our societal values. There is a rise in divorce rates, more women joining the workforce and not enough available childcare outside the home for the dual-earning parents. Due in part to the reduced adult presence and supervision in the home, as compared to prior generations, this group was nicknamed the "latchkey generation," children return home to an empty house, and letting themselves inside with door key.

The parenting method of "latchkey" may have fostered the independent nature of Generation X. They became flexible, ready for change when it came and prepared to work through problems. They were critical thinkers, thanks to more opportunities to higher education than those of previous generations. All these attributes have led to changes in communication, workplace environments and their culture.

Issues: Latchkey kids, politically correct language, rising divorce rates, loyalty is challenged, and consumption focused culture.

Technology Innovations: television, development of the modern computers, MTV (a 24/7 cable Music TeleVision network), video games, Dot.com, space exploration.

Family Beliefs: the world is not safe, success is determined by oneself.

Family Experiences: Children often neglected because, in most families, both parents worked.

Famous and/or notable people born during **1965–1980:** Robert Downey Jr, Elon Musk, Tom Brady, Dwayne Johnson, Janet Jackson, Brett Kavanaugh, and Michael Strahan.

Events: Vietnam War, Watergate scandal, 1973 Oil Crisis, AIDS, Challenger Disaster, fall of Berlin Wall, Persian Gulf War, 1987 stock market crash, tension between United States and Soviet Union.

Leaders: Bill Gates, Barak Obama.

Popular: Michael Jordan, Steven Spielberg, and Johnny Depp.

 Or

Millennials or Generation Y were born between the years 1980-1999. In 2020, their ages are 40-21. At first, this generation was known as Gen Y, since they are the generation who followed Generation X. But since they are the group who were born during the last two decades of the 20th Century, and became adults around the turn of the century or millennium, (children, born in 1982, graduated from high school in 2000), sociologists called them the Millennials. They are the first generation that grew up in the internet age. The technical advances of the world revolutionized much of our lives. What is not influenced, controlled or connected to the internet? The millennials' childhood and teenage years were in the midst of these changes. The first social media platforms became available while they were teenagers or young adults. They may remember a time before social media, but they would have a hard time having a future without it.

Researchers and sociologist have had a difficult time to pin point a single characteristic of this generation, but they have concluded some attributes common to them such as they are good at accepting change. Throughout their lifetime, technologies and the economy have quickly changed. Millennials seek faster and better ways of achieving, they want to know. Some of the achievements are more than likely to be completed in a collaborative work environment. In this workplace, Millennials appreciate positive feedback and recognition for a job well done.

Technology Innovations: Cell phones, internet for personal computer, television (reality shows), "real time", social media platforms.

Issues: Focus on the child and family, girl power; rewarding all children.

Family Beliefs: Children are special.

Events: Columbine school shooting, Virginia Tech school shooting, 9/11, Hurricane Katrina, tsunamis.

Leaders: Prince William, Bill and Hilary Clinton.

Famous and/or notable people born during **1981–1996:** Kim Jong-un, Serena Williams, Usian Bolt, Lady Gaga, Mark Zuckerberg, LeBron James, Prince William, Meghan Markle, and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez.

Popular: Serena Williams, Leonardo DiCaprio, Kurt Cobain, and Disney.

Generation Z or "Zoomers" or "Nexters". Gen Z'ers were born after 1996. It is up for debate as to the end of the birth years, some say 2010. This generation is relatively young. Sociologists are not sure what name to call them. Suggested names are Homelanders, Post-Millennials, iGeneration, or Gen Wii. Generally accepted name is Generation Z, since it follows Generation Y. But sociologists are using nicknames of Zoomers as a play on the Baby Boomers or as Nexters, implying Generation Next.

No matter the name, they grow up with access to the Internet and portable digital technology from a young age. They have been dubbed the "Digital Natives." They have no memory of the world before the Internet, social media platforms or smart phones.

Characteristics that would describe Generation Z'ers are that they are highly educated, less likely to drop out of high school and more likely to attend college than previous generations, and are children of parents who attended college. They make good entrepreneurs. With just a phone, an internet connection and good idea, a business could be started.

