Generational Differences in the Glendale Fire Department Today

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A proposed research project submitted to the Ohio Fire Executive Program

03 August 2012

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

I hereby certify that the following statements are true:

1.   This paper constitutes my own product, that where the language of others is set forth, quotation marks so indicate, and that appropriate credit is given where I have used the language, ideas, expressions, or writings of another.

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ABSTRACT

The problem that occurred in the Glendale Fire Department was the friction between the different generational groups which led to poor communications and separation of the groups in various organizational activities. The purpose of the study was to identify areas which were the most different and the most common to build on to minimize these issues. The research method that was completed was by surveying the Glendale Fire Department first, then the Wyoming (OH) Fire Department, Scottdale (PA) Fire Department and random departments in southwest Ohio. These other surveys were to help to establish standards based on department similarities of size and type. The research questions were what are the needs, expectations and desires of the different age groups within the department? What were the similarities and differences of the different age groups in the department? What the different generational groups were critical of programs or areas? What were the areas that the different generational groups feel were an important part of their job? What did the different generational firefighters feel is important to be provided by the Glendale Fire Department? The procedures were to tailor the survey asking for respondent's replies on setting topics in priority order and various other items to get the perspective of the survey takers. Survey also used demographic questions to set the proper group for the people. The results showed areas where Glendale fire officers have an opportunity to address concerns of the members to relieve the issues. The survey revealed areas that were common in all the generation groups. These wereareas where they could build on to develop a stronger buy in of the members. There was a determination that additional research should be completed to further determine areas of concern so that training and education programs could be developed to get firefighters working together and communicating. The survey should be used as a standard to be filled out on an annual basis to gauge the level of improvement in the

departments. Further research in focus group settings where like groups can express their concerns among their peers. This must be completed by an outside facilitator. Results must be tracked and compared to find common areas as well as differences to develop training programs for all members. Building teams with all groups represented promotes the positive results of the groups.

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INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

The problem that this research project addressedwas that the Glendale Fire Department (GFD) was facing the integration of new people into the department that had an established core of seasoned veterans of the fire service. Different generations of firefighters had different perspectives and attitudes regarding the needs and actions of the Glendale fire department. In addition, the officer group lacked experience in dealing with the differences among the younger members. This did not have an effect on putting out fires. There was a definite division between the different generations of firefighters. The fire department needed to develop a plan to make people aware of the differences between generations and how to build a stronger total group. The Generation X and Generation Y people had constant issues with the standard policies and had an air of entitlement within the GFD. At any point in a presentation of policy or procedure some of the X's and Y's found cause to fight the proposal and to question the reasoning of the leadership team. They felt that the goal of the leadership of the fire department was to create an issue with the people of a different generation and not merely to set policy for the department. The GFDwas experiencing conflicts between the different generations in the fire department as reflected in their lack of personal involvement in activities of the department, their failure to buy intothe department and their feelings of resentment toward various groups.

Glendale is a volunteer department in a career dominated geographic location, and is a feeder or training department for the other departments in the area. Due to that fact, the department was constantly managing mostly new people coming in to the fire service. The Department had an established leadership core that was primarily from the Baby Boomer Generation. These were the people that most needed to learn to effectively communicate with the

different generations. The success of the Glendale Fire Department depends on turning out good, quality trained members of the fire service. Glendale Fire Department will be a transitional department because of where the department is located. There will constantly be turnover issues within the department and they will be challenged to keep seasoned fire personnel in the leadership roles to lead, direct and mentor people.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine how the generational differences within the Glendale Fire Department affect the leadership and cooperation of the firefighters and officers of the department and possible methods to create a positive environment.

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered by this descriptive research:

1. What are the needs, expectations and desires of each age group within the Glendale Fire Department?

2. What are the similarities and differences of the each age group within the Glendale Fire Department and the surrounding departments?

3. How or why are different generational groups critical of different programs or areas?

4. What do the different generation firefighters perceive to be important parts of their job in their department?

5. What do the different generation firefighters feel is important to be provided by the Glendale Fire Department?

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

The Village of Glendale is a Village in Hamilton County, Ohio that is located 5 miles north of the City of Cincinnati. It has 942 residential and 78 non-residential structures. Non-residential buildings include churches, schools and retail businesses. The Glendale Fire Department (GFD) is funded by tax levies out of the village general fund. The village council will not consider a separate levy for the fire department. In looking to the future, the GFD will continue to be a volunteer department until such time that it cannot keep people in the station or it combines with another department. Currently the GFDprovides EMS first response to EMS calls in the village and is building its EMT base to a point that it can do its own EMS transport. The department will not increase the EMS service until there are enough certified people on station around the clock. In addition, the GFDis providing service to the community by pumping basements, storm damage mitigation, home inspections, smoke and CO detectors installations and other assistance the residents need. The GFDparticipates in activities in the village like street fairs, car shows, concerts and festivals. The GFDis very interactive in the community events of the Village of Glendale. The firefighters that are starting with the Village of Glendale have a wide variety of training level. The fire department will take a person off of the street with no training and train them to the Firefighter 1A level, then to Firefighter 1B and finally to a Firefighter 2 level at no cost in exchange for a 2 year commitment of their time. The GFDwill provide EMT Basic training to members desiring to be certified as EMT Basic with the same commitment requirement (The program instituted by the GFDgets the time commitment from the applicants in exchange for the certifications.) The GFD started a cadet program to get young people ages 15-17 into the program to start them in the fire service in the Village of Glendale.

The goal of the cadet program is to build interest and develop loyalty in the department at a young and impressionable age.

The fire department has members varying in age from ages 18 – 65. The breakdown in experience levels are "no experience up to 40 years in the fire service." The administration of the GFD considers the department as a challenging and rewarding opportunity to build a highly trained and successful department within Hamilton County and the State of Ohio. The Chiefs of the fire department understand that a lot of the people are going to move on. The goal is to keep 25% of the people trained to build a valuable team for the fire department and the Village. The community has been served by a volunteer fire department since its inception in 1855. The census of 2010 indicated that there were 2,155people, 969 households, and 628 families residing in the village. The population density was 1,275.1 people per square mile. There were 1,057 housing units at an average density of 625.4 per square mile.

Of the 969 households,23.9% had children under the age of 18, while 55.0% were married couples living together, 7.3% had a female householder with no husband present, and 35.2% were non-families. Thirty and seven tenths percent of all households were made up of individuals and 11.3% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.20 and the average family size was 2.75.

In the village the population was spread out with 19.6% under the age of 18, 3.5% from 18 to 24, 18.8% from 25 to 44, 38.1% from 45 to 64, and 20.1% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 49.6 years. The gender makeup of the village was 48.4% male and 51.6% female.

The median income for a household in the village was $76,895.00 and the median income for a family was $101,719.00. Males had a median income of $76,458.00 versus $50,625.00 for females. The per capita income for the village was $51,035.00.

The fire department currently has 49 people on the department. There are 12 members in the Baby Boomer Generation (24.5%), 10 in the Generation X Group (20.4%) and 27 in the Generation Y Generation (55.1%). There are 39 (79.6%) male and 10 (20.4%) female members of the fire department. At this time, the Glendale Village Council will not support going to a part time fire department. This group must adopt that policy before presenting it to community so that it would be approved by the citizens of the village. The Chief is the only person that is paid and that is based on a part time basis only working 30 hours per week. From that point on down starting with the Assistant Fire Chief, the members receive a point for each run, training or detail attended. The points will vary in value based on the amount of runs, trainings or details for the month. Staffing is done by requiring all fire department members spending a minimum of 36 hours per month on duty at the station. The members earn one point for each twelve hours on duty. The department is also staffed by employees of the public works department for the time period of weekdays, 7:00AM-4:00PM.

Table 1 shows the breakdown of the members of the Glendale Fire Department and their generational group.

Table 1

Generational Groups within the Glendale Fire Department

	Officer Group		Firefighter Group	
	Number	%	Number	%
Baby Boomers (1946-1964)	5	71	7	17
Generation X (1965-1980)	2	29	8	19
Generation Y (1980-2000)	0	0	27	64
TOTAL	7	100	42	100

The problem that the Glendale Fire Department is currently dealing with is the friction created between different generational groups within the department. The department make-up is shown above and the large number Generation Y-ers and the disparity in the officer group. Generation profiles specifically address how these differences can lead to detrimental effects within the agency. The goal of this research is to determine ways to improve the intergenerational relationships, improve communications and interactions to have a better operational performance of the department. Research will be done by reviewing current literature in this topic and to survey all members of the department to get their input and perceptions on the topic described.

