Move Over Millennials, Here Comes Generation Z

The importance of communicating and engaging across the generations

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU YOUNG FARMERS, JAMIE TIRALLA
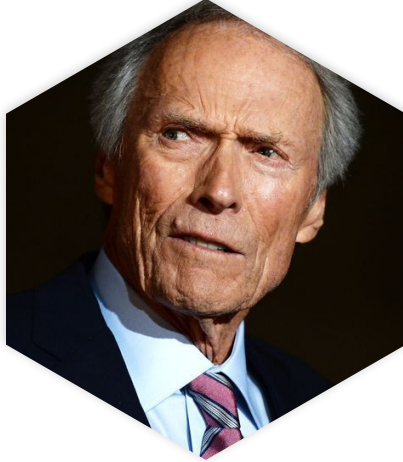
What defines a generation?

A generation is "an identifiable group that shares birth years, age, location, and significant life events at critical developmental stages" (Tolbize, 2008).

Members of a generation share experiences that influence their thoughts, values, behaviors, and reactions.

There are five generations currently in the American workplace.

SILENT (TRADITIONALISTS)

Born after 1925, now age 73 - 90.
Defining events: Great Depression,
Pearl Harbor, and WWII.

BABY BOOMERS

Born after 1946, now age 52 - 72.
Defining events: Cold War, Civil Rights Act,
Vietnam War, and the Assassinations of
JFK and MLK.

GENERATION X

Born after 1965, now age 38 - 53.
Defining events: Fall of Berlin Wall,
Computers, and the International
Space Station.

MILLENNIALS

Born after 1980, now age 22 - 37.
Defining events: 9/11, Diversity, and
the Internet.

Gen Z

Born after 1996, the oldest "Post Millennials" are turning 21 this year.
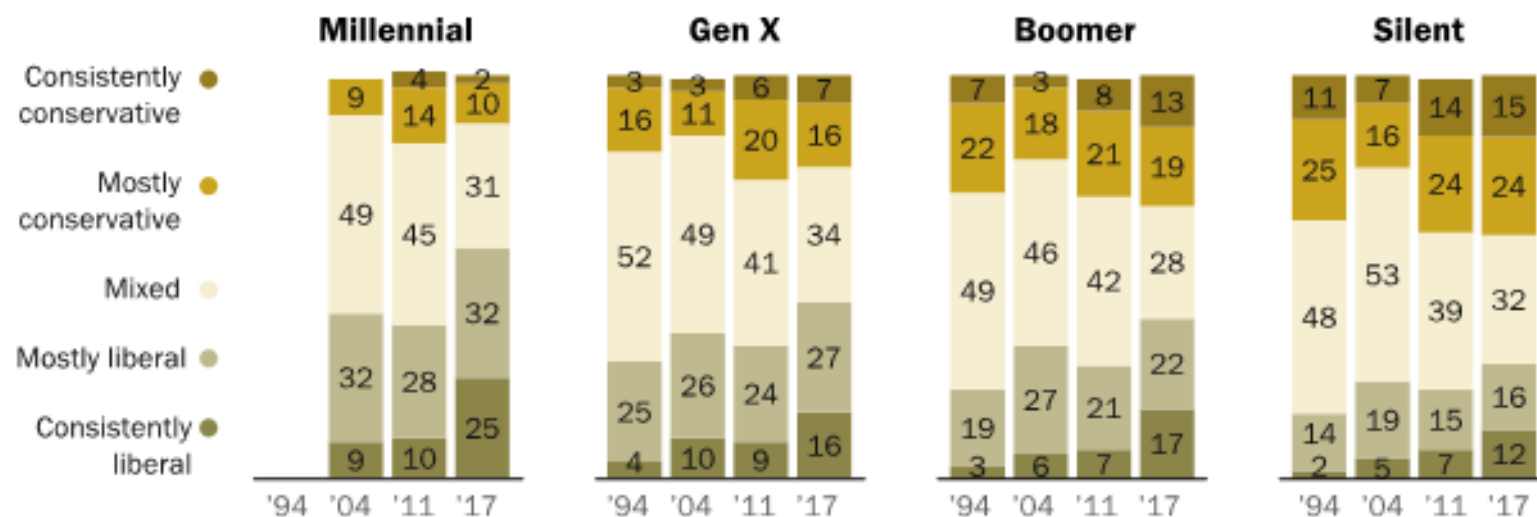
Defining events:

- iPhones

- Invention of Facebook

- Social Media

Why do generations matter?

Categorizing ages into a 'generation' can provide a road map to effective communication and engagement.

