

TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST TUESDAY WEBINAR SERIES

GENERATIONS IN THE WILD: UNDERSTANDING
WHAT DRIVES ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES ACROSS
AGE GROUPS



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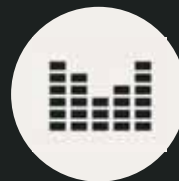
WHY
GENERATIONAL-IQ?



5 Generations in
the Workplace
(and on the ranch)
for the first time



Significant
differences in values



How they view
their role in
environment differs
(ethos)



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Please take a moment to answer the following in the CHAT

Question: What most shaped your connection to nature?

Answer choices: (type in chat as many as are meaningful)

- Family
- School
- Work
- Media
- Lived experience
- Other – please list



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BOOMER



GENX



MILLENNIAL



BIAS AND STEROTYPES

The difference between bias and stereotype is that a **bias is a personal preference**, like or dislike, especially when the tendency interferes with the ability to be impartial, unprejudiced, or objective. On the other hand, a **stereotype is a preconceived idea that attributes certain characteristics (in general) to all the members of class or set**

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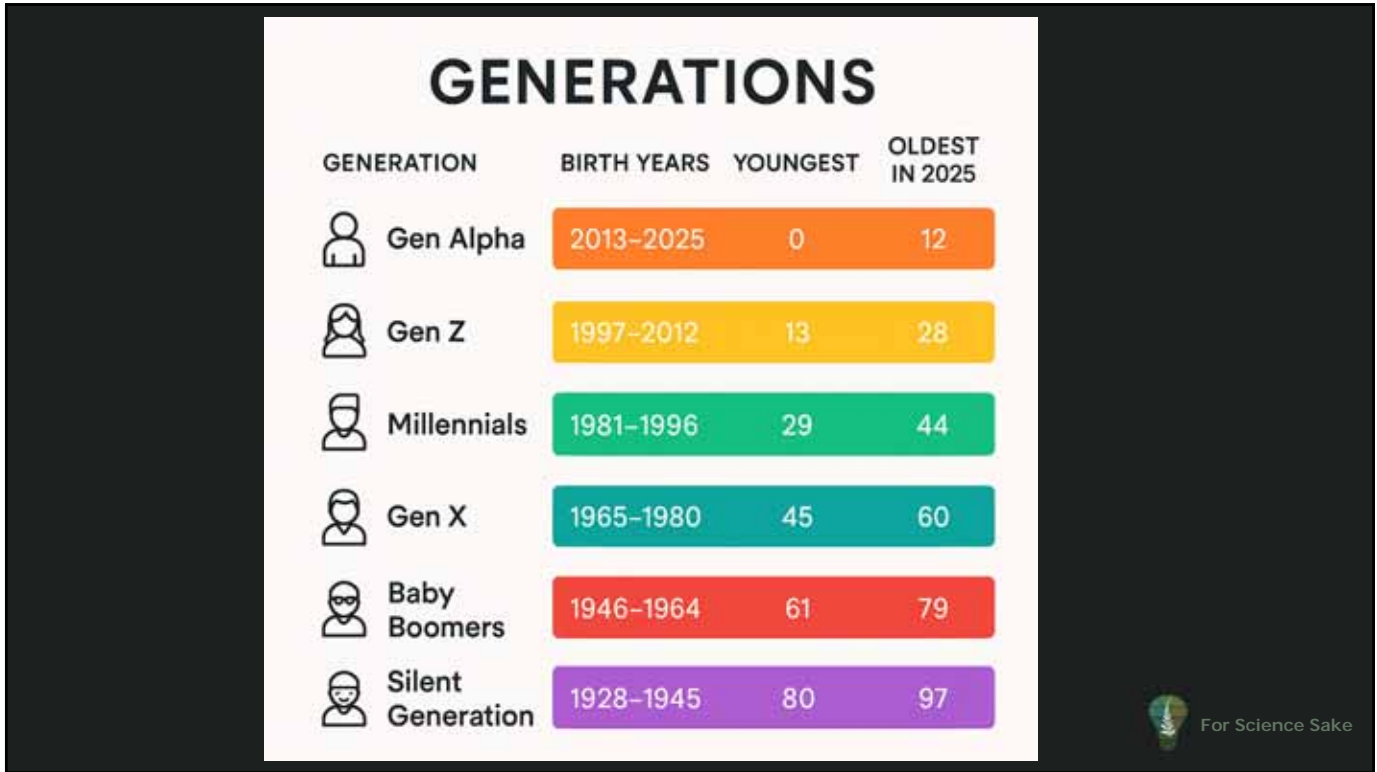
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THE #1 WALL STREET JOURNAL BESTSELLER



