

Bridging the Gap: How Understanding Generational Differences Can Grow Your Association



Nora Riva Bergman ©

“Children today are tyrants. They contradict their parents, gobble their food, and tyrannize their teachers.”

Socrates (470-399 B.C.)





**For the first time
four generations are
working side by side.**

Silents: 1926-1945

Baby Boomers: 1946-1964

Gen Xers: 1965-1975

Gen Y: 1976-1999

Which of the following is important for a Baby Boomer (Born 1946-1964)?

Build parallel careers.

Build a stellar career.

Build a legacy.

Build a portable career.



*From **When Generations Collide: Who They Are. Why They Clash. How to Solve the Generational Puzzle at Work.**, Lynne C. Lancaster and David Stillman, 2003, Collins Business.*

Silents (Born 1926-1945)

Build a legacy.

Baby Boomers (Born 1946-1964)

Build a stellar career.

Generation Xers (Born 1965-1975)

Build a portable career.

Generation Y (Born 1976-1999)

Build parallel careers.



*From **When Generations Collide: Who They Are. Why They Clash. How to Solve the Generational Puzzle at Work.**, Lynne C. Lancaster and David Stillman, 2003, Collins Business.*

Which of the following is important to Generation Xers (Born 1965-1975)?

Give me balance now, not when I'm sixty-five.

Support me in shifting the balance.

Help me balance everyone else and find meaning myself.

Work isn't everything; flexibility to balance my activities is.



*From **When Generations Collide: Who They Are. Why They Clash. How to Solve the Generational Puzzle at Work.**, Lynne C. Lancaster and David Stillman, 2003, Collins Business.*

Silents (Born 1926-1945)

Support me in shifting the balance.

Baby Boomers (Born 1946-1964)

Help me balance everyone else and find meaning myself.

Generation Xers (Born 1965-1975)

Give me balance now, not when I'm sixty-five.

Gen Y (Born 1976-1999)

Work isn't everything; flexibility to balance my activities is.

*From **When Generations Collide: Who They Are. Why They Clash. How to Solve the Generational Puzzle at Work.**, Lynne C. Lancaster and David Stillman, 2003, Collins Business.*



**Which of the following feedback does Gen Y
(Born 1976-1999) prefer?**

Sorry to interrupt, but how am I doing?

Once a year, with lots of documentation.

**Feedback whenever I want it,
at the push of a button.**

No news is good news.



*From **When Generations Collide: Who They Are. Why They Clash. How to Solve the Generational Puzzle at Work.**, Lynne C. Lancaster and David Stillman, 2003, Collins Business*

Silents (Born 1926-1945)

No news is good news.

Baby Boomers (Born 1946-1964)

Once a year, with lots of documentation.

Generation Xers (Born 1965-1975)

Sorry to interrupt, but how am I doing?

Gen Y (Born 1976-1999)

**Feedback whenever I want it
at the push of a button.**



*From **When Generations Collide: Who They Are. Why They Clash. How to Solve the Generational Puzzle at Work.**, Lynne C. Lancaster and David Stillman, 2003, Collins Business*

You know you're a "Silent" if . . .

You remember when TV was all black & white

You remember actually ballroom dancing, not watching it on TV

You use a computer, but you're still afraid you'll break it

You listened to Ricky Nelson on the radio



Silents - Influential People & Events



You know you're a "Boomer" if . . .

**You thought you might one day join the
Mickey Mouse Club**

**You used a typewriter to write your term
papers**

**You saw every episode of "Leave it to
Beaver"**

You remember Woodstock



Baby Boomers - Influential People & Events



You know you're a "Gen Xer" if . . .

You remember Atari and Asteroids

You couldn't wait until 1999 to play "1999" by Prince

One of your first favorite movies was "Star Wars" or "ET"

You typed your term papers on a word processor



Twentieth Century Fox Presents A Lucasfilm Ltd. Production STAR WARS
Starring MARK HAMILL HARRISON FORD CARRIE FISHER
PETER DINKLAGE
with ALEC GUINNESS
Written and Directed by GEORGE LUCAS Produced by GARY KURTZ Music by JOHN WILLIAMS
DOLBY DIGITAL
DOLBY DIGITAL
DOLBY DIGITAL
DOLBY DIGITAL

Gen X - Influential People & Events



You know you're a "Gen Y" if . . .