During the 2020 start of the COVID-19 pandemic, some of the members of Generation Z were in elementary school. Older members were in high school or just staring college or their careers. The full impact on the Zoomers may not be known for years or decades. Doctors have evidence of not only the Zoomers, but of the whole general population, children, adolescents, teens, adults and the elderly, of higher rates of anxiety and depression.

Technology Innovations: iPods, iPads, the "cloud," Smart TV, and global access.

Cultural Beliefs: diversity, the impact of actions on environment, and open-minded, innovation.

Issues: COVID-19 pandemics and quarantine, amber alerts, hand sanitizing, debt concerns, and constant change.

Events: Great Recession, Iraq/Afghanistan war, and Arab Spring (series of anti-government protests, and uprisings that spread across much of the Arab/Muslim countries).

Famous and/or notable people born during **1997–2012:** Billie Ellish, Malala Yousafzai, Chloe Kim, and Simone Biles**.**

Communication: quick, timely, and entertaining.

PART II

IMPACTS OF EXPERIENCES

Anna Liotta tells a story of her mother saving tinfoil that has been used to cover a casserole. Anna explains, in her book "*Unlocking Generational Codes*," that this was an example of the impact of our experiences on behavior. Even though tinfoil (after WWII it was replaced by more durable aluminum foil, but at times still called tinfoil) was readily available in stores, her mother remembered a time when resources were scarce.

Today, a Generation Z'er may be equally conscious about resources, not because there are not enough. Rather, they may be concerned for the affect consumer products may have on the environment.

Anna also shares stories of persons that have misunderstood each other based on their own perspectives that are shared with others of their own age group. For example, a manager may show respect and appreciation in a different way than a younger employee might wish for.

In small groups, consider the following questions and facts. Write down insights that you have to share with others.

1. Is face to face communication better than digital? Why? Why not?
   a. Social interaction is necessary to gain personal social skills.
   b. Millennials, known as digital natives, have grown up in the comfort of communicating with technology.
   c. Digital communication lacks the means for sharing nonverbal and tone information of a message.
   d. Digital information can be accessed and replied to when it is convenient.
   e. Digital communication can be efficient; reducing lost time on chit chat.
   f. Face to Face communication can provide time to build relationships.
   g. Digital information can reach a larger audience and spread information at a faster rate.
   h. Time can be wasted while exploring all available messages and attractive ideas.
2. What is right? Valuable? Important? Necessary?
   a. How do you feel about time? Studies indicate that it is very precious to the Gen X'er.
   b. How important are Relationships to you? For the Baby Boomer, research suggest they are highly important.
   c. What about Hard work? Or do you feel that it is better to "work smarter not harder"?
   d. Recognition and Respect? We all deserve it. Millennials expect it.
3. Expectations based on experience: What do you expect in your work life? Home life? Personal life?
   a. Millennials have had quick access to information and entertainment. All the time.

4. Perspectives based on life's experience: What are your thoughts and feelings about the following?
    a. Waste, recycling, reusing.
    b. Money, loans, credit cards.
    c. Social experiences.
    d. Authority and "experts".
    e. Family.
    f. Health.
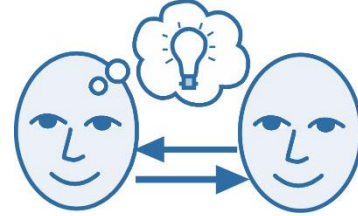
PART III

THE IMPORTANCE OF UNDERSTANDING OTHERS' COMMON EXPERIENCES

In general, the younger generation will always have more experience with technological advancements and appear to be more disrespectful to authority. This is because we are always questioning our world. Once we have established our own world, anyone that challenges it appears to be defiant or difficult to work with.

Additionally, younger generations also will have a unified cultural background that their predecessors will not be able to relate to; this, unfortunately, creates a natural barrier among groups.

We see life through our own experiences and naturally feel that our own opinions and perspectives are the most accurate. Along with this, we feel that opposing opinions or ideas are wrong and maybe even hostile. This is not to say anyone's ideas are either right or wrong.

Whether you are among those in a younger or older group, your opinions and feelings do matter. Everyone's opinion does- for the sake of discovering what is best. In fact, Art Markman and Bob Duke suggest in **Brain Briefs** that individuals working (thinking) *alone* first produce greater ideas than working as a group. This allows individuals to consider their own ideas without the influence of others. Some members of a group may, as Art Markman and Bob Duke warn, influence the ideas of others in the group. Typically, the first person that speaks guides the rest of the direction of the ideas. This can be problematic because the first idea is not necessarily the best idea.

