1.

Good Afternoon! I am going to let you in on a big secret. We do not have all the answers and so today we will be asking your input on the topic of: Bridging the Generation Gap in P.E.O. You will notice that we have 3 wonderful volunteer sisters who have cordless microphones out on the floor. If the three of you can wave, so I can point you out to everyone. (point out the locations of the microphone sisters)

Let’s start this off with an audience question. If you have something to add, please raise your hand so I can call on some of you as time permits and a runner can bring you a microphone.

2.
First Question: What is wrong with this younger generation? Tell me everything and don’t hold back.

(wait for: entitlement, lazy, want everything now, their devices, still live at home, not social)

Tell me if it sounds accurate:

“The children now love luxury; they have bad manners, contempt for authority; show disrespect for elders..... - They no longer rise when elders enter. They contradict their parents, ....and tyrannize their teachers”

How about this description:

"What is happening to our young people? They disrespect their elders, they disobey their parents. They ignore the law. They riot in the streets inflamed with wild notions. Their morals are decaying. What is to become of them? “
This person summed it up like this:

“I see no hope for the future of our people if they are dependent on frivolous youth of today.... all youth are reckless beyond words... When I was young, we were taught to be discreet and respectful of elders, but the present youth are exceedingly disrespectful and [without] restraint.

Another said:

“The world is passing through troublous times. The young people of today think of nothing but themselves. They have no reverence for parents or old age. They talk as if they knew everything, and what passes for wisdom with us is foolishness with them. As for the girls, they are forward, immodest and unladylike in speech, behavior and dress.”
Nailed it! Didn’t they?

Who said these things? The first quote was from Socrates in 399 BC, the second from Plato in 347 BC, the third is Hesiod form the 8th Century, and the last one is a cranky fellow named Peter the Hermit in 1254 A.D. It appears once we get to a certain age we have been saying the same things about youth for over two millennia. I had some doozy quotes about those of you coming of age in the 60’s and 70’s but they were so much worse, under the circumstances, I didn’t think sharing it would be “radiating all light possible”

3

We are in a multigenerational organization that has survived and grown, until the recent decade, for nearly 150 years. What do you love about being in a multi-generational
organization? I’m looking for audience input here so raise your hands:

(get personal stories of how it helped them and why they want it to remain)

I was introduced to P.E.O. by two women each a generation apart. One was 20 years older than I, and the other 45 years older than I. It was a multi-generational effort. When I became involved in the inner life of my chapter, I was surrounded by women who were highly educated in their 90’s with advanced degrees. The women in my family of origin had not been educated. I was embraced into a sisterhood that mentored me and encouraged me through the ups and downs of raising my children. Most of my older sisters had already experienced similar things with their own children, the good
the bad and the ugly. They were a source of wisdom and support.

If we truly believe the multigenerational aspect of our sisterhood is valuable and needs to be preserved, we need to start thinking, talking, and planning what we can do to bridge the generation gaps that exist between our different generations. I hope we can do that today.

4

Let me tell you about a person and their basic character.

“Strong desire to share their unique gifts with others. Deep Desire to have a positive impact on others. Collaborative - Values everyone's point of view. Willing to be mentored by a leader. Open to new ideas. Extreme value on efficiency – values others time. A hunger for learning. Ambitious. Confident.
Conscious. Educated, Motivated, Idealistic. Open Minded.

Passionate. Polite. Problem Solver. Trailblazer. Loves to have fun. Who does this person sound like to you? (They will answer one of us or a P.E.O.)

It is a millennial. Those characteristics were provided by the employers of millennials when asked in surveys what their most positive characteristics were. Is that surprising? Let’s see if we can reconcile what we think is wrong with the younger generation (millennials) with what their employers are saying about them and help our sisterhood thrive in the process.
Each one of us is a part of a generation influenced by a unique defining common history. Each generation spans enough time for a group to start the next generation.

There are 4 different Generations currently eligible for P.E.O. membership: Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials.

If you were born between 1922 and 1945? Please stand and look around. You are our Traditionalists.

If you were born between 1946 and 1965? Please stand and look around. You are our Baby Boomers.

If you were born between 1965 and 1980? Please stand and look around. You are our Generation X’ers.