You've always had an answering machine or voice mail

You were using a computer by the time you were learning to read

You've always had cable TV with remote control

The Internet has existed as long as you can remember



Gen Y - Influential People & Events



THE HILLS

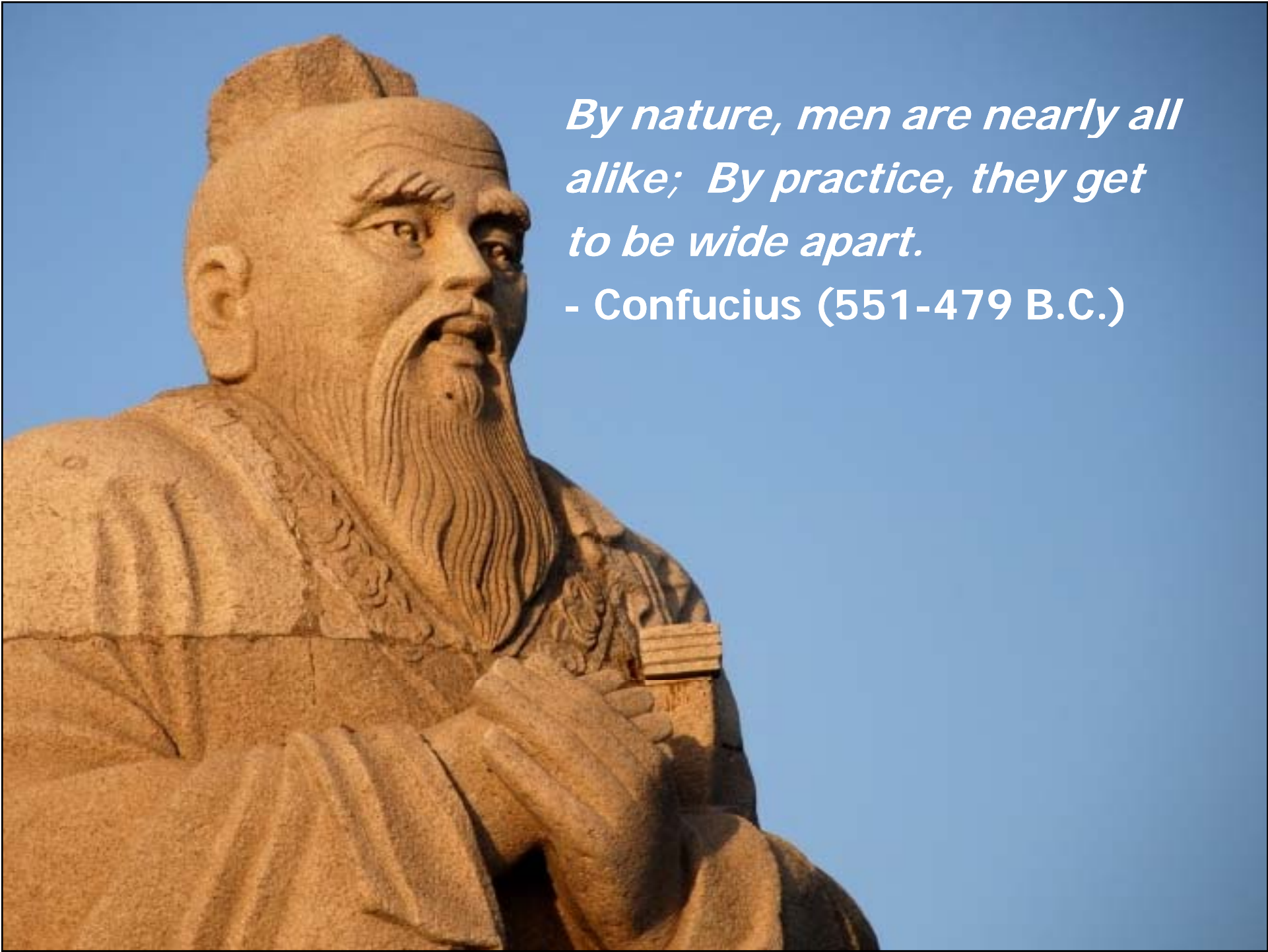




Consider this . . .

Fundamentally, people want the same things regardless of their generation.

You can work with all generations without driving yourself crazy.



By nature, men are nearly all alike; By practice, they get to be wide apart.

- Confucius (551-479 B.C.)

Who are we?

Silents (Born 1926-1945)

**A sense of community, loyalty,
"waste not, want not"**

Baby Boomers (Born 1946-1964)

Pay your dues, competitive, optimistic

Generation Xers (Born 1965-1975)

**Rewarding work now, self-reliant, highly
adaptable**

Generation Y (Born 1976-1999)

