

Idaho State Prevention and Support Conference – April 2015



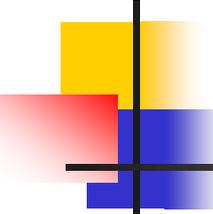
Why Don't You Act My Age? Generational Team Building for Teachers and Staff

Ken Jenkins, Training Manager
Ada County Juvenile Court Services
Boise, Idaho

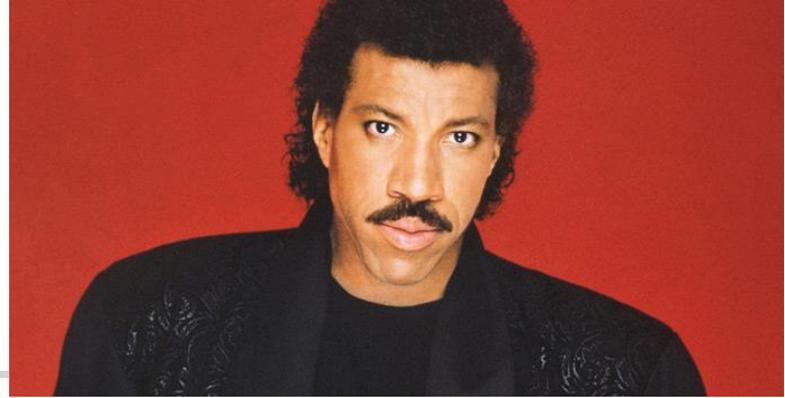
Welcoming Activity



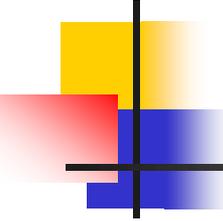
- **Please take a marker and walk around to the Decade Charts on the walls**
- **Based on your own memories (or history class), on each chart please write ONE event (such as “Gulf War”) or symbol (like “Sony Walkman”) that represents the decade to you**
- **Sorry, no using Google/other search engines**
- **Please have a seat and relax as you enjoy a collage of music from the past five decades!**



Agenda



- Introduction
- Who Are We Talking About?
- How Are Generations Perceived?
- Learning and Communication Preferences
- Group Exercise: Teambuilding & Challenges
- Teambuilding Tips with Multiple Generations
- Going Forward



Objectives



- At the end of this block of instruction, the student will be able to:
 - State the five generations in our schools and communities
 - List at least three collaboration techniques to help bridge generational gaps
 - Describe at least one trait for each generation
 - Demonstrate cross-generational communication skills in a group exercise

Your Instructor



- Ken Jenkins – Training Manager for Ada County Juvenile Court Services (ACJCS)
 - Probation, Detention, Counseling Services, Court Clerks, and administrative support
- BA, Montana State U. and JD, Georgetown U.
- Passionate interest in generational characteristics in the workplace
- Self-described Baby Boomer & pop music fan

Disclaimer and Explanations

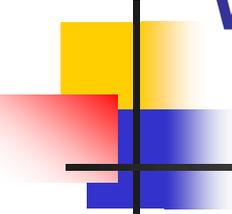


- There are always exceptions to a generational characteristic
- Some members do not conform to norms
- Other factors affect characteristics, such as race, geographic location, economic status, language, faith, and job experience
- Do NOT assume members of a generation will always act as their generation “should”
- My focus is on staff and partner communication today, not your students

Reflection Questions

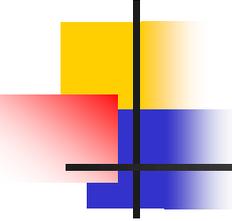
- What generational issues have you encountered in your workplace?
- What generational issues do you expect to face in the next few years at work?





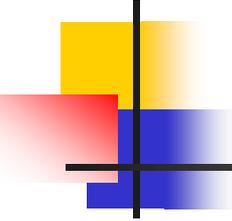
Why Train on This Subject?

- I am passionate about this subject because:
 - I see a need for better generational knowledge and communication every day (ACJCS)
 - As a parent, I know the generational challenges
 - As a strong supporter of education and its professionals, I realize we need to know **more**
- Two recent Idaho surveys validate this need



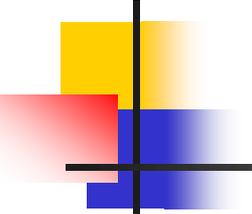
2013 Idaho Youth Risk Behavior Survey

- Several questions addressed cross-generational communication
 - Only 48% of students had discussed HIV or AIDS with their parents or other adults in their family
 - 70% of students could talk to at least one teacher/other school-based adult about problems
- Lesson learned?
 - Eliminate communication barriers between generations to proactively encourage discussion



2014 Idaho Youth Prevention Survey

- Covered a wide range of issues (peer and adult engagement, drug use, social media)
- Key findings
 - Interactions between youth and adults **drop** between 6th and 12th grade
 - Parental supervision **down** 40% (same period)
 - Between 6th and 12th grade, youth comfort level with telling teachers/administrators about fights or weapons **drops** from 53% to 30%



Who Are We Talking About?