Most Millennials have 'consistently liberal' or 'mostly liberal' views; Silents remain most conservative cohort

% with political values that are …

Millennial

	'94	'04	'11	'17
Consistently conservative		9	4	2
			14	10
Mostly conservative		49	45	31
Mixed				32
Mostly liberal		32	28	25
Consistently liberal		9	10	

Gen X

	'94	'04	'11	'17
Consistently conservative	3	3	6	7
	16	11	20	16
Mostly conservative	52	49	41	34
Mixed				27
Mostly liberal	25	26	24	16
Consistently liberal	4	10	9	

Boomer

	'94	'04	'11	'17
Consistently conservative	7	3	8	13
	22	18	21	19
Mostly conservative	49	46	42	28
Mixed				22
Mostly liberal	19	27	21	17
Consistently liberal	3	6	7	

Silent

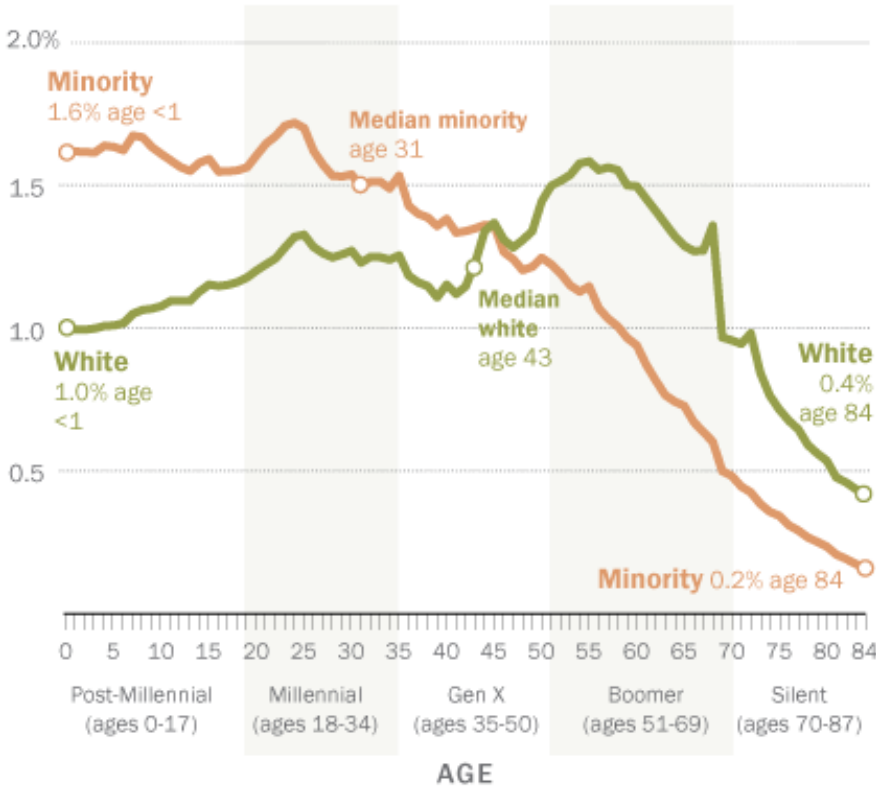|	'94	'04	'11	'17
Consistently conservative	11	7	14	15
	25	16	24	24
Mostly conservative	48	53	39	32
Mixed				16
Mostly liberal	14	19	15	12
Consistently liberal	2	5	7	

Note: Ideological consistency based on a scale of 10 political values questions.
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted June 8-18 and June 27-July 9, 2017.

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Minorities in U.S. tend to be younger than whites

Percentage of people of each age, 2015

Minority
1.6% age <1

Median minority
age 31

Median white
age 43

White
1.0% age <1

White
0.4% age 84

Minority 0.2% age 84

Post-Millennial (ages 0-17)
Millennial (ages 18-34)
Gen X (ages 35-50)
Boomer (ages 51-69)
Silent (ages 70-87)

AGE

Note: Whites are single-race, non-Hispanic; minorities include all racial and ethnic groups except single-race, non-Hispanic whites. Ages 85 and older are not shown.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2015 population estimates

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Among whites, more Baby Boomers than Millennials

% in each generation, 2015

	Ages 0-17	Millennials	Gen X	Baby Boomers	Silent/ Greatest
Total U.S. population	23%	23%	20%	23%	10%
Total U.S. minority population	29	27	21	17	5
White	19	21	20	27	13
American Indian/ Alaska Native	27	26	20	21	6
Black	25	26	21	21	7
Asian	21	27	25	20	7
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	26	29	22	18	5
Hispanic	32	28	22	14	4
Multiracial	46	26	14	11	3

Notes: Racial/ethnic groups are single-race non-Hispanic, except multiracial Americans, who are two or more races and non-Hispanic, and Hispanics, who are of any race. Minorities include all racial and ethnic groups except single-race non-Hispanic whites.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2015 population estimates

