When Generations Collide
Planning's Multigenerational Office
Introduction to Speakers

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Group Introductions
Objectives

- Ideas and approaches to overcome the challenges of an age diverse planning office.
- Ways to foster collaboration and leadership.
- How to uncover or recognize hidden opportunities with generational colleagues.
Results of Survey

144 Total Survey Responses
Generation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generation</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baby Boomer</td>
<td>36.11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen X</td>
<td>41.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen Y</td>
<td>21.53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen Z</td>
<td>0.69%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Years in parentheses.*
Demographic

- Male: 47.22%
- Female: 52.78%
Planning Education

Other Education:
- Environmental Design
- Landscape Architecture
- Geography
- Architecture
- Civil Engineering
- Public Administration
- Environmental Planning
Years in the Field (full-time)
Job Sector

- Public sector: 79.86%
- Private sector: 20.14%
Work Schedule

- Flexible (allows variations to daily hours): 36.81%
- Set (typically 8-5, M-F): 57.64%
- Work from home (on a regular basis): 5.56%
Does This Meet Your Work/Life Balance Goals?

- **Yes**: 55.56%
- **Sometimes**: 34.72%
- **No**: 9.72%
Generations in the Workplace *(dates are approx.)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generations</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| **Boomers (1946-1964):** | • Electronic & in person communication  
• Team oriented (meetings and committees)  
• Competitive/Driven  
• Hard working and knowledgeable  
• Optimism  
• Challenge the status quo |
| **Gen X (1965-1979):** | • Casual, direct, & electronic communication  
• Internal motivation  
• Resourceful and self-reliant  
• Tech-literate  
• Work/life balance  
• Often skeptical and questions authority |
| **Gen Y (1980-1994):** | • Fast, casual, direct, & high-tech communication  
• Self-confident and collaborative  
• Eager to please and receive rewards  
• Hard working and educated  
• Optimistic  
• Innovative & creative - make an impact |
| **Gen Z (1995-2010):** | • Conversational, in-person, & high-tech communication  
• Competitive and independent  
• Multi-task everything  
• Social media as a means  
• Wants change and to make change |
Where you are in life guides you.

Perceptions change as we grow in the profession and within our careers. The perception of planning has changed/shifted over time.

- National and World events shape each generation, which has a direct relationship to the planning profession and the various generations.
  - Education
  - Younger professional
  - Seasoned professional
  - Near-retirement professional
- Colorado is more receptive to planning than some other states.

Younger generations
- perception by older generations that using technology and other tools to work more efficiently can be perceived as not working hard

Older generations
- perception by younger generations that the old folks have lost their spark and are just coasting until they can retire
Younger Generations

- Technical skills
  - Use of technology
  - Thinking outside of the box
  - Increase efficiencies

- Innovative

- Want to make an immediate impact
  - Most have a work hard mentality
  - Well rounded education

- Flexibility and freedom
  - Working remotely
  - Home/work balance

- Organizational rules
  - Start career bound by organizational norms (“the way it has been”)
  - With time, more likely to question the norms and look for ways to change
Older Generations

- **Institutional knowledge**
  - Politics, developers, community dynamics, etc.

- **Seniority**
  - Ability to push doors open and make things happen

- **More reluctant to change or the thought of change**
  - “The way it has always been done”

- **Proud of accomplishments**
  - The planning field and making a difference

- **Ownership of the procedures and documents used**

- **Strategy advice**
Pathways to Becoming a Planner

- No clear path; No clear end
- Diversity in the type of planning schools & education
  - Policy
  - Social Justice
  - Design
- Public vs Private Sector
- Various Perspectives Increase Workplace Diversity
  - Non-profit and volunteer work
  - Economics
  - Design
  - Land Development
  - Career changes
From the Classroom to the Boardroom

- Education focused mainly on private sector work and design.

- Perception of young/new planner by citizens, developers, consultants, and appointed and elected officials.

- Lack of experience and education in working with other professionals.

- Accustomed to writing essays and papers - different format/style from technical writing and memo writing.
Challenges in the Planning Profession
Breakout Discussion #1

Challenges facing each generation within the Planning profession over the next:

● 5 years?
● 10 years?
Regroup and Report
Breakout Discussion #2

How can we best utilize the skills and abilities of other generations to meet career and organizational goals?
Regroup and Report
Leadership and Power Dynamics in the Office
What kind of boss are you or would you work for?
Breakout Discussion #3

Leadership and power dynamics in the office. How to encourage and develop leaders?
Regroup and Report
Group Discussion

What is this sign (#)?

A number sign; A pound sign; An octothorpe; or A hashtag.
Final Thoughts?