DON CLIFTON
Father of Strengths Psychology and
Inventor of the Clifton StrengthsFinder

STRENGTHS FINDER 2.0

FROM GALLUP


Tom Rath

Empathy, Adaptability Distinguish Millennials

TOP FIVE STRENGTHS BY GENERATION

Millennials	Gen Xers	Baby Boomers	Traditionalists
1. Achiever	1. Achiever	1. Responsibility	1. Responsibility
2. Empathy	2. Responsibility	2. Learner	2. Learner
3. Learner	3. Learner	3. Achiever	3. Connectedness
4. Adaptability	4. Relator	4. Relator	4. Achiever
5. Responsibility	5. Strategic	5. Strategic	5. Input

CLIFTON STRENGTHS SUMMIT 2019 | GALLUP

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A generation is a cohort of people born within a similar time span who are shaped by shared formative conditions, especially during childhood through early adulthood (often framed as roughly birth to the mid-20s). Those shared conditions can include major events, economic cycles, technologies, cultural norms, and institutional experiences that influence common “default” tendencies in how people:

- build or withhold trust
- assess risk and uncertainty
- relate to authority and institutions
- communicate and make decisions
- interpret responsibility, stewardship, and time horizon



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LENS NOT TYPE

In generational intelligence work, it is important to treat a generation as a **context lens** (a pattern of shared influences), **not a personality type or a set of fixed traits**.

Individuals vary widely within any generation due to geography, culture, class, profession, and family systems.



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GENERATIONS SHARE COMMON INFLUENCES THAT IMPACT HOW THEY APPROACH COMMUNITY AND PROBLEM SOLVING

A new generation starts when a significant tragedy shifts how a community operates, technology shifts, and economics change

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Workplace Generational Understanding Chart for Leaders				
Generations	Baby Boomers (1946-1964)	Generation X (1965-1980)	Millennials (1981-2000)	Generation Z (1997 - after)
Historical References	Vietnam War, Cold War, Civil Rights, Watergate	AIDS epidemic, Cold War, dot-com bubble	Columbine, 9/11, Iraq and Afghanistan Wars, Internet rise	Smartphones, social media, recessions, climate change
Traits	Optimistic, workaholic, team-oriented, loyal, success-driven	Independent, adaptable, self-reliant, family-focused, skeptical	Purpose-driven, tech-savvy, civic-minded, collaborative	Tech-immersed, entrepreneurial, value authenticity, socially aware
Work Style	Value teamwork and individual accomplishments, prefer recognition, stability	Prefer independent work, value work-life balance, results focused	Seek meaningful work, teamwork, flexibility, feedback	Highly adaptable, value flexibility and purpose, seek rapid growth
Communication Style	Prefer face-to-face and phone calls, comfortable with email	Email preferred, but also comfortable with phone and face-to-face	Digital communication (text messaging), social media	Visual and digital-first (Slack, Teams, video calls), quick updates
Technology Usage	Adapted over time, prefer traditional methods but increasingly savvy	Comfortable with technology, use it efficiently for productivity	Grew up with the internet, adept at tech, rely on collaborative tools	Digital natives, immersed in tech since childhood, rely on smartphones
Motivations	Recognition, stability, mentoring and proving value	Flexibility, fair pay, self-building, autonomy	Purpose-driven work, career growth, impactful projects	Growth opportunities, social impact, authenticity
Employer Support Tips	Acknowledge contributions, provide mentoring opportunities	Offer flexibility, immediate feedback, work-life balance	Support career development, offer continuous feedback and challenges	Provide learning paths, align with values, engage through tech
Notable Challenges	Resistant to change, may struggle with rapid tech shifts	Skepticism towards large institutions, balancing family responsibilities	May switch jobs if unsatisfied, expect rapid career progression	High expectations for inclusivity and environmental responsibility
Social Dynamics	Strong sense of teamwork, believe in long-term value	Value personal achievements, prioritize family time	Team-oriented, collaborative, but seek personal growth	Individualistic yet socially aware, prefer diverse work environments