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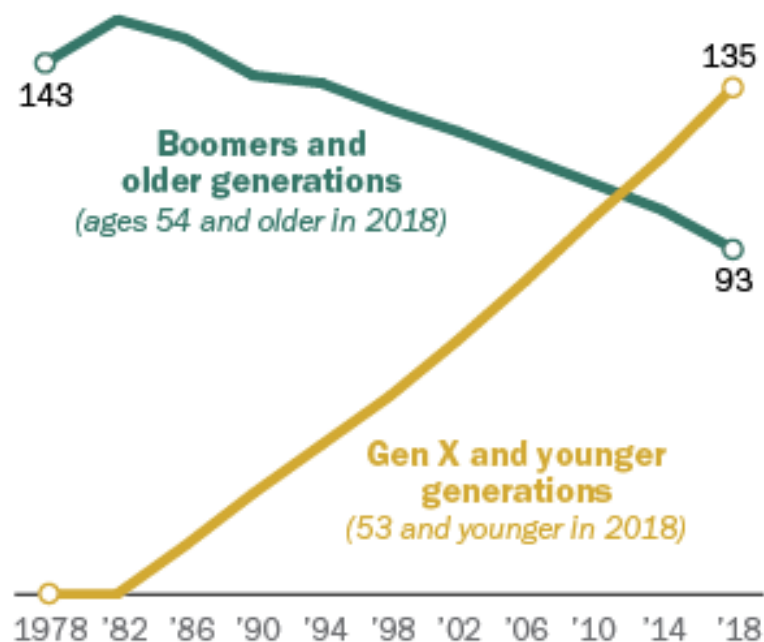**WHICH GENERATIONS DO THE EMPLOYEES AT YOUR ORGANIZATION BELONG TO?**

- Silent Generation: 7.1%
- Baby Boomers: 75%
- Generation X: 85.7%
- Generation Y: 85.7%
- iGen: 32.1%
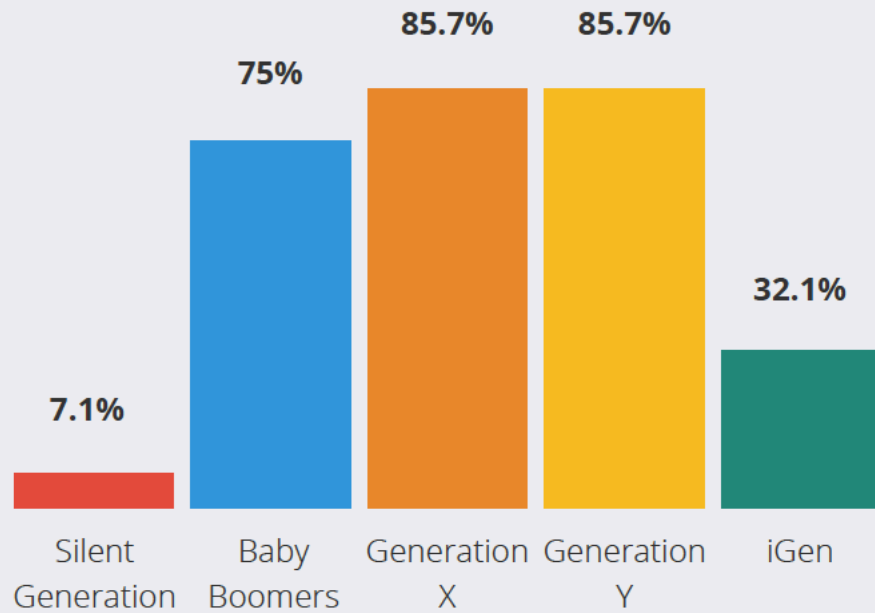
DO YOU FEEL THAT YOUR WORKPLACE HAS EVOLVED AS A RESULT OF DIFFERENT GENERATIONS WORKING TOGETHER?

- Strongly Agree: 17.9%
- Agree: 53.6%
- Neutral: 25%
- Disagree: 3.6%
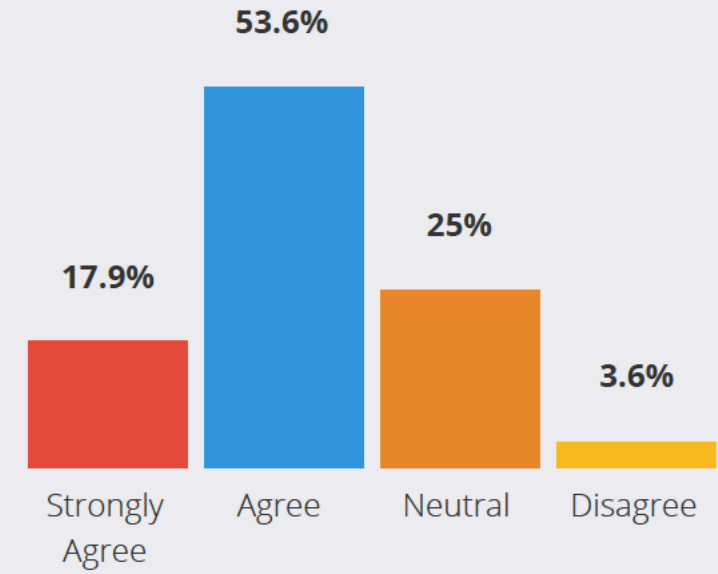
Source: DATIS, 2017 State of Workforce Management

Gen Xers and younger generations are the clear majority of eligible voters ...