PART IV

EXAMINING THE NEEDS AND PERSPECTIVES
OF YOUNGER GENERATIONS

"Younger" is a relative term! Let's look at the two younger generations in the workplace today: the Millennials (Generation Y) and the Nexters/Zoomers (Generations Z).

Millennials are the first natives to the digital world. Generation Z has been immersed in it all their lives. Moreover, because of this prevalent access to the Internet, they have firsthand experiences with a global society. They have grown accustomed to access to the world and instant information 24/7. The information they consume is to the point.   Communication via technology is efficient and cost effective. They are comfortable with sharing how they feel to the world on a moment-to-moment basis.   Socially, Millennials have had many optimistic building experiences.

Research suggests that Millennials want a purpose in what they do. They want balance in their lives between their personal life and the work they do. Millennials want more respect, shown by fair wages and a positive work environment.

Millennials are taking control of their lives. In short, today's rising generation into the work force isn't working "for" 'anyone. They may be employed by a company, but they are *working for* their own reasons.

IN CONCLUSION

As we conclude our research about generational studies, it is important to remember the words of caution from researchers Costanza, Finkelstein, Imose, and Ravid (2020). They reviewed the applied psychology, human resources, and management literatures looking for studies about how organizations should manage generations in the workplace. They identified a range of inappropriate inferences and unsupported practical recommendations and systematically refuted them based on legal, conceptual, practical, and theoretical grounds. They concluded: "Instead of customizing HR [human resource department] policies and practices based on such [generational] differences, organizations could use information about their overall workforce and its characteristics to train recruiters, develop and refine policies, and offer customizable benefits packages that appeal to a broad range of employees, regardless of generation."

Appendix I helps NAFCE members understand their organization's history and people's backgrounds in order to make appropriate decisions for policies, recruiting members for maintaining its mission to "promote a better way of life." (NAFCE's creed)

APPENDIX I

NAFCE's roots first started in answer for a need to educate rural women about farming issues and to help them achieve the standards of their city counterparts. They came together to have "lessons" taught by a County Home Demonstration Agent, a "cooperative extension service government agent" from a land grant college. This was established from Smith-Lever Act of 1914 that had created funding to advance agriculture and home economics. Some of the first lessons were in food preparation and the making of clothing and hats because the cost of ready-made clothing was too high.

The civic clubs took on a variety of names, including but not limited to: Tomato Club, Home Improvement, Homemaker Club, and Home Bureaus. In Kansas from 1915 to 1943, the Farm Bureau sponsored a club called Farm Bureau Units. Toward the end of the 1920's, 47 of the 105 Kansas counties reported 85 Farm Bureau Units with a total membership of 1,726.

When these clubs unified together as a national organization in June of 1936 in Washington, D.C., the groups of women were known as members of the **National Home Demonstration Council** (NHDC).

Their purpose was as follows:
- To further strengthen…adult education.
- To determine the basic factors –satisfactory rural life.
- Join with other organizations.

The group began to grow. The women helped improve:
- School lunches,
- Local libraries.
- Nutrition.
- Family income by creating an avenue to sell home products.

In 1940, the 4 year old national organization had 20 member states. Services and growth continued despite the depression and wars. By 1956, forty member states worked together in the organization and membership reached over a million members (1,229,804).

In the1960's, annual conferences were held at universities. The first 3-day National *Leadership* was at Purdue University, Indiana. Members could subscribe to the National organization's *National Notes*.

As for service, members worked on clean up and beautification projects and vast numbers of members were involved locally to help those with disabilities.

In the 1970's, there was a concern for the influence of alcohol, drug abuse and appropriate sex education sparked programs in family life. Allstate Insurance Company offered a grant for safety education to combat safety issues on the highway.

In 1977, the book *Treasure Trails* (national places to visit) was published. Additionally, the *Homemaker* magazine began circulation.

In the 1980's, the Family and Community Leadership (FCL) program was born with the grant funds from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation. At the 1986, 50th Anniversary Conference, marigold seeds were given to represent "The Golden Future."