The Workforce in 2025

Projected size of U.S. labor force (in millions) by age, for the year 2025

Age Range	Generation Z	Millennials	Generation X	Boomers	Silent
18-19	4.7				
20-24	14.6				
25-29		17.6			
30-34		18.9			
35-39		19.1			
40-44		18.4			
45-49		17.1			
50-54		16.0			
55-59		15.5			
60-64			12.8		
65-69			7.5		
70-74			3.7		
75-79			2.1		
80+			0.7		

Source: Department of Labor | WSU.com

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<https://greatresultsteambuilding.net/how-leaders-can-understand-and-work-more-effectively-with-four-generations-in-the-workplace/>

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CONSERVATION ETHOS

DO GENERATIONS
APPROACH THEIR ROLE IN
THE ENVIRONMENT THE
SAME WAY?



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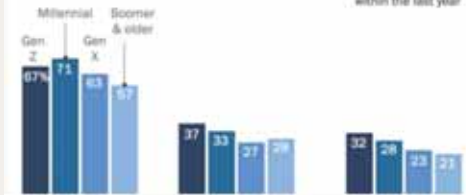
Gen Z, Millennials more active than older generations addressing climate change on- and offline

% of U.S. adults who say ...

Climate should be top priority to ensure sustainable planet for future generations

Addressing climate change is my top personal concern

Have personally taken action to help address climate change within the last year

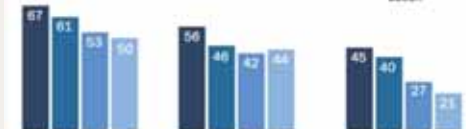


In the past few weeks ...

Talked about need for action on climate at least 1-2 times

Seen content on social media about need for climate action

Engaged on social media with content on need for climate action



Note: Respondents who gave other responses and who did not give an answer are not shown. Seen content on social media and engaged with climate content based on social media users.

Source: Survey conducted April 20-29, 2021.

"Gen Z, Millennials Stand Out for Climate Change Activism, Social Media Engagement With Issue"


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These are common 'doorways'
people use to relate to
environmental issues. Your job is
to test which doorway is active,
not assume it



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TRADITIONALISTS
Born 1900-1945

- Great Depression
- World War II
- Disciplined
- Workplace Loyalty
- Move to the 'Burbs
- Vaccines

TRADITIONALIST/SILENT




**Uncertainty;
Conformity**


33.0 million

\$36,743

Practical



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I Do What Others Do




MATURES	
Years Born	1945 and before
Age in 2014	69 + years old
Cultural ethos	Uncertainty; Conformity
Outlook	Practical



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BOOMERS
Born 1946-1964

Vietnam, Moon Landing
Civil/Women's Rights
Experimental
Innovators
Hard Working
Personal Computer

BOOMER



**Prosperity;
Counterculture**

74.6 million

\$57,844

Optimistic



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I Do What's Right



BOOMERS	
Years Born	1946 - 1964
Age in 2014	50 - 68 years old
Cultural ethos	Prosperity; Counterculture
Outlook	Optimistic



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BABY BOOMERS (1946–1964):

PRACTICAL TIPS

VIEWS

View their role as stewards of tradition and legacy. They prioritize hard work, loyalty, and face-to-face relationships.

OUTREACH STRATEGY

Emphasize respect for their experience and incorporate historical perspectives when proposing changes. Highlight how new practices honor past traditions while promoting progress.



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GEN X

1965-1980

- Fall of Berlin Wall
- Gulf War
- Independent
- Free Agents
- Internet, MTV, AIDS
- Mobile Phone