Eligible voters, in millions

Boomers and older generations
(ages 54 and older in 2018)

143

135

93

Gen X and younger generations
(53 and younger in 2018)

1978 '82 '86 '90 '94 '98 '02 '06 '10 '14 '18

... but cast 21 million fewer votes than older generations in 2014

Reported votes cast in midterm elections, in millions

70

57

36

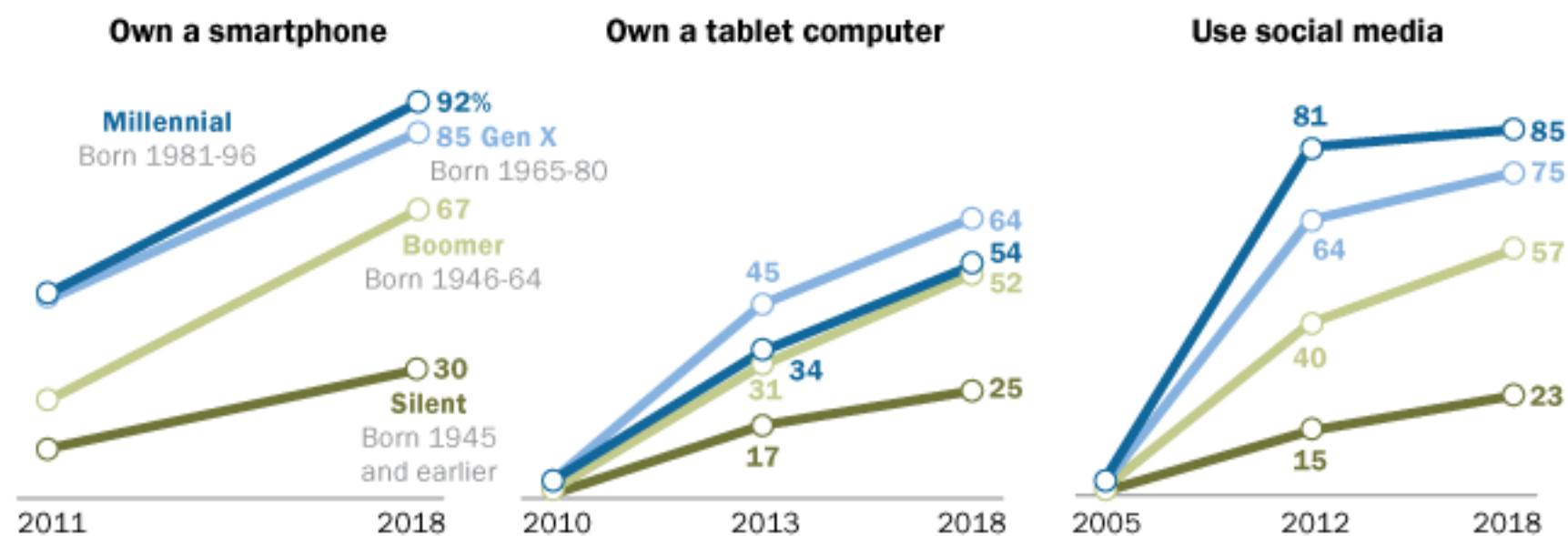1978 '82 '86 '90 '94 '98 '02 '06 '10 '14 '18
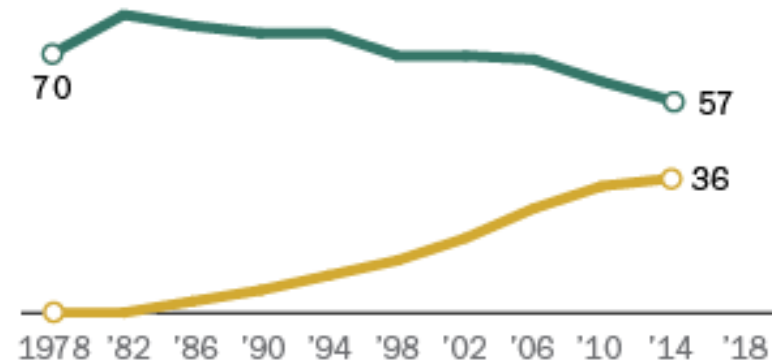
Note: Eligible voters are U.S. citizens ages 18 and older.
Source: Pew Research Center analysis of the 1978-2014 Current Population Survey November Supplement (IPUMS) and April 2018 Current Population Survey.

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Millennials lead on some technology adoption measures, but Boomers and Gen Xers are also heavy adopters

% of U.S. adults in each generation who say they ...

