

Encourage Dialogue Among Generations

By Donna Rawady

I recently facilitated a roundtable discussion for the [Rochester Women's Network](#). This conversation among professional women of all ages prompted a fascinating dialogue on addressing the powerful opportunities we have, as young and seasoned professionals, to collaborate for success.

Among the 25 women who participated were a high school senior ready to begin her career, recent college grads, young professionals who've been in the workplace for under 10 years, and women in their 60s with decades of experience. The dialogue among these women was candid, highly informative, and thought-provoking.

If you have the opportunity to bring multiple generations to the table within your organization, I highly recommend it. If the conversation is well-facilitated and candid, it will offer a better understanding of the strengths and challenges of multigenerational teams, and provide a stepping stone towards improved collaboration.

Here are a few questions you may want to ask participants, if you choose to sponsor or facilitate a multigenerational roundtable discussion.

- What are the most valuable contributions of your generation to today's workplace?
- What do you feel are the most valuable contributions of your young and/or seasoned colleagues?
- What do you find to be the most significant misconceptions, if any, about your generation at work?
- What is your experience of the most significant challenges of multigenerational teams?
- What tidbit might you offer your colleagues to help them better understand what you may be looking for in a collaborative relationship?

In today's business environment — more than ever before — our ability to understand and learn from one another across generations is not only an awesome opportunity, it's a requirement. A candid conversation is a great start.

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