1999



GenX

Disillusionment;
Information

53.4 million

\$58,271

Skeptical

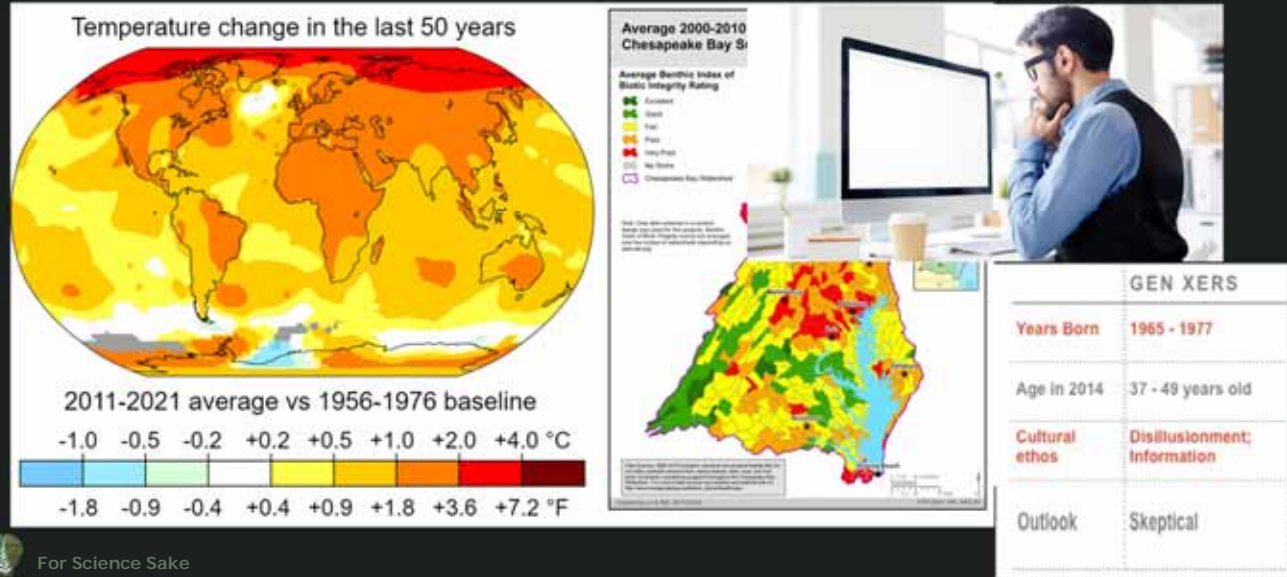
Prove It



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I Do What the Data Shows



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GENERATION X (1965–1980):

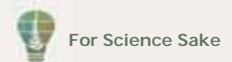
PRACTICAL TIPS

VIEWS

Independent, pragmatic, and focused on balancing work and personal life. They value efficiency and self-reliance.

OUTREACH STRATEGY

Offer solutions that provide flexibility and practical benefits. Present data-driven insights and tools that improve efficiency without adding complexity.



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Gen Y/Millennial



MILLENNIAL
1981-1996

9/11 Attacks
Community Service
Immediacy
Confident, Diversity
Social Everything
Google, Facebook




Globalization; Social Responsibility

78.3 million

\$44,946

Hopeful



Best Choice

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I Do What's Best

MILLENNIALS	
Years Born	1978 - 1995
Age in 2014	19 - 36 years old
Cultural ethos	Globalization; Social Responsibility
Outlook	Hopeful

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MILLENNIALS (1981–1996):

PRACTICAL TIPS

VIEWS

Seek meaningful, purpose-driven work and are open to collaboration. They value sustainability and innovative practices.

OUTREACH STRATEGY

Frame discussions around the long-term environmental impact and sustainability. Use collaborative methods like workshops to engage them in co-creating solutions and incorporating digital tools.



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GenZ



GEN 2020
1997-2012

Age 15 and Younger
Optimistic
High Expectations
Apps
Social Games
Tablet Devices






Most Good


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I Do What's Helpful

Gen Z

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GENERATION Z (1997–2012):

PRACTICAL TIPS

VIEWS

Technologically adept and socially conscious, they view their role as part of a global movement toward regenerative practices.

OUTREACH STRATEGY


Integrate the latest technology and social media strategies in advisory practices. Use platforms that resonate with their digital-first mindset and connect them with mentorship opportunities for hands-on learning.