The research when complete will provide a direction to which the officers and firefighters of the Glendale Fire Department can develop a plan to provide better working relationships among all people in the department. It shall provide a positive management approach in developing those plans to accomplish the goals.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Underwood (2007) wrote of generational dynamics and how enthusiastically different generational groups will defend the principals of their group. He stated the importance of understanding generational differences in the workplace, marketplace and the living room. Then he described how the classroom is the great compressor, the great incubator of generation wide values. When kids were in school during the 9/11 tragedy and the hurricane Katrina have been molded in to a generation that will value community service. It showed examples of kids giving up spring break for a chance to help. The author went on to explain that when we all acknowledge the realities of generations, we begin to make peace with other generations and our own. That is the point at which the generation gaps begin to shrink. Also the importance of when we focus on the values we American generations have in common, instead of the ones we don't.

Lancaster and Stillman (2002) initially spoke of the importance of companies that are heavy on the older generations have a true need to start developing bench strength now and for the future. In order for companies to be successful there is a need for them to relate to all generations and bridge the generation gaps. This publication went in to depth detailing the issues when generations collide. It gives many example demonstrating the issues and hang ups that cause stress in relationships in the workplace. This particular book is focused more on the workplace than other situations. It shows practices and ideas that have been proven to help in managing coworker relationships. Feedback is listed as one of the important factors in helping to retain employees and getting different groups talking with one another which helped to improving the general positive approach that was desired. Mentoring is another of the pieces that put together good working relationships with employees of different ages.

Zemke, Raines and Filipczak (2000) book, while it was published thirteen years ago described how the United States has had such a global impact on generational issues before the economic issues of today. They explained that the generations have closed ranks with each other. They demonstrated through examples how a workplace can be positive for all generations working together. The book explained the dynamics of a multigenerational workplace, case studies in generational peace, and advice in working across generations. The book the goes in to further detail about the characteristics of the four major generations and how some of the myths are true but mostly how they are not. It gives some ideas to help managers develop plans to get people working together towards the common goals of the company. It has tools that can be modified for each individual business and some of the rewards to be gained from the exercise in the publication. This book has common questions that relate to generational differences in the workplace and answers based on survey response from all over.

Bernstein (2006) demonstrated that each generation has their own perspective on the meaning of employment. The importance of groups working together and understanding others perceptions are an important part of different groups working well in the same workplace. This publication has detailed descriptions of the general traits of the generational groups. It had ideas to get along with the different generations as well. It explained that there is a real value in acknowledging and accepting the issues that each generation exhibits and that working with that knowledge is a big advantage in teams working well together. It also has tips to getting along with all generations. Finally it made the statement that this can all be boiled down to one word when as the single most important key for working effectively with other generations is respect.

Martin & Tulgan (2002) raised the idea that we need to remove the thoughts of age when determining hiring or job assigning completely and that those functions can be determined on

whether or not the person can do the job regardless of age. It explained that the generations are molded by the events of their lifetimes especially during the formative years. It further showed how groups have changed as they aged and modified their perspectives based on their failures and successes. It had discussion topics and team building ideas to consider when working with people in a group of different generations. The publication detailed various best practices as used in generations working together. The book was put together in a format that is easy to take in to meetings and go through the points of discussion to help in team building.

Gravett & Throckmorton (2007) book demonstrated how members of any generation can relate to people they work with in other age groups to minimize conflict, miscommunication and wasted energy. They looked to assist managers in their effort to maximize the talents and energies of the workforce. They conducted one-on-one interviews with over 500 people of each generational group in a five year period of the people in the workforce today. They gave ideas in conflict resolution and ways to build bridges across the generation gaps. The authors have done extensive research and work daily in building harmonious relationships in workplaces around the country. This was an interesting and informational publication on the topic of generational differences and various ways to manage conflict resolution s well as team building. This text was designed for use by any manager of people in any capacity and to develop programs that will be successful.

Ballam (2012) commented on how the fire service is getting younger while seasoned veterans of the fire service are getting older. This is a time of change when the oldest generation is retiring out and the new people coming in have lowered the average age. The article described the importance of using the technology advancements of the younger generations currently available to move towards harmony within an agency. Older firefighters and officers need to be

able to teach younger firefighters the traditions and the institutional knowledge and to teach them

in a way that they can relate to. Veteran firefighters need to understand that the younger

generation will do things differently and embrace technology faster than those not familiar with

it as they move up the ladder. Young firefighters are more familiar with multimedia types of

learning and fire instructors are obligated to that type of education. These factors are important

in communicating across generations.

Sun (2011) explained that "Communicating with people within your own age group

presents a significant challenge. Among different age groups, this challenge increases even

more". The article pointed out some thoughts on how to minimize differences in the workplace

such as focusing on similarities rather than differences, recognizing the value and the perils of

the tried and true, the importance of older people learning new technologies and to avoid

characterizations based on age. Sun published a quote from Mark Twain that said "When I was a

boy of 14, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when

I got to be 21, I was astonished at how much the old man had learned in seven years". The quote

is a demonstration of how perceptions of an age group can change within itself.

Campbell (2011) made the statement "Workplace competition can be challenging enough

without the added diversity elements of generational composition. The characteristics generally

associated with a certain generation, in fact, may be stereotypes; not everyone within each

generation will have the same characteristics. However, because the similarities associated with a

generation are driven by external factors – what was happening in the United States when one

was born – it is more likely that people of the same generation will share some similar

perspectives". She also comments that harnessing the differences proactively can lead to greater

operational performance. This article is useful in the research as it explains how some generational differences are developed and the uses in the workplace.

Dittman (2011) stated that every generation is influenced by its period's economic, political and social events – from the Great Depression to the civil rights and women's movements to the advent of television and advanced computer technologies – so it follows that generational context also may affect the way they work. Dittman also quotes Patterson (2008) that "A lack of understanding across generations can have detrimental effects on communication and working relationships and undermine effective services". One comment in the literature was that younger generations such as the Generation X-ers or Y-ers give work a lower priority than the Traditionals or Boomers and placing less value in feeling a sense of pride at work. Furthermore, the article stated effective teams should value different views, encourage active listening, decrease ambiguity among team members' roles, support the sharing of expertise, share recognition and appreciation, value hard work and build in humor and fun to their meetings. Events that can also influence a generation are out of the control of any group. There are topics to work on increasing communication across generational lines.

Notter (2002) remarked that when people are working side by side and have largely different values; conflicts tend to erupt, hampering productivity and morale in workplace settings. The article recognizes that the workplace is currently dominated by two generations (Boomers and Generation X-ers) – one of whom tends to be supervising the other – and the repeatedly generationally based conflicts are going to attract attention. It further offers that responding to these generational differences and conflicts requires the same skills needed to deal with other diversity issues: awareness, communication, and the ability to manage conflict productively.

Lancaster (2003) detailed the following observation "At the American Library Association meeting in Toronto, a telling generational shift was apparent – under the table. The elegant Traditionalist librarian introducing the speakers wore a skirt, heals and pantyhose. The Baby Boomer speaker wore a pantsuit, sandals and no stockings. The Generation X librarian who participated in the panel discussion wore a skirt and flip-flops." This article is used to show what the generational groups feel is appropriate in a work environment, and is an example of perceptions from the different generational groups.

Stein & Berardinelli (2009) wrote that "Today's fire service workforce consists primarily of four generations. Each generation has its own values, beliefs and priorities. That is the reason the relationships among members of one generation and those of the other generations often are hindered by misconceptions and impatience". They talked about how older supervisors don't buy in to the work ethic of today's employees. The article really discussed the need for bridging the generational gaps by not stereotyping and it explained that not all characteristics that are discussed apply to all people of a generation. There is a blending based on the situation during the formative years of the individuals. The article continues to discuss the benefit of appreciating someone's strengths and weaknesses as signs of wisdom, instead of being distressed by differences, try to focus on the strengths. On the positive side, using each other's positive attributes helps the whole organization.

Peterkin (2012) made the statement that the Generation Y group is the second largest generational group behind the Boomers. The Y's have grown up during the high tech revolution and have never known a world without video games, compact discs, the internet microwaves and ATMs. They had the benefit of growing up in a child focused time period, where they received positive reinforcement and investment in their skill sets from doting parents. She states that this

may be a cause for them to have a hard time meshing in workplace environments stymied by lack of progress and those rigidly stuck in past ways of doing business. She gives suggestions to help manage the Y-ers by providing clear leadership and direction, stimulating challenges, fun work environments, diversity and technology, and flexibility. Furthermore the comment " Though this may sound like a huge shift from your current management style, it's one you're going to need to start embracing more and more, since Generation Y is the future and it's your job to groom them for it". In this article it goes in to more detail about the Generation Y group as they are the second largest group. This helps to explain the perception of that group and some points in dealing with them.