If you were born between 1981 and 2010? Please stand and look around. You are our Millennials.
As a general rule, each generation shares values and world viewpoints based on a shared common history and culture from their formative and early adult years. As a new generation comes along, those values and viewpoints change because history and culture changes. Common history & culture shapes each generation’s vision of what the sisterhood is and what it should be.

Traditionalists experienced the poverty of the Great Depression and sacrificed in an extraordinary way to defeat incomprehensible evil. Often called the “Greatest Generation,” they suffered the loss of ½ million North American souls during
World War II. We owe them more than we can ever possibly know.

They gave to the next generation: Prosperity, Stability, & Babies. Presiding over an unprecedented economic expansion after the War, they presided over the largest building of massive public infrastructure in the history of the world. They did this to benefit everyone, not just their own, and this included affordable, and in some cases, tuition free college.

My mother-in-law, mother of 9, said my father-in-law, who at 16 lied about his age to join the Marines, never spoke of what happened in the War, except to say that after witnessing the death of so many promising honorable young men, he felt obligated to make life again in their honor. This common reaction lead to the next generation: Baby Boomers.
Baby Boomers were raised during prosperity. As a result, Boomer women had more advanced educational opportunities than ever before and joyfully entered the work force. In many cases, economic expansion coupled with education lead women to the conclusion that they and their children did not need to suffer in bad or abusive marriages. Other key developments influencing their common world view include wide spread use and acceptance of the birth control pill, the sexual revolution, the Vietnam War, and an awakening to disparity in civil rights, both racial and gender based.

Their awareness and work provided to the next generation of women and men: The blessing to pursue individual educational and professional dreams.
There are fewer Gen Xers than other generations because they were born after wide acceptance of the birth control pill, and their generation span is a short 15 years.

Xers experienced a tumultuous time with issues like Watergate, the energy crisis, and being the first generation of 'latchkey kids'. Home without adult supervision after school, due to the emergence of dual-income families or else a parental divorce, they experienced an emotional void. They became masters at figuring things out on their own and became innovators and entrepreneurs.

As a reaction to the issues of their childhood, they have a fierce commitment to work/family balance. They gave to the
next generation self-confidence and the freedom to think outside the box.

11

Millennials, sometimes called Generation Y, saw an explosion in technology and embraced it as native users. The history which has profoundly influenced their world view includes AIDS, school shootings, terrorist attacks and “helicopter” parents. They are trying to forge a better balance in the parenting area.

12

Research reveals that chapters with 3 or more generations attending meetings thrive and are not likely to disband. This means, there is no way our chapters are getting out alive without welcoming, embracing, and accommodating, Gen X’rs or Millennials. There is no way around it. Even chapters with
large membership numbers are at risk when their membership is all within the same generation.

Consider this: For the first time in history, At least 2 of the 4 generations eligible for P.E.O. membership is happily working during the day when most of our chapters meet. Can I have everyone who is in a daytime weekday chapter stand and look around. Eye opening, isn’t it? We will be working later today to find solutions to harmonizing the needs of each generation within our sisterhood, so let’s see if we can first come to a better understanding of each generation and their needs.

13

The common culture & history of each generation can be used as a lens to see how each generation sees and to understand what each values. These generational values can
help us understand how each views our sisterhood, both what it is, and what it can be. P.E.O. sisters Trudy Traditional, Betty Boomer, Genny Xer, and Molly Millennial will help us today.

**Trudy Traditional:** Her exposure to unimaginable poverty during the Great Depression and her participation in the group effort during World War II gave her a sense of duty and camaraderie. She trusts rules, tradition, discipline, work, conformity, stability, & formality. She will sacrifice her personal needs for the group. She is civic minded. She trusts organizational structures, leadership based on hierarchy, and values authority. It is how we won the War!

**Betty Boomer:** Born after the War and free from financial fears during her upbringing, she had the freedom to consider her personal dreams rather than her survival needs. Due to
exposure to widespread economic prosperity, she is idealistic, believes in equality, has a driven work ethic, is team orientated, highly values personal & social expression, personal fulfillment, personal gratification, and emotional & physical health. She values leadership based on consensus (not hierarchy). She is both tolerant of and distrustful of organizational government and authority.

