

## **Section 4**

# **Membership**

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We were fascinated to learn that our membership has fluctuated wildly over the last biennium. Our current numbers are just over 30,000 with our goal of course to get back to the 33,000 number. Since November 2011 membership has gone up by 490 members.

We talked a lot about membership, what works and what doesn't. A new way of thinking about membership emerged from our discussions and the goals of the leadership. In many cases members who are joining now want to get something out of membership as much as they want to give to an organization.

If we think about what we have already learned about running our meetings with a discussion focus, practicing good leadership skills while we lead our boards and our clubs, then we can see a natural path of interest for new younger members.

To appeal to the younger set, we need to be seen as relevant, timely even "hip". This means understanding and embracing technology, being able to relate to time restraints of younger members and valuing their contributions, even when they seem initially like something that is very foreign. Get new members involved and ask for their opinion about matters at hand.

If we can agree that each one of us needs to replace ourselves in Zonta, at least once, then we have to accept that the younger generation will be the members of tomorrow. Determining what your club has to offer new young members will be the first step in your success in recruiting.

We need to think of membership as an "outcome" as opposed to a goal. Outcome based membership will be derived from our visibility in the community as a relevant, interesting group with passion for our mission. We should rethink our current membership recruitment methods to determine the cost/gain of each. We also need to make sure that the people we are recruiting have the right motives and are joining for the mission. Recruiting for the sake of just gathering members will in many cases lead to quick turnover.

Another area we are potentially weak is in member education. In order for us to be able to talk intelligently about Zonta and our mission, we really need to understand that mission and our programs in place to get there. Some clubs can very clearly explain what their local service projects are but quote international projects from years ago. Spend time with your members making sure they understand the latest projects and Zonta's relevance in these projects.

New member orientations are imperative but again, may need some retooling. It is difficult for anyone to grasp the "whole Zonta" in one day of presentations. Some clubs have had very good luck with one person being "responsible" for the new members and mentoring them. Some clubs do orientation as a 4-6 week process, meeting one time per week with a different specific part of Zonta discussed. Understanding what Zonta is all about and what interests new members have is the first step.

There is a place for every new member to fit in. It is the job of the club board to make sure that these people get plugged in and are engaged.

# The Millennials Are Coming, and Boards Need to Get Ready

## The Millennials Are Coming, and Boards Need to Get Ready

The Millennial generation is a growing presence in the corporate workforce, and the same old company policies won't always work for them. Is your board of directors prepared?

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The Millennials are coming to the corporate workforce, in droves. Is your board of directors prepared?

The members of the generation born roughly between the late 1970s and the early 2000s comprise the fastest-growing segment of the labor market. As such, their increasing presence at the office raises all kinds of policy issues for companies—beyond laments over how to tolerate the quirks of the “ME generation”—that range from topics like talent management and compensation to social media.

These issues require thought leadership from company directors, too, according to panelists at the Women Corporate Directors 2012 Global Institute, held this week in New York City.

First, what sets this generation apart from their Gen-X and Baby Boomer forerunners? They expect constant stimulation at work, and they want constant feedback, says Jannice Koors, managing director at compensation consultancy Pearl Meyer & Partners.

And forget waiting their turn for access to the powers that be. Millennials want to share their opinions, and they want to be heard by the CEO from Day 1, notes Kathy Kane, senior vice president for talent management at Adecco Group North America.

She also stressed that Millennials aren't afraid to hop from one company to another, a la the milieu in Daniel Pink's book, *Free Agent Nation*. Kane recommended that boards have a talent management committee to make sure they are placing the right people in the right job at the right time—and at the right cost.

And don't forget that compensation committees aren't limited to just thinking about executive compensation, says Koors. She encouraged board members to consider HR policies and their impact on the company, broadly.

For example, many businesses are still clinging to holdover policies from the manufacturing age that are out of sync with today's changing workforce, she says. Those relics include rigid hours and requisite face time; formal annual review processes, in which companies spend “an inordinate” amount of time and resources telling workers “that they're average”; and hierarchical pay structures.

“We overvalue tenure relative to contribution,” Koors says.

The Millennial challenge for boards, then, is to ask: Are we doing these things because they makes sense, or because this is way we've always done it? As for paying higher wages to younger employers based on their skills sets, "All of us 50-year-olds are going to have to get over that," she says. And on revamping the formal review process, she reminded the audience that Millennials "want to be able to give feedback as much as they want to receive feedback."

Social media policies also need to account for how Millennials use online networks. KPMG is in the process of updating the company's social media policy, says Nancy Calderon, national partner in charge for operations and chief administrative officer for KPMG Americas.

One of the biggest concerns they are wrestling with, she says, is "whether or not we should allow our employees to 'friend' a client." The risk is that Facebook friending could create a potential conflict of interest, Calderon says.

When it comes to blogging and tweeting by employees, another issue that arises is how to combat the perception that employees are giving advice on behalf of the company. She suggested one possible solution is to make more use of disclosures that state "all these views are my own and not affiliated with my company or my board."

She also advised boards to start a technology committee—and to make sure that young people are represented on it.

After the panelists had enumerated the many changes they recommended be made for a Millennial-heavy labor force, one audience member finally asked if companies could ever deny the Millennials what they want. "Where's the pushback?"

Kane said to remember that Millennials don't just make up a rapidly growing segment of the workforce—they're also most companies' rising customer base. "It's what your products and services need to be," she says. "It's a new world and we have to behave differently."