All of the publications and literature described the differences in the various generational groups and spoke of the differences of each group. In addition, they talked of some of the importance or value to get the groups working together and communicating. One of the themes that seem to reoccur is the basic need to understand the differences and to acknowledge them, appreciate the differences and build a stronger team using those differences. There are some discussion points to assist in the research development plan.

PROCEDURES

Survey

Prior to conducting a survey, there was a focus group discussion with members from all

of the generational groups to validate the survey questions. In order to evaluate the membership

of the Department, there was a survey completed by all of the members of the Glendale Fire

Department. Additional surveys were completed by two other fire departments of similar size

and types. Those departments were the Wyoming Ohio Fire Department and the Scottdale

Pennsylvania Fire Department. Both of these departments have a makeup and situations that are

the same as the Glendale Fire Department. The results of the surveys were tabulated to identify

common features among members and to find common issues across members in various

generational groups. After completion of the initial surveys, the other surveys were sent to

members of departments that surround Glendale to compare the results to those departments.

They were all career departments, so this will give the comparison based on that factor. The

survey is listed in the appendix section of this document. Each of the departments received the

same survey with only the fire department name changed. Those results were compared to the

other agencies to determine commonality between them. These results were evaluated by a

statistician to present the results.

Focus Groups

After the survey was completed, there were focus group discussions in the department

with each generational group. The questions for the post survey sessions are listed in the

appendix. The focus group was with at least three people from each of the generational groups.

There was one person to act as a moderator of the session to ask questions and to record the

responses. The focus of these discussions was to determine what each group thought the needs,

expectations and desires were for each group within the Glendale Fire department. Results were tabulated to see common features and obvious differences among members of the department and to find common issues across members in various generational groups. The group sessions were held in a casual environment and similar questions were asked of all of the groups. This determined peer opinions and trends within the department.

Definition of Terms

Baby Boomer. A baby boomer is a person who was born during the demographic Post-World War II baby boom between the years 1946 and 1964, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

Generation X-er. The group of people in the U.S. who were born during the late 1960's and the 1970's. (Business Dictionary 2012).

Generation Y-er. The generation of people born during the 1980's and early 1990's. (Business Dictionary 2012).

Traditionals – Group of people born between 1900-1946

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of the study were validity and truthfulness of the individual responses from the members of the department. The survey size was also a limitation of the survey.

RESULTS

In evaluating the surveys that were completed from the Glendale Fire Department respondents, the first question related to respect within the fire department. The first question asks for the opinion of the survey respondent if the officers of the department respect the individuals. The results show that the 76.93% of the people feel that they are respected by officers with 19.23% feel neutral and only 3.85% feel they are not. Nobody felt completely disrespected by the officers of the Glendale FD. The second question asks whether or not the respondent felt they respect the officers of the department. The results show that they feel they show respect 88.46% of the time and only 7.69% feel neutral and 3.85% disagree. The third part of the first question asked the respondents if they feel like a valuable member of the department. Eighty percent felt like they are valuable and nineteen percent feel neutral. No one felt somewhat or completely as not a valuable member of the department. These three questions reflect a general feeling of well-being for the members of the Glendale Fire Department by the members.

Overwhelmingly the second question was answered with the "leadership" and "training" as the most important parts of the department with 100% of respondents rating them as very important or slightly important. These two responses are the strongest reported in the survey.

The next question asked how the members felt the officers managed those topics, the response was 73.08% strongly agreed while or agreed officers managed the topics. Next the following question asked how long the people have been a member of the Glendale Fire Department. Most respondents show a fairly short period of time on the department. The average time on the Glendale Fire Department for the respondents is 3.52 years. The next question asked how long the people felt they would remain a member of the Glendale Fire Department. In general the responses show that there is a great deal of interest in remaining a part of the

department. We then asked how long the people have been in the fire service. The average

response is 7.83 years. These results show that the members have been in the fire service longer

than being a part of the Glendale Fire Department. When asked which activity gives the people

the greatest satisfaction, the highest response was fire suppression followed by training, team

building, EMS, fire prevention and public education respectfully. Question 9 asked which

generational group works best with each member. These results are very close with Baby

Boomers leading by a small margin, however on question 10 which asked which generational

group was the most difficult to work with the generation Y's are by far the leading group in that

category. Questions 11 and 12 ask if they feel respected and if they show respect to the

department and both positively responded by a full 100%. Over 80% of the people taking the

*survey take part in either all or most of the activities in the department. Sixty eight percent of

the people are on committees in the department. Question 15 asked for areas of improvement in

the department and the results showed generalized areas such as training, EMS and the

facilityleading responses. The next question asked for areas that are working well within the

department, and the most common positive area was administration and leadership. Eight-four

percent of respondents had at least some college education. Fifty eightpercent of people surveyed

had a Firefighter 2 certification. Forty percent of respondents had other family members in the

fire service with their father the biggest percentage of that. Ninety six percent of respondents

were male.

In the survey that was sent to fire departments randomly around the southwest region in

Ohio, the results as they relate to the study are as follows. In question number one, the results

85% of the people responding felt the officers respected them. This is only slightly higher than

the Glendale survey. In the second part of the question respondents felt that they respected the

officers with 91% strongly agree or agree while the Glendale response was 88.46%. The third

part of that question in the Ohio survey showed that 100% of respondents felt that they were a

value to the department while the Glendale response was only 80.77%. In question 2 the

respondents ranked EMS and training the most important topic in their departments with fire

suppression and leadership very closely behind them in importance. In the second part of this

question the respondents feel that their fire operations and EMS activities are the best managed

with fire suppression and personal protective equipment ranked behind them. The next few

questions related to demographics show ages and years of service in varying degrees. Those

responses are listed in the appendix. Question 8 asked for what topic give you the most

satisfaction with fire suppression being the top response and EMS second.

      Question 9 shows the group easiest to work with as baby boomers at the top followed

closely by generation x-ers, traditional and lastly the generation y-ers. Question 10 asked which

generational group is the most difficult for the respondents to work with which overwhelmingly

shows that the generation Y group as the top response (62.5%).

      Over 91% of the respondents felt they are respected while 100% feel that they respect

their fire departments. The remaining questions relate more to the demographics of the

respondents than to the survey and closely relate to the Glendale response.

      In the Wyoming Fire Department, survey question 1 results indicated that the respondents

felt they are respected by the officers of their department with 55% agreeing or strongly

agreeing. 70% felt they show respect to the officers and 80% felt a valuable part of the

department. Wyoming respondents felt leadership as the most important topic with training,

personal protective equipment and fire suppression following them. Question 3 asked which

topics were the best managed and personal protective equipment and fir operations the highest

ranking items. The respondents ranked the group that was the most difficult to work with as the generation y-ers the top and generation x-ers closely behind them. Question 11 responses how they felt respected by the department 84.21% and they responded they respect the department 100% of the time in question 12.

The Scottdale survey respondents felt respected by the officers sixty nine percent of the time and they respected the officers over eighty four percent of the time and sixty nine percent felt a valuable member to the department. Question 2 showed they felt leadership, fire operations the top responses and training, suppression and personal protective equipment closely behind. Respondent felt that the topics that are the best managed are suppression and operations with apparatus and personal protective equipment closely behind. Fire suppression is ranked number one as far as the most satisfying topic of the department. The next question that asked the most difficult generational group to work with had the generation x-ers and y-ers equally difficult. Seventy seven percent felt respected by the department and 100% felt they respected their department.

Thefollowingtablesshowhowrespondentsfeltabouttheimportanceofleadershipwithintheirfiredepartments.

The table below shows the ages of the survey respondents by region and overall.