Generations - Generally

- **Born between 1910-1924: World War II/G.I.**
- **1925-1942: Silent**
- **1943-1964: Baby Boomer (Boomers)**
- **1965-1981: Generation X (X'ers)**
- **1982-1994: Generation Y (Millennials)**
- **1995-????: Generation Z (or I)**
 - **These are the teenagers of today (2015 teenagers were born between 1996 & 2002)**

G. I. Generation (ages 91 to 105)



- Virtually all living members are now out of the work force and retired, but they had tremendous impact on the USA and the two generations that followed them
- Hallmarks: loyalty to country and company, cooperative, ambitious but appreciative, formal business attire, well-educated (thanks to the GI Bill), and leaders who put public interest over personal gain
- Somewhat hesitant to embrace new things (like rock'n'roll, social change, and technology)

Silent Generation (ages 73 to 90)



- Born between 1925 and 1942
- The children of The Great Depression and The War, G.I. Generation members were their role models
- Caught between the GI's and the Boomers
- Rise to power coincided with fragmenting families, cultural diversity, and the rise of litigation
- Generally affluent and powerful leaders, due in part to the number of jobs available
- Outstanding mentors for other generations

Baby Boomers (ages 51 to 72)



- Born between 1943 and 1964
- Largest of all American generations (for now)
- Product of WWII victory and 25 year economic boom
- Boomer cultural touchstones still guide the USA (rock & roll, TV, individual freedoms, antiwar protests, sexual revolution)
- Latter Boomers ('60-'64) have more in common with Gen X; '43-'55 Boomers were subject to the draft during Vietnam, have less in common with others; '56 – '59 birth years are classic Boomers
- Many senior leaders are Baby Boomers
- Workplace motto: work hard, pay your dues, and you will do well (but layoffs from 80's through today changed attitude)

Generation X (ages 34 to 50)



- Born between 1965 and 1981
- Saw end of the Cold War and the Gulf War victory
- Smaller generation: affected by increases in divorce, more mothers in the workplace, and zero population growth
- Self-reliant and independent (no belief in workplace guarantees, based on what happened to Boomers)
- Somewhat less optimistic about the future and more cynical about the world
- Many supervisors and managers are from Gen X
- Negative image (“slackers”) counterbalanced by Gen X belief that Boomers seek just money, not happiness

Millennial (Gen Y) (ages 21 to 33)

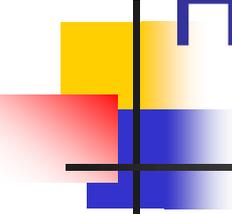


- Millennials: born between 1982 and 1994
- Multi-taskers extraordinaire
- Memories include great horror (9/11) and great triumph (expansion of the Internet)
- Generally more optimistic than Generation X
- Gen Y resembles the G.I. Generation (civic focus, concerned about saving the world, open-minded attitude, and not intimidated by authority)
- Very comfortable changing jobs/careers several times in lifetime; like Gen X, do not enjoy “paying dues” or giving extra time to employers

Next? Gen "Z" or "I" (up to age 20 & growing)

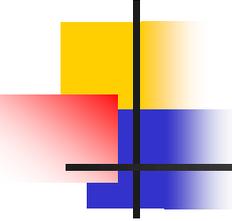


- What does the "I" stand for? **Internet**
- AKA Gen 2020, Generation Now, or iGeneration
- First Americans to grow up in an Internet-dominated world (will have a Facebook page and a Smart phone by elementary school)
- Who are they? Children born from 1995 through the present; generation to end around 2020
- Hallmarks: Total communication ("digital natives"), Internet access in their pockets, multi-culturalism, globalism, & ***who knows what else***



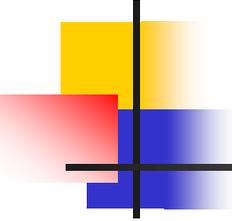
How Generations are Perceived

- Members of a particular generation have images and beliefs about other generations
- How we handle and address those perceptions is critical to teambuilding and workplace harmony
- Let's chuckle a bit as we tackle this head on



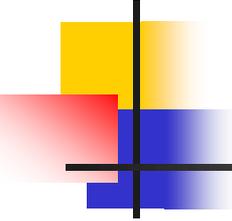
Silent Generations are Seen by

- **Boomers** as parents, bosses, mentors, & coaches (reverence mixed with rebellion)
- **Gen X'ers** as senior leadership and technophobes (“Oh no – not a computer!!”)
- **Millennials** as retirees; people in old movies on Netflix; grandparents/great-grandparents; and nice, polite links to living history