Own a smartphone

Millennial
Born 1981-96

85 Gen X
Born 1965-80

92%

67
Boomer
Born 1946-64

30
Silent
Born 1945
and earlier

2011   2018

Own a tablet computer

64

54
52

45

34
31

17

25

2010   2013   2018

Use social media

81

85

75

64

57

40

23

15

2005   2012   2018

Source: Survey conducted Jan. 3-10, 2018. Trend data are from previous Pew Research Center surveys.
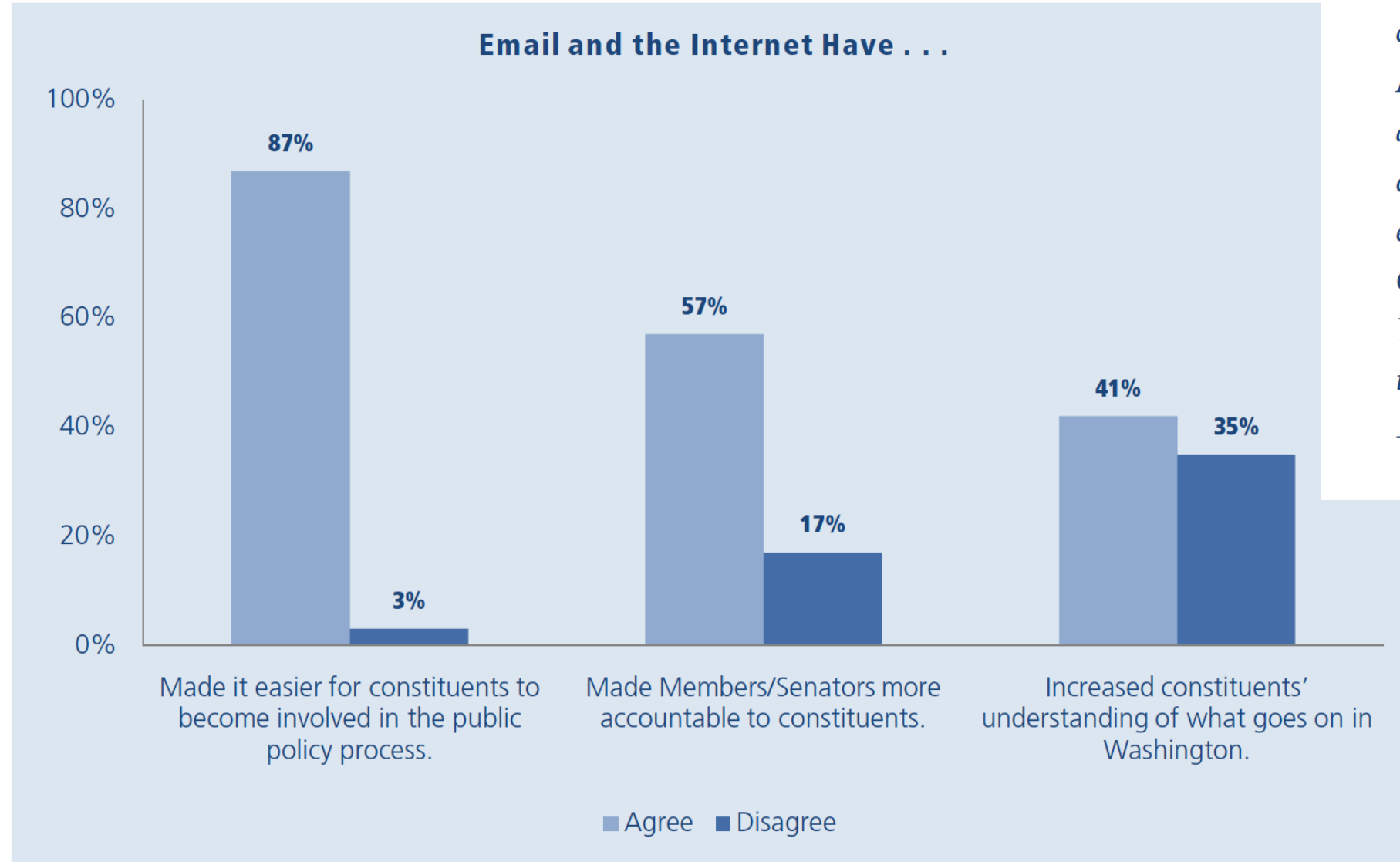
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Being More Effective Across Generations

Communication methods have less to do with what generation you're in and more to do with the specific situation and information you are trying to convey.