Age of respondents, calculated from birth year. As of 2013.

|	Minimum	1st Quartile	Median	Mean	3rd Quartile	Maximum	NA's	Count
Glendale	23	27.25	34	37.86	50.75	61	4	26
Ohio	25	34.25	43	44.21	51	77	2	60
Scottdale	28	36	38	39.92	46	59	0	13
Wyoming	16	22	36	37.62	49	73	7	20
All Regions	16	32	41.5	41.56	51	77	13	119

Countofrespondentsansweringthequestion
"Pleaseratetheimportanceyoufeelinthefollowingtopicsin[your]FireDepartment:Leadership"

	Notatallimportant	NotveryImportant	Neutral	SlightlyImportant	VeryImportant	Count
Glendale	0	0	0	2	24	26

	Notatallim portant	Notvery Im portant	Neutral	SlightlyImp ortant	VeryImport ant	Total
Ohio	0	0	6	4	50	60
Scottdale	0	0	0	1	12	13
Wyoming	0	0	2	4	14	20
AllRegions	**0**	**0**	**8**	**11**	**100**	**119**

Percentageofrespondentsansweringthequestion
"Pleaseratetheimportanceyoufeelinthefollowingfin[your]FireDepartment:Leadership"

	Notatallim portant	Notvery Im portant	Neutral	SlightlyImp ortant	VeryImport ant	Total
Glendale	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%	92.3%	100.0%
Ohio	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%	6.7%	83.3%	100.0%
Scottdale	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%	92.3%	100.0%
Wyoming	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%	20.0%	70.0%	100.0%
AllRegions	**0.0%**	**0.0%**	**6.7%**	**9.2%**	**84.0%**	**100.0%**

How would you rate the importance of...

Average Response, Not at all Important = 0, Very Important = 5
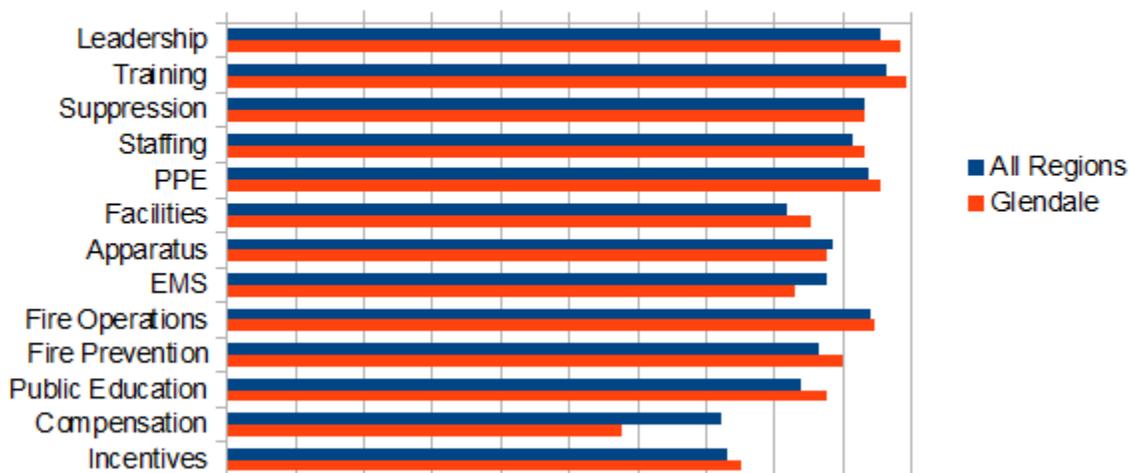
How well managed is...

Average Response, Not Managed at all = 0, Very Well Managed = 5
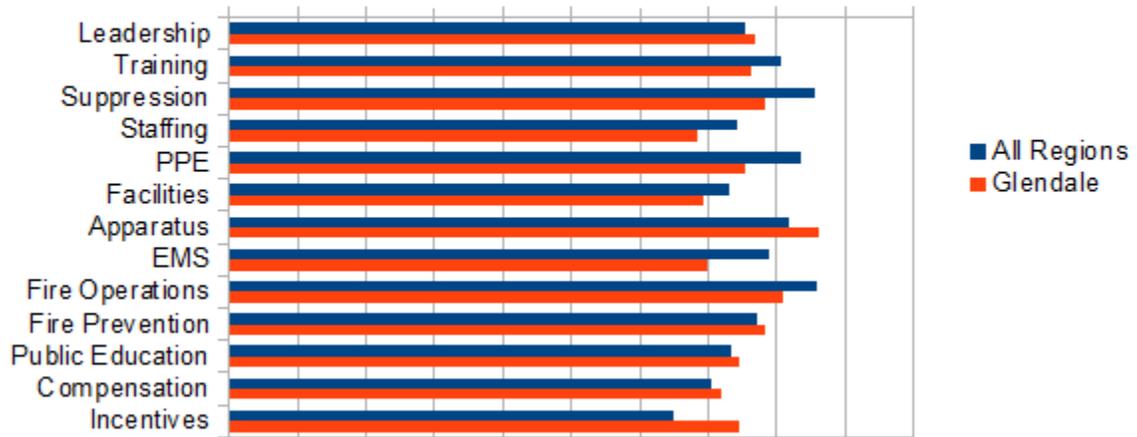
DISCUSSION

In looking at the first question of the survey,the Glendale response shows that seventy seven percentof the firefighters feel they are respected by the officers of the fire department while the larger group of Ohio departments had a response of eighty five percent. This may be due in part to the fact that the general population of the Glendale department has a much lower average time in the fire service and the age of the population is lower. In some cases it seems that this may be the first real job held by some of the Glendale members. When looking at the second part of question one, the Glendale people are fairly close to what the Ohio survey results were (88.46% compared to 91.67% respectively). The third part of the question asks the respondents if they feel that they are a valuable member of their department. Glendale people responded with 80.77% and the Ohio survey reported a much higher 100%. This too can be related to the Glendale people are a much less experienced population than the Ohio respondents. This shows an opportunity for the officers of the Glendale department to build up the confidence of the newer firefighters. Building up confidence adds to the personal well-being of the firefighters and will give them trust in themselves.

Question two asked what topics the survey takers felt were the most important parts of their department. Training and leadership were the two highest ranked areas in Glendale while training and EMS were the two highest with leadership a close third for the Ohio survey. EMS may have scored higher in Glendale if they provided those types of services but they are limited to only doing first responder type duties. When you take that piece out of consideration, then the top two are the same in both groups. This shows that even with a relatively lower experience level the groups have the same topics of importance in mind.

Question three asked the respondents how well the topics are managed in their department based on the same list. The top two topics on the Glendale survey was fire operations and apparatus with suppression being a close third. The Ohio surveys top two responses were fire operations with suppression second. Again this goes to show how the respondents from Glendale are not far off of what the Ohio survey respondents were.

Question fiveasked the respondents how long they have been a member of their department. The Glendale respondents are a much lower time on the job on their departments in comparison to the Ohio survey. This data is somewhat skewed due to the fact that the Glendale Fire Department was reestablished in 2006 and the members on the department are all less than seven years with the exception of one respondent who was a member of the department prior to the reorganization. The Ohio survey had many more years on the job and have been from more established departments.

Question six asked how much longer the respondents felt they would stay with their department. The Glendale survey had a high number of responses with many years anticipated staying on the department. The Ohio survey was lower in the response and partly is related to the older age group involved in the departments. Glendale being so young has a lot of time in their future in the fire service and mostly their whole career yet to be determined.

Question eight asked which topics gave the respondents the most satisfaction on their jobs in the fire department. Glendale had fire suppression at the top and training number two while the Ohio respondents had fire suppression first and EMS second with training third. Again, with Glendale only doing first responder level EMS they do not have a need for those services very often. When you factor out that topic the other two are the same. This too goes to show that

the Glendale firefighters have the same view on their satisfaction level as the general population of the Ohio survey people.

Question nine asked which generational group worked the best with each respondent. The Ohio survey ranked baby boomers at the top and the Glendale survey ranked baby boomers number one also. Generation x-ers ranked second in both surveys as well. When asked in question ten which generational group was the most difficult to work with, both surveys overwhelmingly ranked generation y-ers as the most difficult. This also provides an opportunity for the leadership core of the Glendale fire department as well as all departments in the responses that this group is where attention needs to be given to work with this group. This is going to take a lot of work to find ways to connect with the y-ers and make them a part of the department. These are the future of the fire departments and the fire service in general. This is the technology generation and have been a challenge for the older generations and the responsibility is on that group to find ways to work better with the younger group. The next two questions asked about respect given both to the firefighters and the fire departments. Both surveys and both responses are very positive that respect is given both ways. Questions following were meant to get overall demographic information about the respondents and their fire departments. When the survey asked what areas are working well in their departments the operational areas like suppression and EMS working well and in the areas needing improvement, training and leadership, and communication are those most common topics. Birth years are generally older in the Ohio survey relative to the Glendale survey. Situation detailed above explains this result. As far as level of education, Ohio respondents' highest ranking was with some college and the Glendale top rank was the same. Glendale did have a higher percentage of respondents with bachelors or masters degrees.

