

21/64

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR //

We at 21/64 have begun to develop resources geared not just towards next generation audiences, but also towards multi-generational families and foundations.

The next generation issue is everywhere. At the World Economic Forum in Davos, one of the most talked about panels, *The Voice of the Next Generation*, featured six young leaders discussing the issues they believe to be critical in the world today. This spring in Tel Aviv, 15-year-old inventors exhibited new technologies they had developed for Israel's high-tech economy. In January, the British Council convened 60 teenagers from 40 countries to develop a global network of Generation Y leaders.

While years of experience used to be the hallmark of leadership, nowadays, global awareness and facility with information technology constitute characteristics of a leader. People used to "put in their time" to achieve positions of authority. Today, youth leaders around the world perceive a new reality, as articulated by one young man at the British Council's gathering: "It is very unrealistic for you to suddenly expect us as young people to grow into adulthood and take up responsibilities effectively if you don't involve us now."

Not only do young people want access to venues where they can gain exposure, they also expect that the challenges of the 21st century will require their participation. From climate change to human rights, today's issues cross national borders and program areas. They demand partners who are comfortable with multiple forms of communication. Ironically, the youngest among us now possess the boundary-crossing traits we need to help navigate our collective future.

This volume of the 21/64 newsletter highlights *Leadership Tools for Change*, a new set of resources we have developed with the Selah Leadership Program to help prepare next generation leaders. If they are offering new ideas that will enable society to rise to the challenges of the day, let's help them gain the skills they need to achieve those visions on behalf of all of us.

Best,



Jeff Solomon



GENERATIONAL PERSONALITIES

During the past 100 years, the average life span in the United States has increased from 49 to 76 years. For the first time, there are four generations above the age of 21 simultaneously involved in society, resulting in complexities for organizations and corporations of all types. In enterprises where family dynamics are co-mingled with operations, the issue of multiple generations working together is particularly acute.

Rather than expecting each generation to fit into the paradigm of their predecessors, at 21/64, we view each generation uniquely and highlight the distinct skills and experiences each has to offer. We ask each generation: What are the familial or historical events and experiences that informed your upbringing? What are the values fostered by those events? How does your “generational personality” influence your participation and decision-making?

REFLECTION //

Gen Xers noted how the Internet was their generation's TV

During a funders event, recently hosted at the New York Regional Association of Grantmakers, four generations reflected on their generational personalities. A Traditionalist told the group that the invention of the television brought the world into his home for the first time. Many Baby Boomers felt that the events of the '60s created a paradigm shift in societal discourse and led to different ways of thinking "before" and "after" that era. Generation Xers noted how the

Internet was their generation's TV; in this case it not only offered a new technology but also an efficient way to create change across distance, time and space. Gen Yers talked about networks created on social networking sites like Facebook.com, mixing positive comments with ambivalence about intrusions on their rights to privacy, as organizations from the government to online vendors to Facebook have access to their every move.

BRIDGING THE GENERATIONAL DIVIDE //

Baby Boomers and Gen Xers don't just speak different languages, they literally communicate through different media.

In family businesses, foundations and non-profit organizations, how do people manage the differences between Traditionalists, often called "the Silent Generation," and Gen Yers who intentionally or inadvertently reveal everything about their lives online?

On the one hand, we may appreciate how Baby Boomers, awakened by the social movements of the '60s, struggle to understand Gen Xers who move through life motivated by the efficiency of the Internet. These two generations don't just speak different languages, they literally communicate through different media.

On the other hand, with the pressing issues facing our communities, many organizations want to work through these generational differences in order to respond to an important need for change. They ask us: How can we tackle poverty, global warming or genocide if we are wrestling with our generational differences?

At 21/64, we strive to help next generation funders and their families move through their generational differences to a place where they can start working together to address local, national and global issues.

LEADERSHIP TOOLS FOR CHANGE //

Leadership Tools for Change is a set of interactive exercises for philanthropic trustees and professionals.

In collaboration with the Selah Leadership Program, we produced *Leadership Tools for Change*, a set of interactive exercises for philanthropic trustees and professionals. *Create Your Own Legacy* helps users to delve into questions about their values and life's purpose and reflect on whether or not their work and philanthropy are in alignment with those values. *Voicing*

Your Vision challenges funders to articulate their goals and visions for change. *Active Listening* and *Regaining Your Center* address communication, especially pertinent to those navigating cross-generational decision-making.

We experienced the impact of these tools while working with the Katz Family Foundation (name changed for privacy).



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What the Katz family gained was a common language that bridged their generational differences and helped their philanthropy be more focused and value-driven.

While they wanted to engage their third generation, second generation family members had not fully articulated their own philanthropic visions. As the Generation X and Y members enthusiastically brought their ideas to the table, their Baby Boomer parents felt protective of their grants and decision-making power.

While the parents wanted to engage their children, they had not yet asked the question: Is involving the next generation, and accommodating some of their visions, more important than maintaining our current giving plans?

One next generation member decided to utilize *Voicing Your Vision* to help the process. After reflecting on her own vision, she asked her family members some questions:

How do you envision changing the world? If we're successful, what will be different? How do you see the Foundation making grants to that end?

By pushing her mom and aunts to articulate their individual philanthropic visions, she motivated those in the second generation to define common

goals—driven by vision and not by control—and to decide that involving their children was of paramount importance. What the Katz family gained was a common language that bridged their generational differences and helped their philanthropy be more focused and value-driven.

There is no easy answer to how each family will navigate generational transitions. The next generations and their distinct generational personalities can trigger barriers to family unity and strategic philanthropy. But distinct generational personalities can also create stronger family teams that are greater than the sum of their parts. Given the challenges of the day, we hope families can find the solutions that work best for them and their foundations.

LEADERSHIP TOOLS



For more information on the *Leadership Tools for Change* series, e-mail us at info@2164.net or give us a call at 212.931.0109.