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Gen Alpha



GEN 2020
2013-2025

Global
Visual
Mobile
Artificial
intelligence
Autonomous
vehicles

Autonomous everything

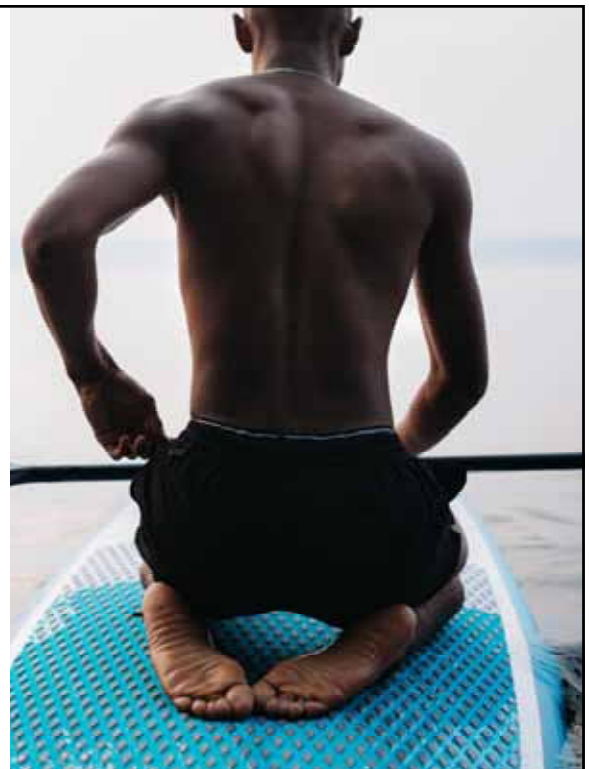
Tele-everything

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Question: (type in the chat)

What is one strength your generation brings to helping people connect with nature??







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ENVIRONMENTAL SELF-VIEW BY GENERATION

Generation	"How I see myself in the environment"	Primary environmental framing
Silent / Traditionalist	"I'm a steward in a chain of responsibility."	Duty, continuity, caretaking, respect for land/community norms
Baby Boomer	"The land is part of my legacy and identity."	Heritage, place attachment, stewardship pride, community standing
Gen X	"Nature is real, but decisions must be practical."	Pragmatism, tradeoffs, autonomy, risk management
Millennial	"The environment is a system we're accountable to."	Values + outcomes, systems thinking, interdependence, long-term impacts
Gen Z	"The environment is my future; I need clarity and agency."	Urgency + authenticity, fairness, participation, integrity ("say/do" alignment)

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ENGAGEMENT CUES BY GENERATION

Generation	Trust Cue	Meaning Cue	Best Proof Type	Best Invitation Style
 Traditionalist	• Local Reputation	• Duty & Continuity	• Trusted Leaders	• Direct & Respectful
 Boomers	• Peer Credibility	• Legacy & Pride	• Stories & Examples	• Connect & Discuss
 Gen X	• Transparency	• Practical Benefits	• Data & Options	• Clear & Efficient
 Millennial	• Integrity	• Purpose & Impact	• Metrics & Accountability	• Mission-Aligned
 Gen Z	• Authenticity	• Agency & Fairness	• Quick Proof & Results	• Action & Access

Tendencies, not types. Role, place, and experience matter too.