Seat belt safety was a major national project.

A task force studied future steps to take and recommended a central office with an executive secretary.

The 1987 year ended with the new and present structure: a vice president of programs, a vice president for public policy and coordinators for each of the regions.

In the 1990's, the organization stepped into a more independent stage and updated the name once again. The name Family and Community Education identified the purpose of its members. In 1996, the recommended central office was established in Burlington, Kentucky.

In the 21th Century, NAFCE has continued projects to promote literacy, caution against unhealthy media habits, inform of violations in society (include violence in homes and human trafficking), and supporting local as well as international causes.

It was in the 1930's that women voiced the desire to work together for a better community. They identified themselves as national members of "Home Demonstration Councils," a name that defined what they *did*. Thirty years later its name was updated to define *who* they were: National Extension Homemakers. Another thirty years passed, and the name was once again changed, now defining the organization's purpose: *to improve both family and community.*

Today's NAFCE organization includes lifelong members that have witnessed a myriad of changes in society and this nearly 90 year old society. Also included, are newer members that have been attracted to NAFCE's purpose. In its early days, husbands knew the value of NAFCE (then, NEHC) and willingly supported their wives. Today, husbands willingly join and help out.

In 1974, the purpose of NAFCE (at the time, known as "National Extension Homemakers Council") was defined and continues to be remembered at many local and each and every national conference:

We will strive to promote a better way of life for all through fellowship, continuing education and service. To provide guidance in our homes and communities by the uniting of people to make the world a better place in which to live. May we have pride in our roles as homemakers and family and community educators, and may our hearts be filled with joy as we serve. Let us always be conscious of the needs of others and be strengthened by the "Divine Light" that guides us all.

NAFCE, like any other group of people (from families to church groups to work organizations to political and geographical communities), has challenges of diversity of perspective based on backgrounds. However, we are united in our quest "*to make the world a better place in which to live.*"

We invite individuals, FCE local clubs, and state organizations to discuss the generations of FCE and our country with the following questions:

1. When did you become a member? How old were you? Why did you join?

2. What projects have you been involved with?

3. How has NEHC/NAFCE impacted your life? Your family? Your community?

4. How has the changing demands of society had an impact on your membership? Your local club?

5. In your group, how have your differing backgrounds influenced your perspective, opinions, expectations, and actions?

6. How have the differences been a benefit to your group?

7. What challenges do you/your group face?

8. What challenges do you see for NAFCE?

9. What recommendations do you have for the local, state or national group?

10. Consider: types of memberships, ways of reporting, leadership structures, teaching, and projects.

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HANDOUT #1

Summary of The Four Generations

Generation:	Traditionalist	Baby Boomer	Generation X	Millennials
Events/Experiences	WW II heroes Sacrificing Radio Silver Screen	Moon landing Hippies/Yuppies Workaholics Television Increased Consumers	Latchkey kids Kid friendly shows Cable TV Divorce rate increases	9-11 Cell phones Dot com businesses
Common Values	Loyalty Respect Authority Follow through Hardworking Honor family	Personal growth Equality Time Conscious	Independence Results Family	Innovation Being "green" Diversity
Common Priorities	Being appreciated Companionship Lasting quality Steady leadership	Full service Eye Contact In person communication Building relationships	Bargains Self service Balancing work and life Testing Authority Want consistency	Trendiness True to self Career Advancement Purpose Fun
Common Characteristics	Understand importance of "paying dues"	Hard working Recognition Balancing many responsibilities	Using internet to research	Willing to question authority Dependent of Technology

HANDOUT #2

The Impact of our Experiences

In small groups, consider the following questions and facts. Write down insights that you have to share with others.

1. Is face to face communication better than digital? Why? Why not?

2. How do you feel about time?

3. How important are Relationships to you?

4. What about Hard work? Or do you feel that it is better to "work smarter not harder"?

5. What are your thoughts about Recognition and Respect?

6. Expectations based on experience: What do you expect in your work life? Home life?

   Personal life?

7. Perspectives based on life's experience: What are your thoughts and feelings about the

   following?

   Waste, recycling, reusing

   Money, loans, credit cards

   Social experiences

   Authority and "experts"

   Family

   Health