

Implications of Generational Differences

GI Generation:

- Use the formal, “Mr. or Mrs. Jones”, never “Henry” or “Helen”.
- Expect that they will see you as an authority figure and ask for your advice and recommendations.
- Use the age of your company and your years of experience to your advantage.
- If possible, take a little longer when serving these older customers.
- Understand that they will be concerned about money for the rest of their lives.
- Expect to interact with more older women than men. Women live longer and are often forced to deal with business issues that their husbands had previously managed.

Silent Generation:

- Be aware that this is a transitional generation and therefore harder to define.
- Set clear expectations, give consistent answers and stand by your commitments. Silents will expect you to honor your word.
- Provide information on products and services in a variety of formats.
- Notice the increase in knowledge of women conducting business. There is a shift away from the belief that men are ‘the head of the household’.

Baby Boomer Generation:

- Call them by their first name. Being called “Mr.” or “Ms.” will make them feel old when they want to feel ‘forever young’.
- Understand that Boomers want to be in charge of business interactions.
- Save them time. They have active, busy lives. Boomers are called the ‘Sandwich Generation’, caring for aging parents at the same time they are raising their children. You will grow your Boomer business by making their lives easier.
- Offer multiple ways of payment. Boomers see credit as a way of life.
- Consider combining worthwhile non-profit causes, such as disaster relief, with your for-profit business. Offer ways that Boomers can give of their time, talent, and money to help those who are less fortunate.