**Genny Xer** grew up in a consumer culture and watched her parents work long hours to pay off a house and provide “stuff”. She was a latch key kid, so she has “street smarts”. She is self-reliant. The economy changed as she entered adulthood and the world did not present her with what she initially expected, so she is skeptical in outlook. She strives for a balanced work/family life after being a latch key kid. She loves working outside the home, values free agency, diversity, and has a
global mindset. She is cynical of all organizational structure because companies stopped being loyal to employees. This is the first generation that did not get a private pension or a career with only one major lifetime employer. She prefers leadership based on competence. She is unimpressed with authority.

Genny Xer has no problem tackling challenging & difficult tasks where innovation and creativity are required because she is at ease with questioning and challenging the status quo and authority. She takes risks. She engages in things that are relevant, particularly if they are fun.

As a side note: Because Gen Xers are so work/family balanced, work during the day, and are cynical of organizational structure, they aren’t joiners *en masse* of ANY organization......
yet. So far, this is a generational bridge to the millennials, that we do not have en masse.

**Molly Millennial:** She grew up in an era of relative prosperity, so she is optimistic, but her outlook is changing because of the housing market and the burden of student loans. She has energy and a global mindset. She values diversity, achievement, fun, and sociability. She is self-confident. **She and her peers are the most civic minded generation since the Traditionalists.** Let me repeat this: SHE and her PEERS are the most civic minded generation since the Traditionalists. She will join an organization if it values diversity and is doing the **right things.** She already is surrounded by and lives diversity in her personal life, so she doesn’t look for it, but she sees it when it is not there. She values achievement in leaders and is respectful of authority.
In a thriving multiple generational organization: “Treating others as we wish to be treated” doesn’t always work. This is because each generation may wish to be treated differently. Being understanding and tolerant of these differing needs is crucial to being a good sister and the future of our sisterhood. Let’s look at how each generation demonstrates their core value needs in their preferred choice of P.E.O. Socials and Fundraising.

The Traditional generation social involves, china, silver, being dressed up and a level of formality. The formality and attention to detail is an unspoken silent symbolic sign of respect and honor to those present and to the significance of
the group purpose. Guests are expected to dress up because it acknowledges the work and detail that was put into the event. Love is in the symbolic details for this generation. “The needs of the many, should outweigh the needs of the few.”

Traditionalists are getting old enough that they do not have the energy to carry this on, and hope that the younger generation will carry this on. Sometimes when this doesn’t happen they conclude, in error, either that they are not valued by the younger generation or that the younger generation is going to hell in a hand basket!

16

How does the current Traditional generation participate in fund raising? They are older now and getting pooped! They
prefer to write a check. They are tired of all this running around.

17

The Baby Boomer social is less formal in its focus on dress, and the need for it be an indoor sit-down meal. Less formality, flexibility of locations (either indoor or outdoor), and greater ease is a Boomer sign of respect and honor to those present. It is rooted in the awareness that informality and flexibility in a range of differing locations honors and respects individual differences and honors and respects mental and emotional health. Part of the respect for mental and emotional health includes the idea that peers are included in the gathering, but not children.

18
Baby Boomer fundraising: I can say this, because I am a Boomer. We run around all over town getting baskets and crafting supplies. We tirelessly work together and make items to buy from each other at our fundraisers and then after we have completely exhausted ourselves, usually paying less for an item than the materials it cost to make it, we ask at official visits: “What can we do for fundraising that is using O.P.M?” – (Other People’s Money). Everyone else is EXHAUSTED just watching us run around.

19

A Generation X Social: – Let the restaurant do the work! Informality gives them a chance to relax after all that time balancing kids and work. Spirits in moderation are not a bad thing! Sometimes it helps with the *equipoise & symmetry of*
character. Other types of socials they prefer include the family.... Note the child in the background. Work/Family balance means family is included. Flexibility, family inclusion and a lack of formality honors the value of family

20

Generation X fundraisers like to include the B.I.L.’s - because they are part of the family!