Older generations want to hear from younger generations. Generation Z can and will impact local and national politics.
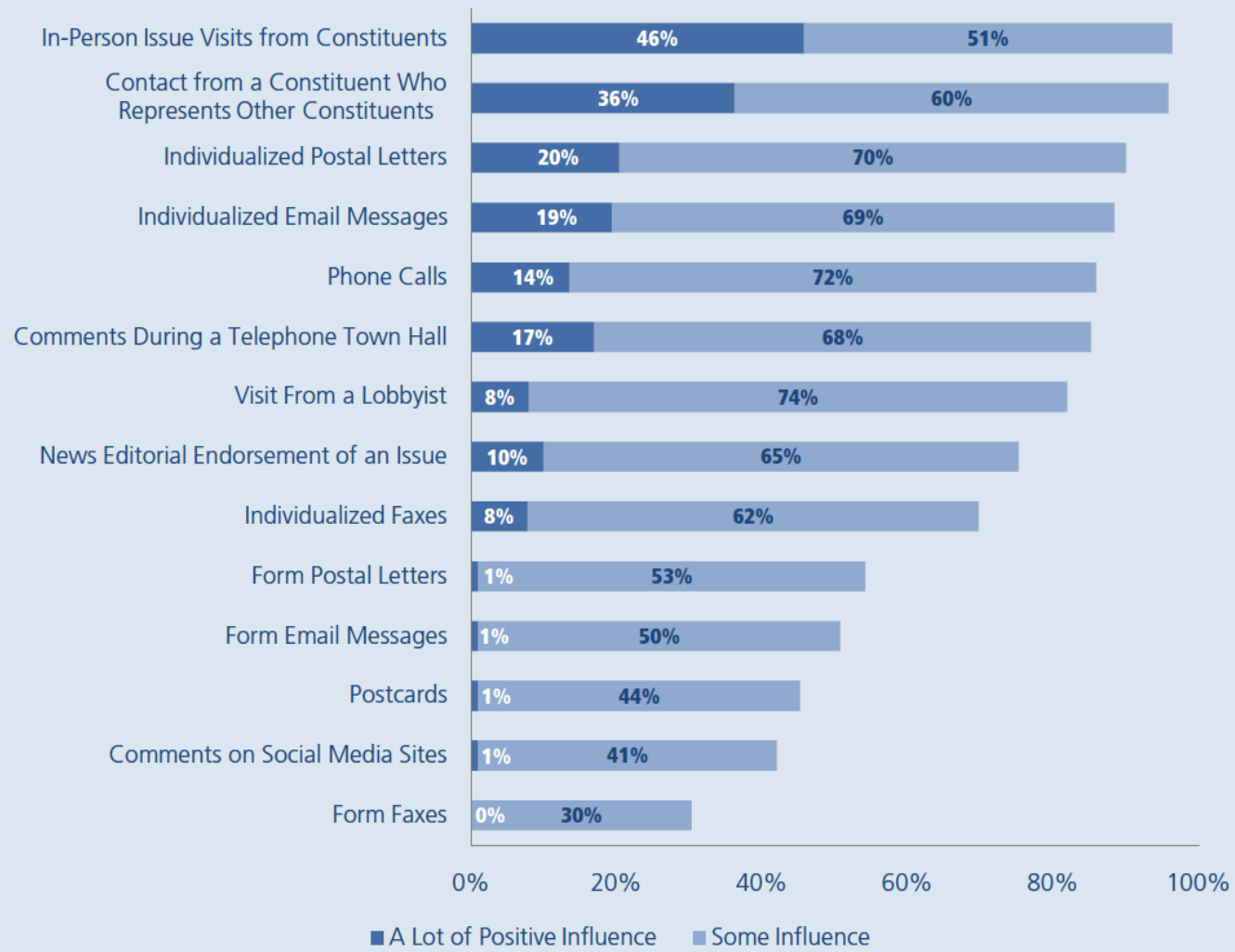
Email and the Internet Have . . .

Bar chart with categories:

- **Made it easier for constituents to become involved in the public policy process.**
  - Agree: 87%
  - Disagree: 3%

- **Made Members/Senators more accountable to constituents.**
  - Agree: 57%
  - Disagree: 17%

- **Increased constituents' understanding of what goes on in Washington.**
  - Agree: 41%
  - Disagree: 35%

Legend: ■ Agree ■ Disagree

"The ease with which constituents can communicate with their Member has really diluted the quality of communications overall. We get way too many email inputs that forward the Congressman some email or YouTube link with 'is this true' as the only message."

—House Legislative Director

Source: Congressional Management Foundation, Communicating with Congress

If your Member/Senator has not already arrived at a firm decision on an issue, how much influence might the following advocacy strategies directed to the *Washington office* have on his/her decision?*

Strategy	A Lot of Positive Influence	Some Influence
In-Person Issue Visits from Constituents	46%	51%
Contact from a Constituent Who Represents Other Constituents	36%	60%
Individualized Postal Letters	20%	70%
Individualized Email Messages	19%	69%
Phone Calls	14%	72%
Comments During a Telephone Town Hall	17%	68%
Visit From a Lobbyist	8%	74%
News Editorial Endorsement of an Issue	10%	65%
Individualized Faxes	8%	62%
Form Postal Letters	1%	53%
Form Email Messages	1%	50%
Postcards	1%	44%
Comments on Social Media Sites	1%	41%
Form Faxes	0%	30%