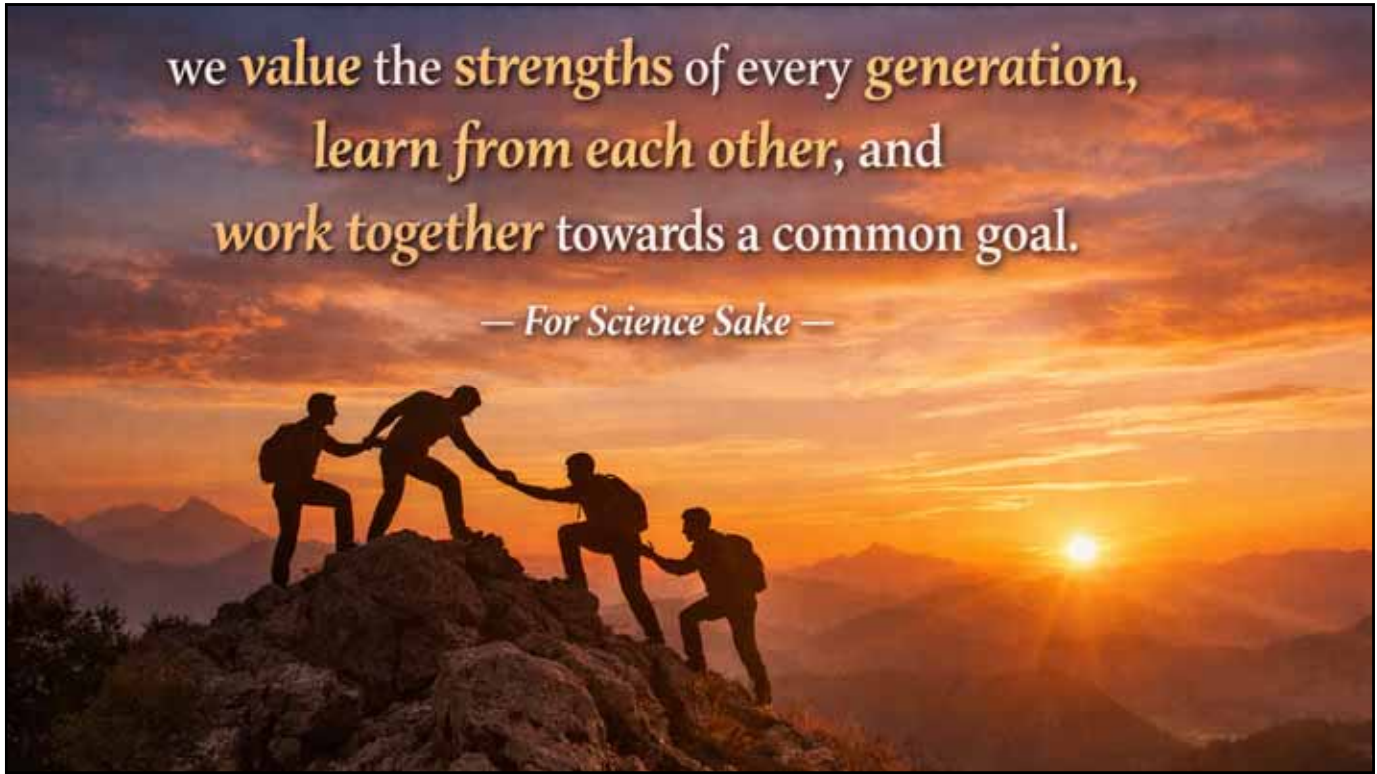
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<h1>MOTIVATIONS</h1> <hr style="width: 30%; margin: auto;"/>	Generation	What tends to feel motivating	What can turn them off
	Silent / Traditionalist	Responsibility, stability, proven local leadership, clear standards	Ambiguity, perceived disrespect, rapid change without rationale
	Baby Boomer	Peer stories, legacy, community benefit, recognition of stewardship	Dismissiveness, accusatory tone, polarization
	Gen X	Clear options and tradeoffs, transparency, competence, efficiency	Vague promises, bureaucracy, "marketing fluff," hidden strings
	Millennial	Authentic values alignment, measurable impact, transparency, fairness	Greenwashing, opacity, performative messaging, exclusion from voice
	Gen Z	Clear pathways to act, visible results, authenticity, inclusion, fairness	Jargon, hypocrisy ("say/do gap"), gatekeeping, slow/unclear process

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Strengths in Generations	
<p>BOOMERS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coalition-building through relationships: strong interpersonal networks and convening power. Commitment to legacy: motivation to protect place, heritage, and community identity. Resource mobilization: fundraising, board leadership, and public influence. Persistence: willingness to stay with long, complex efforts (policy, easements, negotiations). 	<p>GEN X</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pragmatic problem solving: clear-eyed tradeoff thinking; focus on what works. Skeptical due diligence: improves programs by stress-testing assumptions and reducing risk. Operational competence: translating vision into execution; efficiency and process improvement. Bridge capacity: comfort operating across institutions and cultures (ag, conservation, business).
<p>MILLENIALS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Systems thinking: connecting land, water, climate, equity, and economics into integrated solutions. Values-driven innovation: pushing for alignment between mission and measurable outcomes Collaboration and learning culture: openness to partnership, feedback loops, and iterative improvement. Storytelling for purpose: translating technical work into meaning that activates broader support. 	<p>GEN Z</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urgency + action orientation: moving from awareness to rapid experimentation and implementation. Digital fluency: modern communication, mobilization, and transparency tools. Equity and fairness lens: identifying who benefits, who bears costs, and how to build legitimacy. Authenticity radar: pressure-testing integrity ("say/do alignment") that strengthens trust long-term.

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