21

This is how a Millennial does a social. Millennial's prefer socials that are fun and informal and like to organize them using their devices. The lack of formality and the informal dress is a sign of respect. It honors the value of efficiency and respects time. It also costs less, and money is an issue right now for this generation.
Here is how a Millennial raises money. Their value on efficiency can be seen in the way in which they prefer to fundraise. Millennials prefer fundraising that involves ease, doesn’t use the Earth’s dwindling resources, and doesn’t require paperwork. So that means using tech to do the work and accessing O.P.M.! A post to social media, connected to a bank account asking for small donations, can be shared again and again to their friends, and shared by their friend’s friends. The can raise large amounts of money with very little effort and no paperwork. This group raised $27,000 in two days, mostly of O.P.M., with the click of a few buttons and then took a walk!
This chart shows personal and lifestyle preference characteristics of each generation.

Note under the Organization category how each generation views the value of membership in service/fellowship organization like P.E.O. There is more value placed on the philanthropic aspect of our sisterhood as the generations become younger. Gen Xers and Millennials want what they do in P.E.O. to be more than “ladies who lunch”. Gen Xers want abundant evidence of how their contributions are helping specific others. Millennials want to see that fundraising isn’t in the dark ages. They want a digital means to participate and they want the fruits of that fundraising to go to a diverse group of recipients.
The biggest cause of hurt feelings, and misunderstandings in the Generation Gaps can be found below the yellow horizontal line on the chart. Each of the below the line categories involves communication and the means of communication. This is a technology gap and it is huge.

Traditionalists prefer face to face communication, and they value the formal written communication. *The lack of “Thank You” notes makes them crazy.* Because Traditionalists are largely disengaged from technology, they do not see, so they cannot possibly appreciate the digital means that Gen Xers and Millennials use to communicate with others and thank others. A Millennial, who places a premium on the value of time, can shop for a gift, pay for it, have it gift wrapped and shipped to the recipient in seconds on a smartphone - -sometimes while waiting at a traffic light with a voice activated system. No joke.
The Millennial may not appreciate that a Traditionalist went to 3 stores to shop for the perfect gift, then went to another store to find the perfect card, then purchased gift wrap, then called someone to get an address, and then drove a package to the post office. A Traditionalist only knows that a hand-written acknowledgment takes much less time than the time the Traditionalist spent in the gift giving process. So, a thank you text, or email, sent to a Traditionalist or even a Boomer will not be very well received, especially if the Traditionalist or Boomer does not have the technical skills to receive it. It seems disrespectful on every level.

Communication mores tethered to rapidly evolving technology that has left many behind is creating a bigger generation gap than has ever existed before – it is more like a generation chasm. Never has the changing means of
communication between generations been so hard to master and learn between generations. The change from face to face conversations to the telephone, or the formal letter to the telephone, between Traditionalist and Baby Boomers may have resulted in gaps of opinions as to the value of one method over the other, but it wasn’t hard for a Traditionalist to use or answer the phone when those preferred methods of communication changed between the generation.

Gen Xers and Millennials grew up with technology and it is the method of communication they prefer the most. Millennials have known no other way. So, they may not get or appreciate your frustration with it or even believe that it can be that hard for you.
I would like everyone here who finds the internet, smartphones, or computers to be stressful, difficult and mystifying to clap your hands. Don’t hold back. The truth will set us all free! How many of you have had the experience of a younger family member coming over to help you learn something on a computer or smart phone? Clap your hands. Right after they left, how many of you had no idea how to do yourself? Clap your hands. How many of you were then too embarrassed to ask again for help? Clap your hand. How many of you keep being told “It isn’t hard, it is easy”? Clap your hands. How many of you have found that statement to be absurd? Clap your hands. How many of you have thought……?

If babies get it....
Why can’t I get it? ---- Clap your hands.

Here is why: This is a picture of neural pathways for the neurons in your brain! The brain consists of billions of connected neurons, forming neural networks. These networks, process and control information, learning and flow. It is like your own internal information superhighway system. When we are children, there aren’t a lot of well-traveled neural roadways built in the brain yet. But as an adult, who has obtained almost all possible wisdom, you have lots of roadways in your brain because of all the knowledge and skills you have learned. In fact, unlike regular roads, the more a neural pathway is used, the stronger and thicker it gets (check out the center of the
picture). Lesser used neural pathways, get smaller and smaller, eventually breaking away, because your brain is very efficient and likes to default to the main well-traveled highway.

