



Generational Differences

Millennial & Baby Boomer's Philanthropic Engagement

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RADFORD UNIVERSITY

Philanthropic engagement is a crucial part of the functioning and success of colleges and universities nationwide. Much research has been done to evaluate the generations and how they each operate, but little has been done to investigate baby boomers compared to millennials. These are the two largest groups at Radford University and serve as a major component of the giving process and the successful operation altogether.

Evolving and taking the time to understand the communication and donation preferences of these two groups will continue to be something high on the priority list within the Radford University

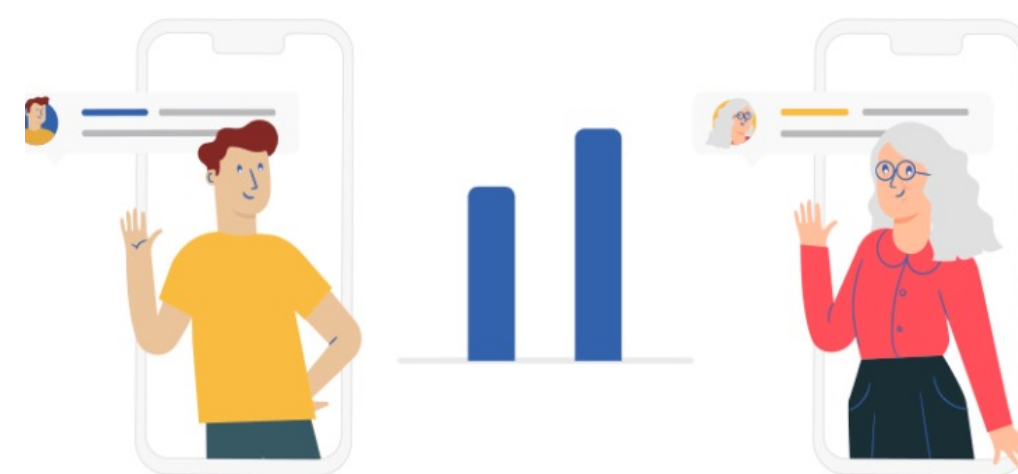
Advancement Department. Millennials want to text, baby boomers prefer to sit down and meet with people in person, so how should we truly be cultivating relationships with these groups?

- Is it cut and dry?
- Are there preferred methods?
- Do they feel valued?
- Why don't they donate?

All of these things were investigated in this study.

This study was divided into three parts and used a convenience sample for the interviews and virtual workshop, and a purposive, but random, sample for the alumni donor survey. Participants for the interviews and virtual workshop included Radford University Advancement professionals within the advancement services, alumni relations, communications, major gift, and annual giving teams to gather information about current and future philanthropic engagement of baby boomers and millennials.

Millennials VS Baby Boomers



Interview participants across the board shared that they feel millennials would like having a text-to-give option and that they don't have the time or the means to give at this time in their lives.

While baby boomers are established in their lives and are reaching retirement age or already have, they have already figured out their means and boundaries.

Finding a way to prepare a roadmap for the best ways to work with these two groups of individuals becomes increasingly more important over time to the fundraisers attempting to obtain scholarship funds and excess funding for emergency programs. Results from the design thinking strategies provided a concept poster for both generation groups to serve as a "how to" for engaging, cultivating, communicating and securing gifts.



“ They [millennials] are just figuring their lives out, getting acclimated in a career or establishing a family, they aren't focused on making things better for generations to come, they are just focused on making sure their lives are good right now.”

“ They [baby boomers] have more discretionary income and are coming into or are at retirement age.”

“ We have got to figure out how to make this text giving or app-giving mode of fundraising a thing. Otherwise we aren't going to ever capture that group.”

“ I absolutely loved my undergraduate experience at Radford. The only reason I don't participate in networking events is because I still stay in touch with all my friends from college. My husband and I choose to donate to our colleges because we are grateful for the experiences we had while there.”

“ Keep the alumni engaged!”

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