Young member engagement: Bridging the generation gap

Workshop leader: Emily Doyle

---

Agenda

1. Welcome and introduction
2. Goals for the session
3. Setting the stage
4. Barriers and challenges to engagement
5. Bridging the generation gap
6. Creating and action plan for your co-op
7. Resources
Goals for the session

• What are you hoping to get out of this session?
• What are some of the issues at your co-op?
• What has/hasn’t worked at your co-op?

The early days...
Setting the stage

Why does young member engagement matter?

- Succession planning - more young members involved in governance
- Strengthening and diversifying our leadership
- Passing on knowledge, experience, passion and dedication
- Diversity of ideas, backgrounds, and experiences
- Changing the co-op culture
- Continue to grow the sector

Results of 2015 Young Member Survey

- 32% have at least one director under 30
- 68% have no directors under 30

Young member engagement: Bridging the generation gap
CHF Canada Workshop
Barriers to engagement

• Stereotypes
• Communication
• Unclear expectations from board or committee members
• Scheduling conflicts and other commitments

Bridging the generation gap

• Bridging the gap is one way to help ensure succession and a strong future for our co-ops
• Reduces barriers
• It’s a two-way street
• It might involve some change – but that’s a good thing!
• Keep a positive outlook
• Maybe you’ll learn something new!
How do we accomplish this?

Here are some ways that we can start bridging the generation gap:

1. Good communication
2. Education
3. Mutual understanding
4. Being open and flexible
5. Mentorship

Communication

Good Communication is key!

- Keep your expectations in check
- Whenever a difference of opinion comes up, start a conversation
Education

- Provide young people with the opportunity to experience and learn new things
- Have reasonable expectations – don’t expect young people to know everything
- Offer training opportunities (workshops and courses)
- Explain the democratic decision making process
- Share resources about co-ops and good governance

Mutual understanding

- Try to imagine where the other person is coming from
- Understanding barriers can help gain perspective
Be open and flexible

• Try to let go of preconceived notions
• Don’t stifle enthusiasm or new ideas
• Create a culture of openness and honesty
Mentorship

- Identifying potential leaders and giving them opportunities
- Think of the learning and experience as going in both directions

A good mentor...

- Gives encouragement
- Is positive
- Is a role model
- Is authentic
- Shows genuine interest
- Is open to sharing experiences and knowledge
- Is open to listening to different perspectives
- Empowers
Implementing mentorship

- Establish trust and understanding
- Encourage young people to take part in the co-op and wider sector events
- Ask questions that encourage involvement without imposing your ideas
- Think about opportunities like committees, board roles, events, and other leadership opportunities

Let’s hear from... Sahara Shaik

- Director for the Co-operative Housing Federation of BC
- Member of Wit’s End Housing Co-op
- Involved with two Land Trust Committees
- Passionate about housing affordability
Developing an action plan

Action Plan

Where to start?
• Sometimes we get stuck trying to do everything at once
• Prioritizing your goals and actions can help!
• Ask yourself:
  ✓ Which action will have the biggest impact?
  ✓ Which action is the easiest to implement?
  ✓ Which action is the most exciting?
Things to consider...

- Are there any barriers to young member engagement at your co-op?
- What actions do you need to take to reach the goal?
- Who do you need to work with (key players)
- What approvals do you need?
- What is your timeline?

Tips for goal setting

- Be specific and measurable
- Action oriented
- Set reasonable timelines
- Be creative!
Creating an action plan

• Take a few minutes to work with your table or the person beside you
• Start thinking about specific actions you can take at your co-op.

Let’s share ideas...
Resources

There are lots of resources and supports to help you along your way...

CHF Canada’s Young Member Engagement Strategy

- **Under 16 yrs**
  - Laying the ground for involvement

- **16-29 yrs**
  - Membership, scholarship and leadership development

- **22-29 yrs**
  - Professional development

- **All ages**
  - Removing barriers

Available under Resources (chfcanada.coop)
Resources and staying connected

- CHF Canada’s website: https://chfcanada.coop
- Youth Network of the International Co-operative Alliance: https://www.facebook.com/globalyouthcoop/
- CHF Canada’s Emerging Co-operators (Facebook Group): https://www.facebook.com/groups/ThinkYoung/
- CICOPA We Own it!: http://www.cicopa.coop/
- The Student’s Commission: http://www.sharingthestories.ca/about.php

Other Resources

Videos:
- “Think Young” & “Be the One” (available on CHF Canada’s YouTube Page)
- Atkinson Revolution (available on CHFT’s YouTube page)
- Adam Conover on marketing to millennials: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-HFwok9SIQQ
General resources

- Provincial co-op association events
- Regional co-op network meetings
- Leadership training
- Diversity training
- Facilitation training

Training Opportunities

- Discounts for young members:
  - Regional Education Events
  - CHF Canada AGM
Diversity Scholarships

- Available in many regions – check with your federation
- CHF Canada offers the scholarship in Manitoba, Nova Scotia, and Southwestern Ontario
  chfcanada.coop/diversityscholarship

Final thoughts...