29

Here is what your brain looks like as a well-educated, smart woman of a certain age, who mastered the dominate culturally accepted polite and efficient communication of your generation: letters and face to face communication. Here is what it looks like when you try and learn the language of communication via a computer or smartphone.

30

A child, who does not have a major well-traveled superhighway in place, does not have to deal with cars racing by the construction zone while their roadway is under...
construction. Their brain is just free to quickly build new communication highway connections.

31

This is why a child under the age of 6 whose family moves to another country will be fluently bilingual in less than 6 months.

32

But the teenager who moves with her family to a new country, doesn’t become fluently bilingual that fast. She already has a few strong large roadways that have been well traveled. Computers, smartphones, and tablets are like learning a new language.
So, if you don’t already know the language of computers, smartphones, and tablets and are an intelligent woman of a certain age....

33

Fear COMES ALIVE! It can be scary when the younger generation understands and can access, operate, and control the emerging dominate means of communication and we can’t. But what is that fear about really?

34

Fear, to a great extent is born of a story we tell ourselves.

35

I’d like to share with you a story in my own family. My Aunt Mary consecrated 16 years of her life to caring for my grandparents in their old age. The three of them lived together
in a tiny old house, with a wood burning stove for heat, in a
town of less than 4000 people. My grandfather passed away
when he was 90 and for the next 5 years my Aunt was caring
for my beloved blind grandmother who was also suffering from
dementia. This was not an easy gig. My aunt had children and
grandchildren and most of her siblings lived in other states or
several hours away. Everyone felt guilty for the workload Aunt
Mary was carrying and wanted her to feel more connected to
everyone, so we installed and paid for an internet line at the
house, bought her a computer, and created Facebook and
email accounts for her. We carefully showed her how to work
the computer, Facebook, & email. We created an instruction
cheat sheet for her as she followed along. At last we could
effortlessly share pictures and stories with each other! We left,
patting ourselves on the back for being such good, loving,
family-oriented people. Weeks went by and Aunt Mary never responded to our emails or commented on our Facebook posts. She never sent any emails or shared any pictures. We started getting a little miffed, expressing nothing to her. We told ourselves she was giving us the silent treatment for not being there to help. This was unreasonable after everything we had tried to do. Months went by. During our next visit, she tensely and shortly asked us to remove the computer, clearly upset that we had given it to her. We were dismayed and confused. We went to our hotel rooms and did not radiate all light possible when opining about her motivations. Everyone was mad at everyone else. Someone genius in the family had the bright idea to ask her why she was rejecting the gift we had gone through so much expense to provide and effort to set up. All we wanted was to help keep her connected on a more
intimate scale under her very difficult circumstances.

Embarrassed, Aunt Mary revealed she could not figure out how to turn it on. There was no visible on/off switch. She had searched, couldn’t find it, and concluded she was too stupid to ever work it. It was a computer where one simply touched an unmarked spot on the monitor to turn it on. No one had thought to write that down for her. Embarrassment and fear had shut down all healthy communication from all sides.

36

Fears are usually uninvestigated stories we tell ourselves. So what scary and painful story do we tell ourselves when the younger generation is busy using technology that we can’t understand? Just like my Aunt Mary, the first story is:

37
I’m not smart enough. This is a deeply painful story.

When the pain of such an ugly story about ourselves becomes too painful, we turn the focus of the story away from ourselves....

and onto the others by making them bad or wrong. We all do it. It is part of our human condition. The problem is, it is usually a lie and we don’t really even know it.

Fear is almost always: FALSE, EVIDENCE, APPEARING, REAL.

Fear is a liar
41

A fear-based lie may take care of the present, but it has no future....

42

“The only thing we have to fear, is fear itself”

43

The Bible says “Do not Fear 365 times” – That’s enough for one each day of the year. For those of us who are Christian, this was the most used phrase of Jesus in all the Gospels.

44

Remember the opposite of FEAR is faith

45
So, what is the answer to bridging the generation gap and how do we harmonize all these views, strengthen our sisterhood, and make it thrive for generations to come? The truth is, we don’t have all the answers to these challenges. But we know that the answer has to start with the VALUES EACH GENERATION SHARES AND AGREES ON: The star and its message. So...