When the cluster analysis of the data was completed it was determined that the respondent separated into four large groups. Those groups were old and critical, newbies, young and critical and finally old happy loyalists. The old and critical group average age is 42, 6 bad gaps in the data, very few good gaps, feels officers respect them and compensation is well managed. The newbies have a limited time in the fire service have family experience in the fire service are mostly certified as Ohio firefighters. The young and critical group was younger in age, 6 bad gaps, very critical, do not feel respected, and feel neutral on respect given to officers. The old happy loyalists were described as average age 43, positive, 2 to 3 good gaps, neutral on compensation management, and with the same department 16+ years.

The Scottdale survey closely reflected the results of the Ohio survey. Scottdale is an older very well established volunteer fire department located in Pennsylvania. This department has a similar make up to Glendale and Wyoming fire departments. The Wyoming survey presented some critical and emotional responses. Shortly after the survey was distributed, they went through the Fire Chief being cut to a part time position from full time and an interim Chief put in place. There were strong emotions about leadership issues and loyalty to the department. The survey results directly reflected those emotions.

The focus group results showed more of a group mentality rather than the individual response. When asked if they felt that groups were treated differently, most groups felt most were treated the same. Then the question of witnessing issues between generational groups, most said they had seen issues even though mostly minor. Issues were questioning leadership as to why they should be doing a particular function. Nobody witnessed any flagrant activities. All groups responded that they felt that they were important parts of the fire department. Generally members from the baby boomers felt responsible for leadership, while Xers felt a pressure to be

moved in to leadership while maintaining contact with the Yers. The Yers felt they were not given the respect from their peers in the fire service but do feel they were the future leaders. Most felt the boomers were the biggest influence in the department and Yers were the least influential in the system. Ideas to make the situations better is to create groups that compromise all of the groups with the plan to better communications of the groups and to identify the common areas. Many participants would volunteer to help build programs. Common areas are represented in the survey questions and accompanying charts. There were no new findings in this area. Differences when discussed in the focus groups were not as big of an issue. There were more common topics than differences. This further supports the ideal that the groups are really very similar, and they should work on communicating between the groups to understand what those areas are. Open communication and dialogue among all members are key to keeping the conflicts to a minimum.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The first recommendation is that the leadership of all fire departments in the survey need to look at what can be put into place to help the communication between the leadership group and the younger generations, particularly relating to the youngest generation in the fire departments. The younger members are the future leaders of the fire service and need to be able to learn from the experienced people to help with actual hands on training in the streets. The leaders of the fire departments must find ways to get the buy in from the various generational groups. Rather than having contentious conversations, they should use the data that was found to lay the groundwork on building the relationships with all the groups.

One other area that can be used to the advantage of the fire departments is to find the areas that are in common with the different groups. That way the groups can start to understand that many items are very similar.

There should be consultation with professionals in the field of generational differences in building programs to minimize conflicts among the groups. Fire service leaders should approach this as an opportunity to work with members of all the groups to build a stronger team.

Additional research needs to be completed with all generational groups to find areas where positive steps can be completed to help minimize the friction of the groups. This research can be done by utilizing the focus groups with a population from the individual groups. An impartial, trained facilitator should be used to lead the focus groups. Additionally, the survey should be completed on a regular basis to determine the progress of the departments. This would give real time data to what areas are making the firefighters feel more a part of their departments and what programs are successful. This survey can be used and then do a comparison with the previous data to see what trends are occurring. After follow up surveys and focus groups the

leaders can make a judgment to further evolve the training programs for their own departments. All results should be tabulated and kept together so tracking of the results can be accomplished as the educational programs are implemented. These results must be used as the tool to start driving change in the department.

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APPENDIX 1 – SURVEY QUESTIONS

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Stronglyagree
The officers of the Glendale FD respect me					
IrespecttheofficersoftheGlendale FD					
IamavaluablememberoftheGlendale FD					

	The following topics are important to me	The following areas are well managed in this department
Category	Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
Leadership		
Training		
Suppression		
Staffing		
PPE		
Facilities		
Apparatus		
EMS		
Fire Prevention		

Public Education		
Compensation		
Incentives		

1. What are areas of improvement in working with officers and firefighters?
    a. Traditionals_____
    b. Baby Boomers_____
    c. Generation X_____
    d. Generation Y_____
    e. Other _____

2. How long have you been a member of the Glendale Fire Department?
    (e.g. 1 year & 3 months)_____

3. How much longer do you see yourself continuing with the Glendale Fire Department?
    (e.g. 2 years)_____

4. How long have you been in the fire service?
    (e.g. 2 years & 6 months)_____

5. How long do you see yourself staying in the fire service?
    (e.g. 10 years) _____

6. Rank in order which activity gives you the greatest satisfaction?
    a. Fire Suppression
    b. Fire Prevention
    c. Public Education
    d. Training
    e. EMS
    f. Team Building
    g. Other

7. Other than your generational group, which group of people work better with you?
    a. Traditionals
    b. Baby Boomers
    c. Generation X

       d. Generation Y

8. What generational group is the most difficult for you to work with in the Glendale Fire Department?
   a. Traditionals
   b. Baby Boomers
   c. Generation X
   d. Generation Y

9. Do you feel you are respected within the Glendale Fire Department?
   a. YES
   b. NO

10. Do you feel that you show respect to the Glendale Fire Department?
    a. YES
    b. NO

11. Do you actively get involved in most of the activities of the Glendale Fire Department?
    a. Always
    b. Most of them
    c. Sometimes
    d. Rarely

12. Are you involved in a Committee or other project within the Glendale Fire Department?
    a. YES
    b. NO

13. What are areas of improvement in working within the Glendale Fire Department?
    a. _____
    b. _____
    c. _____
    d. _____
    e. _____
    f. _____

14. What are areas that are working well within the Glendale Fire Department?
    a. _____
    b. _____
    c. _____
    d. _____
    e. _____
    f. _____

15. What is your birth year?
    a. _____

16. What is your highest level of education?
    a. High school
    b. Some college
    c. Associates degree

d. Bachelor's degree
e. Master's degree

17. What is your level of certification of firefighter in the State of Ohio?

a. Firefighter 1A
b. Firefighter 1B
c. Firefighter 2

18. Do you have anyone else in your family that is a part of the fire service?
a. Father
b. Grandfather
c. Mother
d. Sibling
e. Grandmother
f. Other _____.

19. Did anyone (mentioned above) teach you about the fire service, either directly or indirectly?
a. YES
b. NO

20. Sex
a. Male
b. Female

APPENDIX 2 – FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

The following are questions that were asked in a focus group setting with three members of the fire department in each of the generational groups. This is to determine a group consensus in the various department subgroups.

1. When you are involved in group activities in your fire department do you feel like you are treated the same as the other groups in the department? Explain.

2. Have you witnessed any issues between individuals or groups in the department as it relates to people of different generational groups? Explain.

3. Does your group feel like they are an important part of your fire department and the activities of the department? Explain.

4. Explain to me the role that you perceive your generational group has in the society of this fire department.

5. What generational group has the most influence within the fire department? Describe examples of this influence.

6. What generational group has the least influence within the fire department? Describe examples of this influence.

7. What ideas does your group have to make intergenerational relationships function without problems?

8. Would you be willing to participate in a training sessions with other generational groups to increase good working relationships?

9. List items that your group believes are common goals of the other generational groups.

10. List differences in the generational groups in the department.

APPENDIX 3 – TABLES

Table A1

GENERATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

	Traditionals 1900-1945	Baby Boomers 1946-1964	Generation X 1965-1980	Generation Y 1981-2000
Work Ethic	Dedicated	Driven	Balanced	Ambitious
Entitlement	Seniority	Experience	Merit	Contribution
Work Environment	Conservative Hierarchal	Democratic Warm/friendly	Efficient Informal	Collaborative Diverse
Work Assets	Consistent Loyal	Works hard Service oriented	Task managers Want feedback	Collaboration Optimistic
Work Liabilities	Don't adapt to change	Expects everyone to be workaholics	Dislike rigid work requirements	Distaste for menial work
Leadership style	Hierarchy	Consensual	Competence	Achievers
View of authority	Respectful	Impressed	Unimpressed	relaxed

Dennis Gaylor 2002

APPENDIX 4 – SURVEY RESULTS

In general, how would you rate the respect in the Glendale Fire Department?