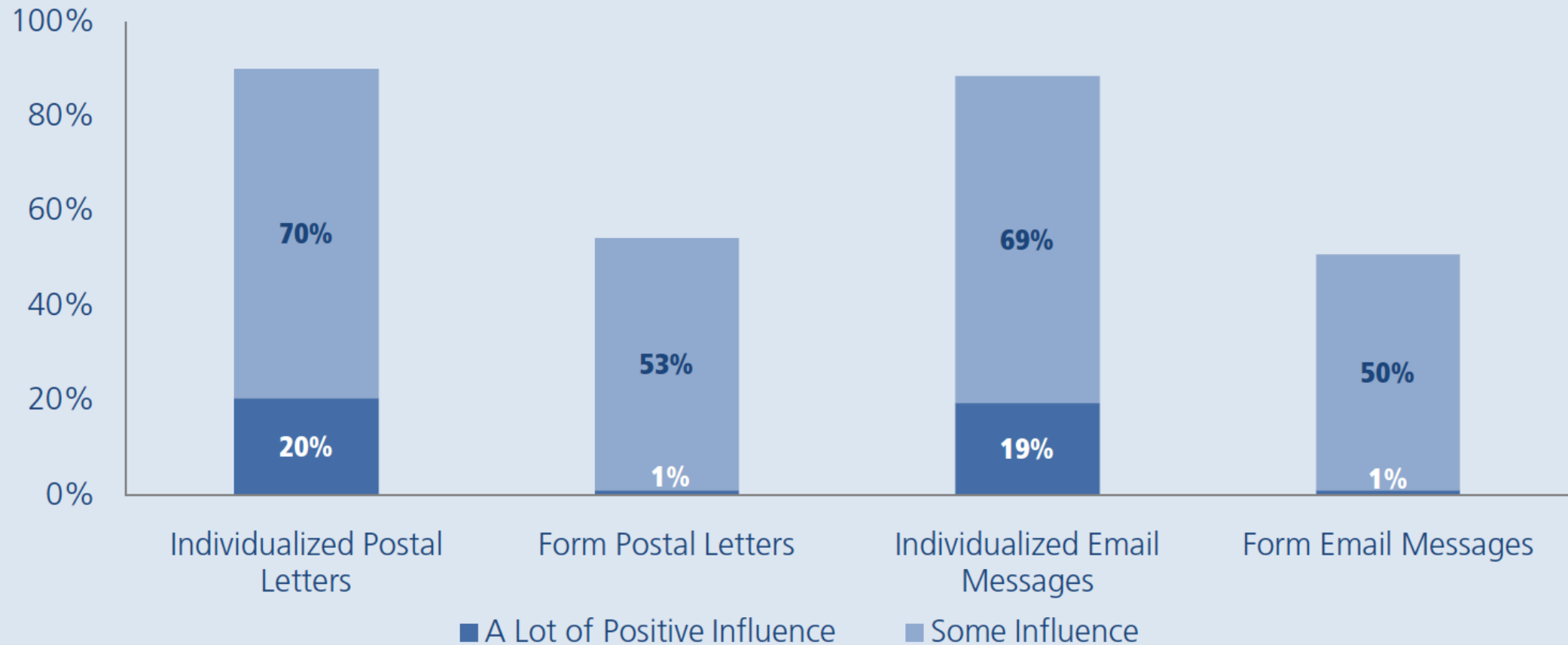■ A Lot of Positive Influence   ■ Some Influence

It's the Content, Not the Delivery

Nearly identical percentages of staffers said postal mail (90%) and email (88%) would have influence on an undecided Member of Congress.
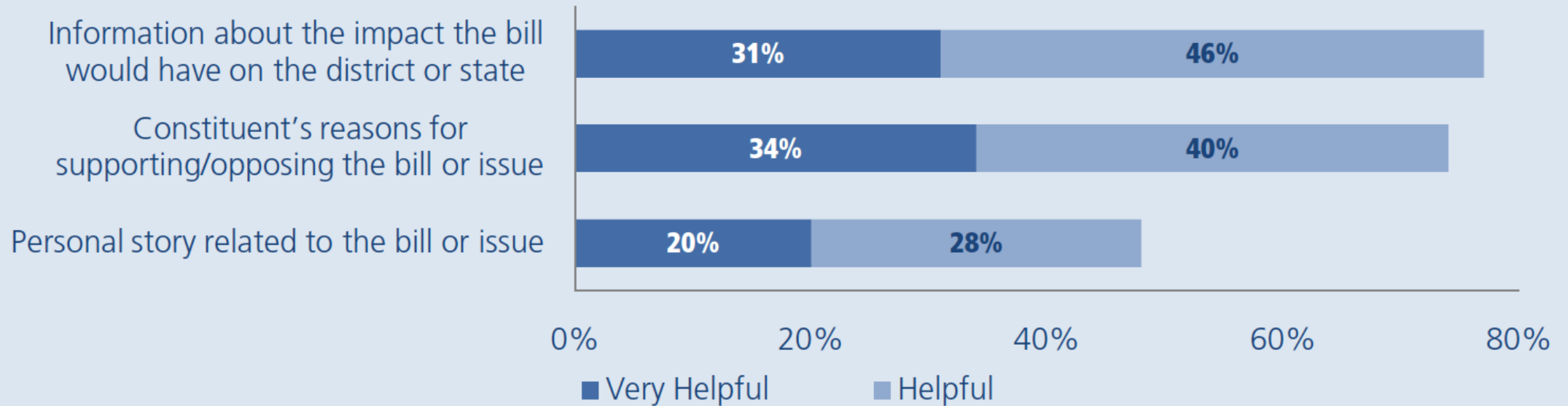
Source: Congressional Management Foundation, Communicating with Congress

