

# Building a Collaborative Staff

## Does your staff collaborate to bring new ideas to the table and solve Association problems?

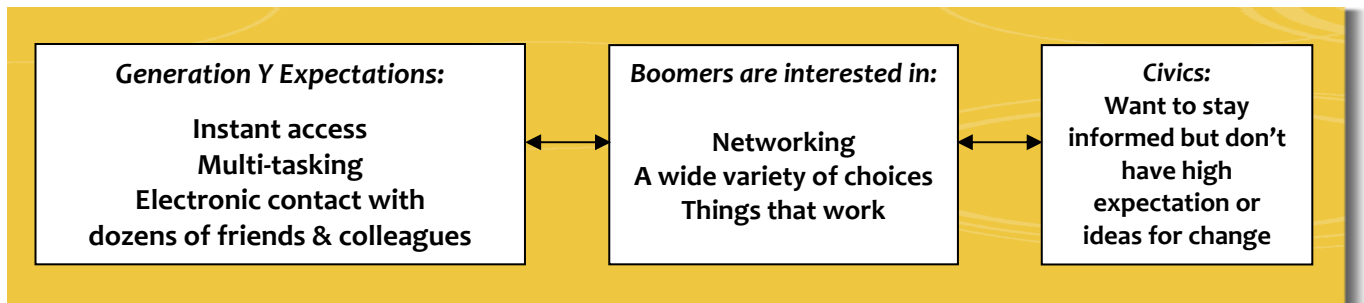
*"I always worked as an individual, and there are certain things I can do by myself that I would never be able to do with a group. When I was first asked to work on a group project, I was a little intimidated. The workshop gave me simple ideas to practice and I am learning to present my ideas without feeling like they are below someone else's standards. It was worth it 100%!"*

Cheryl Story

Most Association Executives have talented and creative people working on their staff. Most work well together. In most Associations, the staff works primarily on their own (although they have good communication with others). Their work is also heavily based in technology, working alongside a computer screen most days. Some AEs even like their own ideas to be challenged, and not accepted *every single* time. This does not lead to a collaboration-rich environment!

**Collaboration is sometimes confused with communication, cooperation, and even coordination.** They are not the same. Learn the differences and what gives collaboration the competitive edge in today's world. Do not confuse a staff *getting along well* as one that is high-functioning.

**The same generational differences facing your membership are facing your staff.** This often stands in the way of working as small teams to create something better. Think about three distinct generations that might comprise your staff:



Bring these diverse people together! Teach them the rules, and then start with easy projects. As you offer permission and good feedback, your staff will develop their skills and independence in collaborating. In time this will happen without your involvement!

**Problem solving is one of the most valuable processes you give your staff in today's real estate market.** Finding new approaches to help your members succeed is not a business-as-usual activity. It requires creativity, diverse thinking and collaboration!

Inside your Association, name one process that could be improved, new service that could be offered, or one problem that can be solved. Then arrange for a collaboration workshop to coach your staff how to do it better!

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