Answered: 26   Skipped: 0
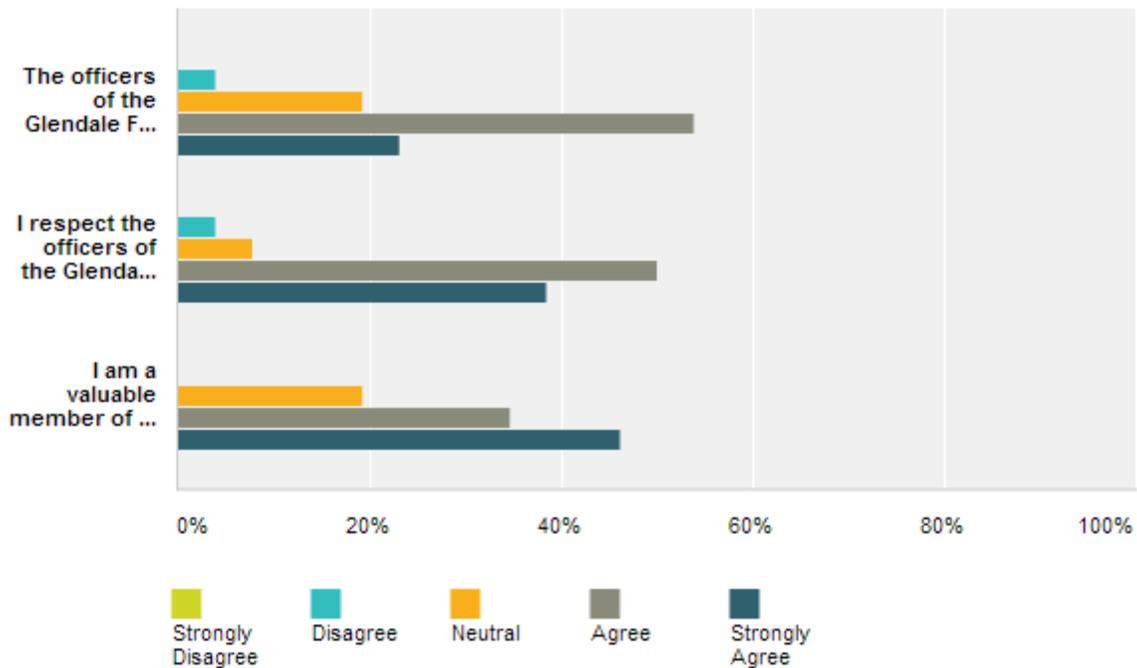
Please rate the importance you feel in the following topics on the Glendale Fire Department.

Answered: 26   Skipped: 0
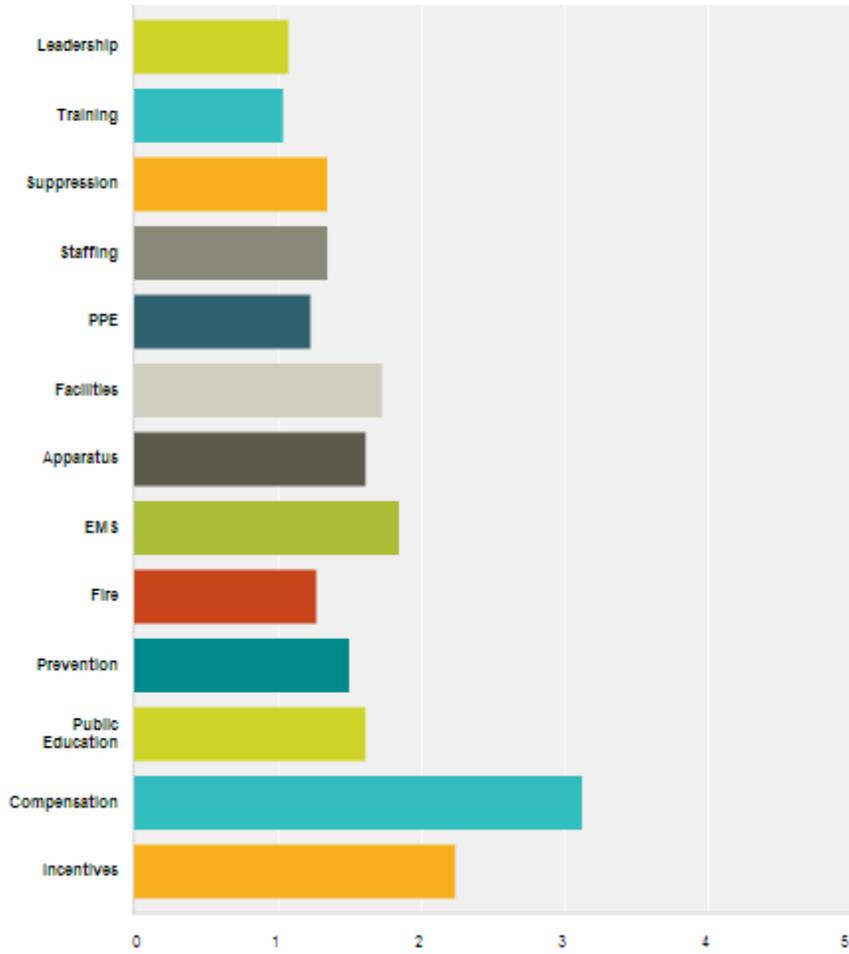
Rate how well the following topics are managed in the Glendale Fire Department

Answered: 26   Skipped: 0
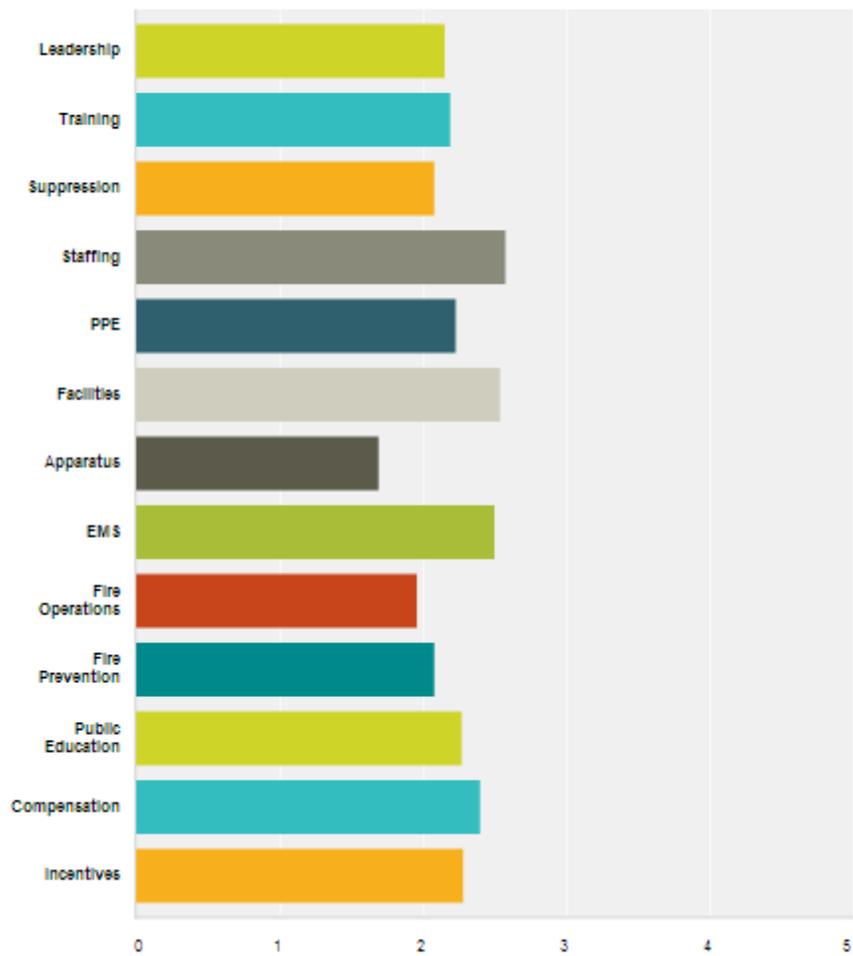
Rank in order which activity gives you the greatest satisfaction.