If your Member/Senator has not already arrived at a firm decision on an issue, how much influence might the following advocacy strategies directed to the Washington office have on his/her decision?*

	Individualized Postal Letters	Form Postal Letters	Individualized Email Messages	Form Email Messages
Some Influence	70%	53%	69%	50%
A Lot of Positive Influence	20%	1%	19%	1%

■ A Lot of Positive Influence   ■ Some Influence

Source: Congressional Management Foundation, Communicating with Congress

**How helpful is it for messages from constituents to include the following?***

Information about the impact the bill would have on the district or state: Very Helpful 31%, Helpful 46%

Constituent's reasons for supporting/opposing the bill or issue: Very Helpful 34%, Helpful 40%

Personal story related to the bill or issue: Very Helpful 20%, Helpful 28%

■ Very Helpful   ■ Helpful

Source: Congressional Management Foundation, Communicating with Congress

The Attention Span of a Goldfish

Some research indicates that our attention spans are shrinking,

from 12 seconds in 2000 to 8 seconds today.

"Brevity is not a nice to have,

it's a need to have."

Joseph McCormack,

Author of *Brief*

The Communication Process
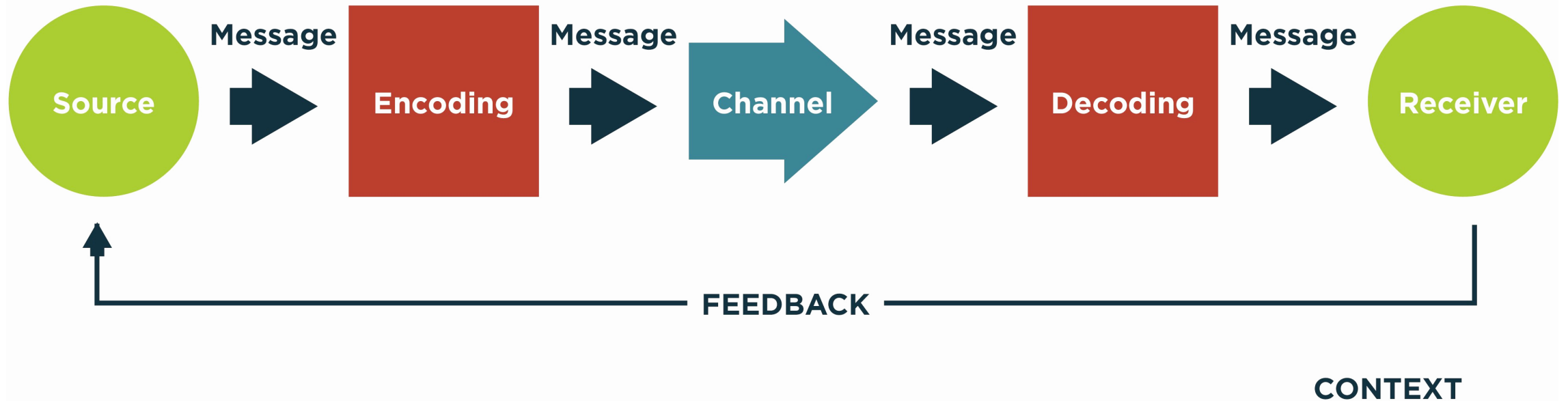
1. State Your Purpose

Get to the point as quickly as possible. First, clearly state the problem, purpose, or issue to be addressed.

2. Explain Why It Matters

Legislators want to address issues that impact their constituents.

Use stories, facts, and information to explain the impact your

issue has on the constituents and/or district.

3. Ask for Action

Be prepared to offer possible solutions and/or action that can be taken to solve the problem, issue, or concern.

4. Explain the Impact (Again)

Explain what the outcome will be if the legislators takes the action

you asked for. Who will be impacted? Why will it matter?

What will they have helped achieve?

THE MESSAGE HOUSE

Start with an umbrella statement. This is the big picture, main point, or key takeaway.

MESSAGE #1

Why does this matter? What's the impact? Who's affected? And how does it affect the legislator…their constituents, district, etc.

SUPPORTING POINTS

Personal Stories
Data / Facts / Statistics

MESSAGE #2

What can be done to resolve this issue? What is the action to be made?

SUPPORTING POINTS

Know what your opposition will say and counter with a positive message.

MESSAGE #3

What will be the outcome of the proposed action? How will the issue be resolved? Who will be affected?

SUPPORTING POINTS

Personal Stories
Data / Facts / Statistics

FOUNDATION: What's the ask? Why does this matter?

The Journalist's Approach

Know the 5 W's: Who, What, When, Where, and Why

Think in headlines and soundbites. Use plain language.

Start with the lead.

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Data / Facts / Statistics

FOUNDATION: What's the ask? Why does this matter?

THE MESSAGE HOUSE

MAIN POINT:

MESSAGE #1	MESSAGE #2	MESSAGE #3
SUPPORTING POINTS	SUPPORTING POINTS	SUPPORTING POINTS

FOUNDATION "THE ASK":