- Don’t be afraid to try something new
- Young member engagement isn’t one size fits all
- Putting in the time and effort will achieve results!
Questions?

Emily Doyle
edoyle@chfcanada.coop

Getting Workshop Materials

CHF Canada Website:
Resources
www.chfcanada.coop/workshopmaterials

AGM Website: Events
https://annualmeeting.chfcanada.coop

AGM Conference App
https://eventmobi.com/2018agm

Young member engagement: Bridging the generation gap
CHF Canada Workshop
Goal
What is your young member engagement goal?
Consider any barriers or challenges you may come across

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planned Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Describe actions you and your co-op will take to reach your goal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Supports/Resources</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What do you need to do to achieve the goal</td>
<td>Also consider who is responsible for these actions</td>
<td>What steps do you need to take? When do you need to take them?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Young member engagement: Bridging the generation gap
CHF Canada workshop
Young Member Engagement: Bridging the Generation Gap

Workshop goals

- Share knowledge and experiences
- Be able to identify barriers within your co-op
- Learn about ways to work together to bridge the generation gap
- Leave more prepared, capable and confident to engage young members
- Come away with an action plan and concrete goals for engagement
- Learn something new!

Why Focus on Young Members? Succession planning. We want more young members in governance and engaging in the decision making process. We need to invest in them for the growth and success of our co-ops.

Tips to bridge the generation gap

1. Good communication – Good communication is key! Keep your expectations in check and if a difference in opinion comes up, start a conversation.

2. Education – Provide young people with the tools and opportunities to experience and learn new things. Offer training opportunities like workshops and courses.

3. Mutual Understanding – Try to imagine where the other person is coming from. Understanding barriers can help gain perspective and understanding.

4. Being open and flexible – Create a culture of openness and honesty. Try to forget your preconceived notions.

5. Mentorship – Is identifying potential leaders and giving them opportunities. Encourage young people to take part in the co-op and wider sector events.

When creating an action plan…

- Develop measurable goals
- Seek feedback
- Start small
- Consider the barriers young members face
- Be creative and open to new ideas
- Make mentorship a priority
- Communicate. Educate. Empower!
Keep S.M.A.R.T goals in mind when developing an action plan

The S.M.A.R.T. goals framework is a useful tool that individuals and teams can use to create effective goals and action plans. The key characteristics of S.M.A.R.T. goals are as follows:

**S = Specific and Strategic** – Goals should be specific so that at the end of the evaluation cycle educators and evaluators can determine whether they have been achieved. Goals should also be strategic, i.e., serve an important purpose for young members or the co-op.

**M = Measurable** – Goals should be measurable so that progress toward a goal can be evaluated and managed.

**A = Action Oriented** – Goals have active, not passive verbs. The action steps attached to the goals indicate who is doing what.

**R = Rigorous, Realistic, and Results Focused (the 3 Rs)** – Goals should make clear what will be different as a result of achieving the goal. A goal needs to describe a realistic yet ambitious result. It needs to stretch the co-op or board toward improvement, but it should not be out of reach.

**T = Timed and Tracked** – A goal needs to have a final deadline, as well as interim deadlines by when key actions will be completed and benchmarks will be achieved. Tracking the progress on both action steps and outcome benchmarks is important, as they help directors and staff know whether they are on track to achieve the goal, and gives them the information they need to make midcourse corrections.

**Resources**

- CHF Canada Website: https://chfcanada.coop
- Young Member Engagement Strategy
- CHF Canada’s Emerging Leaders Facebook Group (https://www.facebook.com/groups/ThinkYoung/)
- The Student Commission: http://www.sharingthesestories.ca/about.php
- Provincial co-op associations events
- Regional co-op networks meetings
- Atkinson Revolution Video (CHFT) www.coophousing.com

**Questions? Emily Doyle: edoye@chfcanada.coop**