Answered: 25   Skipped: 1

Fire Suppression

Fire Prevention

Public Education

Training

EMS

Team Building

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%

1   2   3   4   5   6
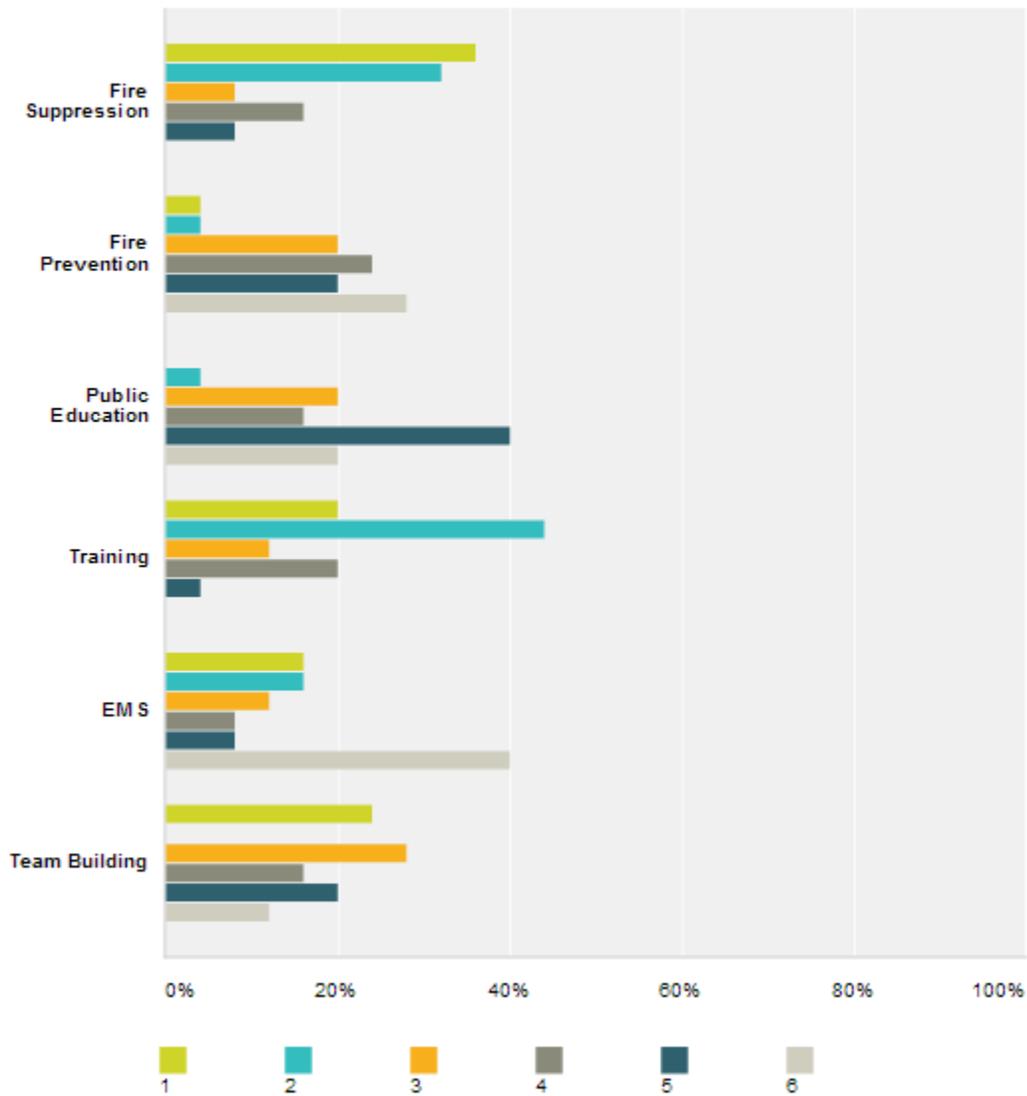
Other than your own generational group, which group of people works best with you?

Answered: 24 Skipped: 2
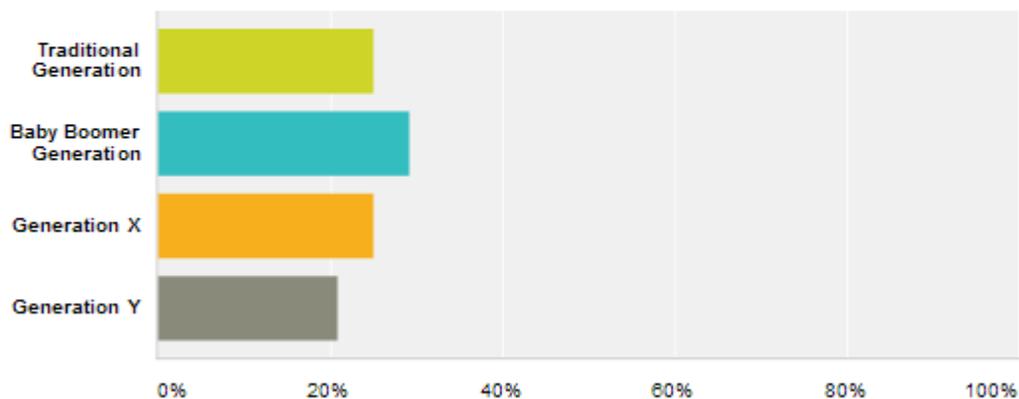
What generational group is the most difficult for you to work with?

Answered: 24 Skipped: 2
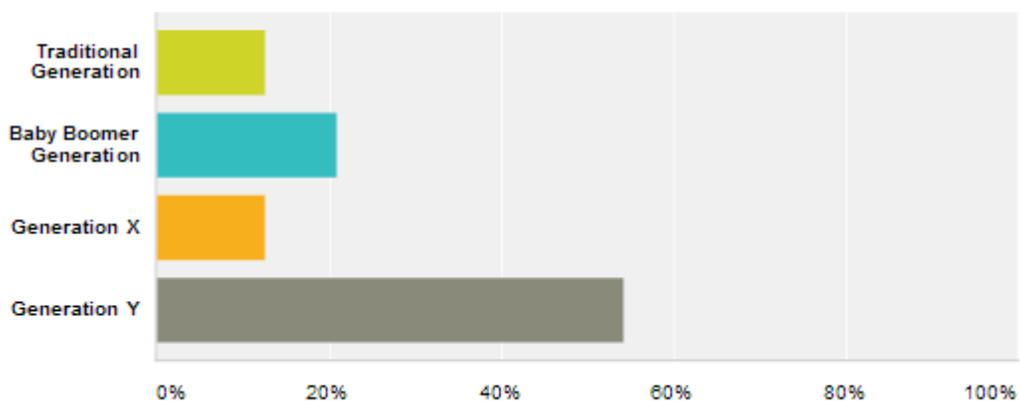
Do you feel that you are respected within the Glendale Fire Department?
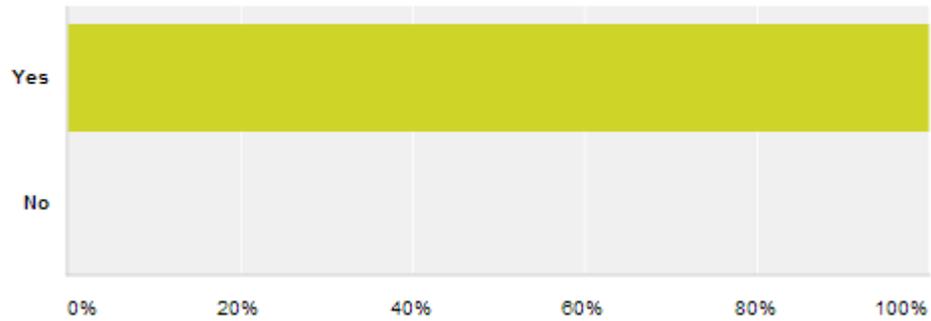
Answered: 26   Skipped: 0

## Do you feel that you show respect to the Glendale Fire Department?
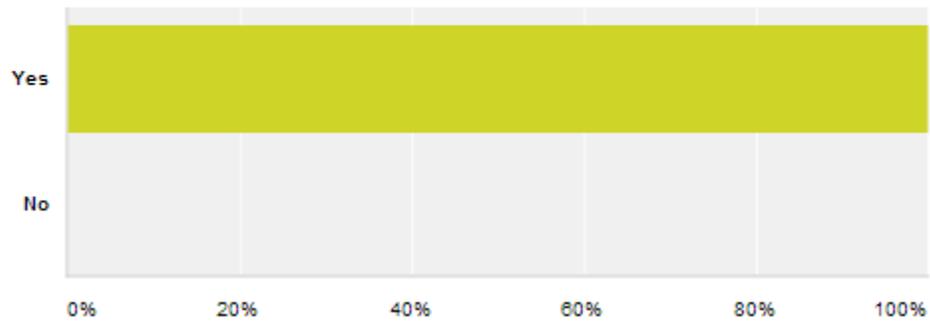
Answered: 26   Skipped: 0

Do you actively get involved in most of the activities of the Glendale Fire Department?