**Work-life balance/blending, flexible,
motivated, globally concerned**



What Different Generations Expect

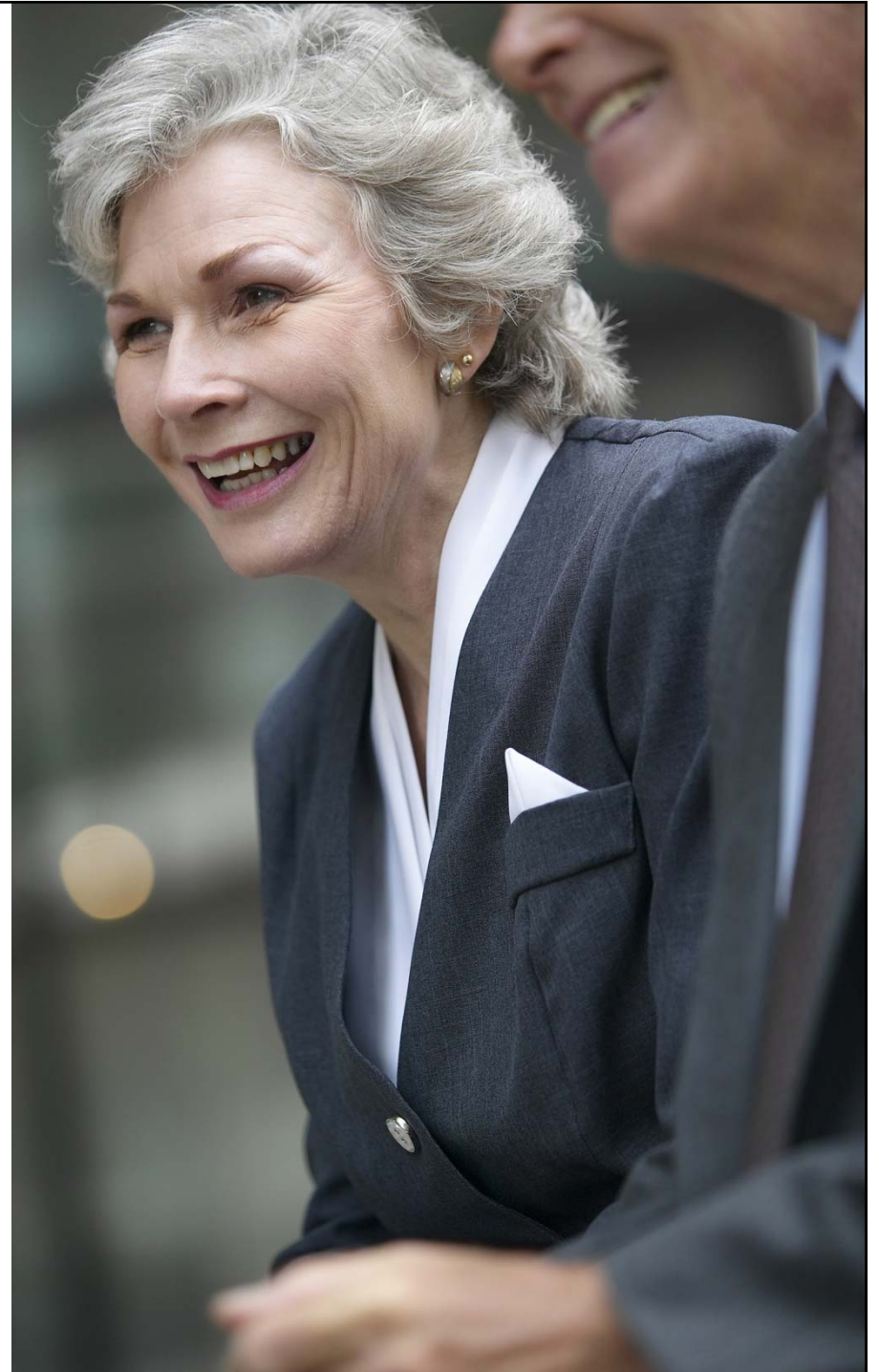


Create a Member Value Proposition



**What do we want?
What's important to us?**

**Silents and Baby Boomers:
Show appreciation for their
experience, use their
expertise, let them know
they are needed, put them
to work, keep them
engaged.**



**What do we want?
What's important to us?**



**Generation X and Y:
Rewarding work now,
self-reliant, highly
adaptable, work-life
balance/blending,
flexible, motivated,
globally concerned.**

Custom tailor your message.

What might be very exciting to one generation may be boring to another.



Satisfaction & Retention of Younger Members



Adapted from *Generations and the Future of Association Participation*, Arthur C. Brooks, Ph.D., 2006, The William E. Smith Institute for Association Research, SmithBucklin Corporation.

Satisfaction & Retention of Older Members



Enhancing career satisfaction

Finding semi-retirement options

Keeping senior members involved

Adapted from *Generations and the Future of Association Participation*, Arthur C. Brooks, Ph.D., 2006, The William E. Smith Institute for Association Research, SmithBucklin Corporation.

Building a Bridge Across Generations

A photograph of a wooden bridge with a railing, set against a background of green trees. The bridge is made of dark wood and has a curved railing. The perspective is from the middle of the bridge, looking towards the end. The text is overlaid on the image.

- One size does not fit all
- Leverage the skills and competencies available in all age groups
- Build a brand that values diversity
- Respect differences in communication styles

Bridging the Gap: How Understanding Generational Differences Can Grow Your Association



Nora Riva Bergman ©