46

• **BE PURE**: Focus on the good & lovely about each other.

• **BE JUST**: Be fair about the challenges unique to each generation

• **HAVE FAITH**: Choose faith instead of F.E.A.R.

• **VALUE TRUTH**: Search for the truth about others & our fears.
LOVE: Love each other!

When you think this...... Reconsider. Have faith.

It might just be FEAR talking- False Evidence Appearing Real.

WHAT EXACTLY ARE THEY DOING ON THOSE DEVICES ALL THE TIME?

49 – 50 Banking

51-52 Working

53-54 Reading the News

55-56 Thanking someone

57-58 Grocery shopping
59-60 Catching up on break

61-62 Shopping for convention

63-64 At the library – obtaining all possible wisdom

65-66 Taking Notes at a P.E.O. Meeting

67-68 Witnessing History......

When you FEAR the Gen Xer or Millennial and do not understand what they are doing, remember that this is what they FEAR the most....

69 ......

70 .... We can help with this

71 When False Evidence Appears Real and FEAR rears its head, it is time to Face Everything And Rise.
72 Are you willing to take a stand for multiple generations and Face Everything And Rise? Clap if you are. I can’t hear you!

73

Here is where you are going to instruct all of us.

I’m going to ask everyone to take out their paper name tag from the plastic name tag holder around your neck. I’ll wait so you can all do that.

Each of you had placed on your seat when you came in this afternoon a little row with 5 colored star stickers and a little decorated Daisy Star paper. Take the star stickers, the Daisy Star paper, and your name tag and keep them together.

74 STAR 1

If you are in a chapter where three or more generations attend your meetings attend your meetings and you think you know why that is
happening and think any chapter can do those things, please RISE. Take a stand and look around. Please sit down and when you are seated. Please sit down and when you are seated put the gold colored star sticker and place it above your name in the middle of your name tag.

75 STAR 2

If you are in a chapter that makes a real effort to help Traditionalist sisters with P.E.O & the internet and can share how your chapter does it please RISE. Take a stand and look around. Please sit down and when you are seated put the silver colored star on the upper right-hand corner of your name tag.

76
If you are in a chapter where to 2 or more Baby Boomer Sisters aged 65 and under were recently initiated and you think you know why your chapter appealed to them please RISE. Take a stand and look around. Please sit down and when you are seated put the green colored star on the bottom right hand corner of your name tag.

77

If you are in a chapter that has 2 or more Gen X’rs who regularly attend meetings and you can think you know why that is happening and think any chapter can do those things, please RISE. Take a stand and look around. Please sit down and when you are seated take your name card out of your plastic badge holder and put the red colored star on the bottom left corner of your name tag.
If you are in a chapter that has 2 or more millennials who regularly attend meetings and you think you know why that is happening and think any chapter can do those things, please RISE. Take a stand and look around. Please sit down and when you are seated put the blue colored star on the upper left-hand corner of your name tag.

Everyone should now take whatever stars did not end up on your name tag, along with the Daisy Star paper that is a map of what each star is for and put it in their plastic badge holder. Everyone should now put their name tag back in the holder, so we can see your name and stars.

This afternoon, tonight and tomorrow, at breaks, meals, and social times, if you see someone who has a colored star
that you don’t have on your name tag, ask them to share how their chapter was able to appeal to the generations represented in each star. Get their tips. After YOU HAVE LEARNED HOW BRIDGE THE GAP TO THE GENERATION REPRESENTED IN THE COLORED STAR, PUT THAT COLOR STAR ON YOUR OWN NAME TAG, AND BE PREPARED TO PASS ON WHAT YOU LEARNED TO ANYONE WHO ASKS.

The goal is that by tomorrow morning everyone has all 5 stars on their name tag when they come into this room. You have cocktail hour tonight, dinner, and breakfast tomorrow to obtain all possible wisdom and get all 5 colored stars on your nametag.

79
So, pour out your knowledge to each other. All of these multi colored stars are we will grow our generations of love for generations to come.

80 Thank you for your time and attention!