Answered: 26   Skipped: 0
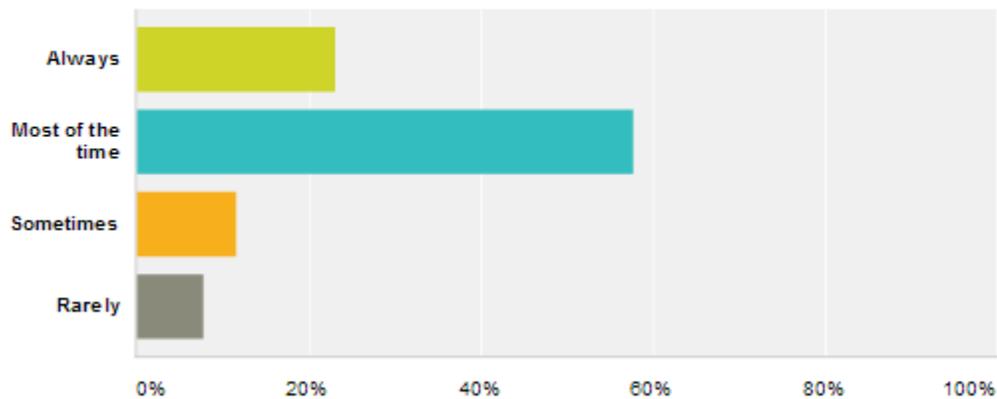
## Are you in a committee or other project group within the Glendale Fire Department?

Answered: 25   Skipped: 1
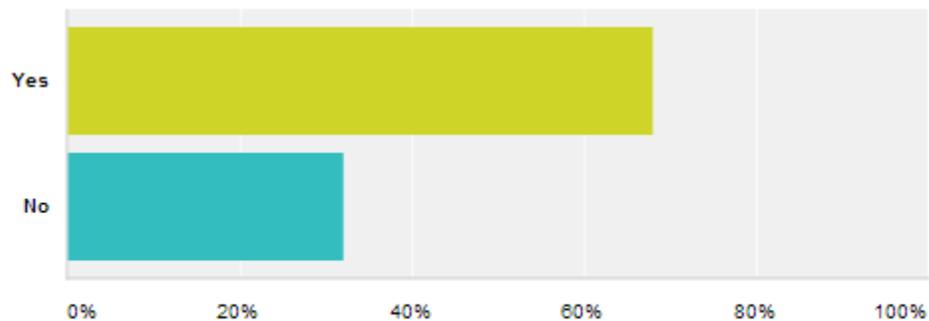
What is the highest level of education you have completed?

Answered: 25   Skipped: 1
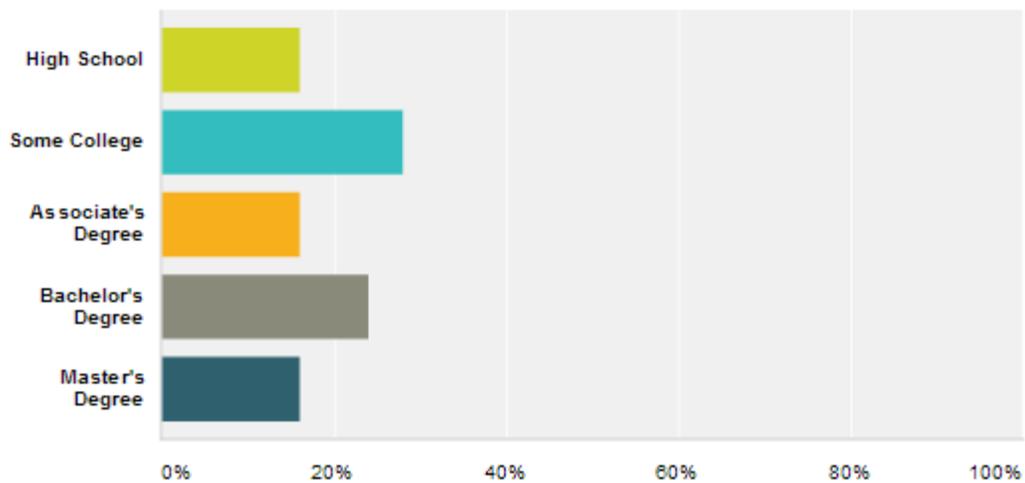
What is your level of firefighter in Ohio?

Answered: 24   Skipped: 2
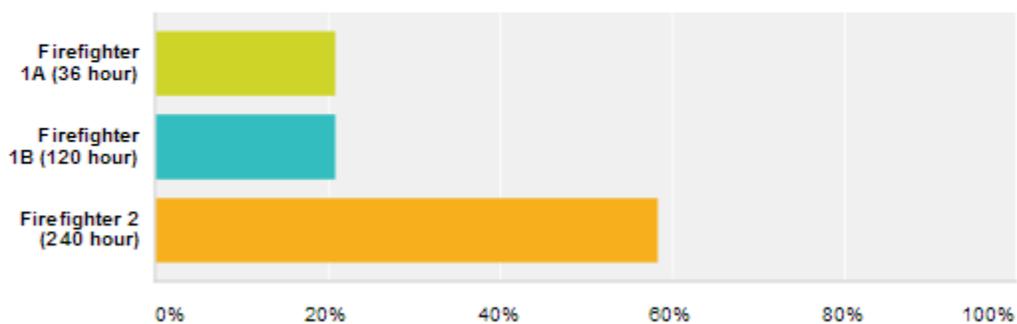
Do you have anyone else in your family that is part of the fire service?

Answered: 10   Skipped: 16
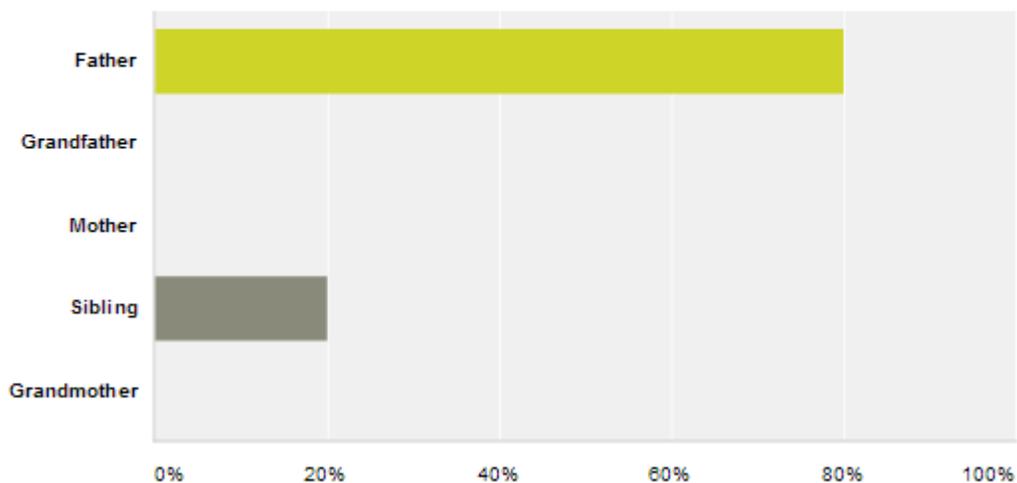
Did anyone mentioned above teach you about the fire service, either directly or indirectly?

Answered: 24   Skipped: 2
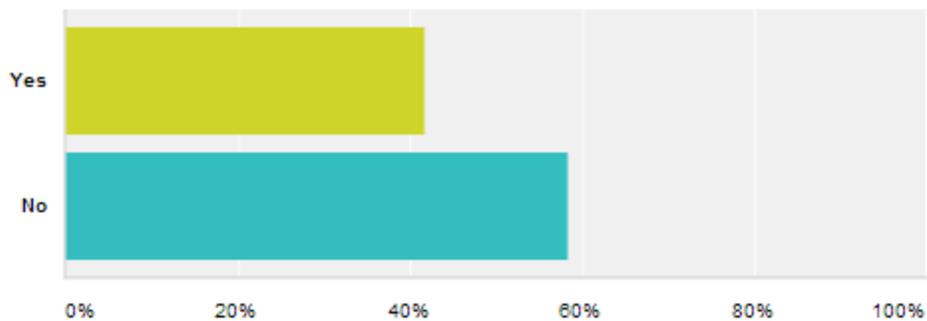
What is your gender?

Answered: 26   Skipped: 0