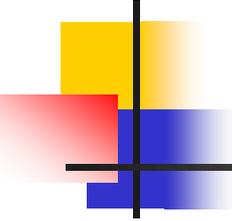
Baby Boomers are Seen By

- **Silents** as children (even in their 50's), heirs to the throne ("Don't screw it up!"), protégés, and their Social Security payers
- **Gen X'ers** as their first bosses, mentors, ruiners of the climate and environment, and the roadblock to promotion ("Time to retire!")
- **Millennials** as quasi-technophobes, meeting-obsessed, and stuck in the 70's



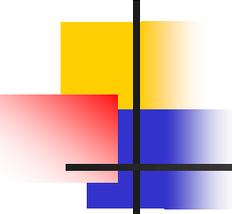
Gen X'ers are Seen By

- **Silents** as nice grandchildren who fix their computer – & another Social Security source
- **Boomers** as pushy, ambitious former slackers that know computers but need to put work ahead of home (“Leaving? It’s only 6!”)
- **Millennials** as mentors, coaches, & OK techies that show some Boomer tendencies



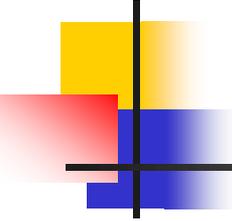
Millennials are Seen By

- **Silents** as talented grandchildren/great-grandchildren who can get them on Facebook (and will help pay for Social Security, too)
- **Boomers** as intimidatingly-good techies, the future for their retirement, & the frustrating new hire they have to text to get a response
- **Gen X'ers** as protégés, competitors for jobs and promotions, and a little bit TOO talented



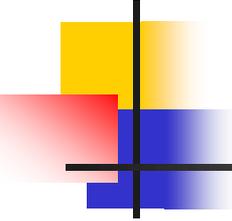
Discussion - Perceptions

- Are these correct depictions of everyone in these generations? NO
- Are these perceptions what every OTHER generational member feels? NO
- These perceptions remind us that we have to deal with such images and ensure we:
 - Treat each other as an individual, with no preconceived notions, while realizing each generation DOES have unique experiences



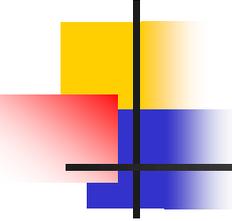
Leaders and Educators, Please Note

- Different generations have preferences for particular learning and communication styles
- Exceptions always exist, but we need to plan as we prepare training or conduct meetings
- Based on recent research, here are some general findings for styles



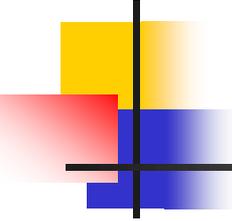
Boomers Tend to Prefer

- Classroom training with lecture, workshops, and course-based learning
- Workbooks and manuals/references
- Video (watching TV is always good)
- Live bodies in a room, so visiting on breaks and networking can take place
- Body language from the instructor



Gen X'ers Tend to Prefer

- Structured classes, increased technology (PowerPoint and beyond), and “fun” classes
- A facilitator (but not a lecturer) up front
- Hands-on, role play, and other interaction
Learning that allows them to build individual skills (so working alone is OK)
- Productive, shorter sessions



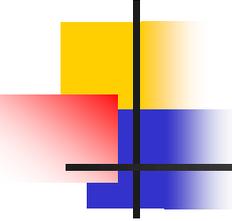
Millennials Tend to Prefer

- Online or personal device delivery if possible
- E-learning, CD's/downloads, and webcasts
- As much technology as they can get – now!
- Focused training in soft skills “people” areas like presentation skills, customer service and communication (not emphasized in school)
- Guidance, then permission for self-directed learning and interactive exercises

A Few Tips for Making Learning Work for All Generations

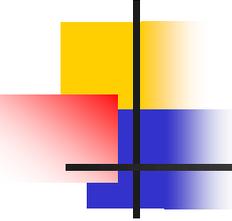


- Welcome all students warmly, regardless of their apparent generation, and work to be inclusive
- Tailor your meetings and classes to all generations, including AV use; also, embrace new technology
 - Avoid using generation-specific topics without explanation (*On "Dragnet," Joe Friday would ...*)
- Be quiet and listen (blunt reminder that we need to hear the perspective of all generations)
- Listen to "the experts" – Boomers/older Gen X'ers lived in person-to-person world (***The Land Before E-Mail***)
- Find common ground in group activities



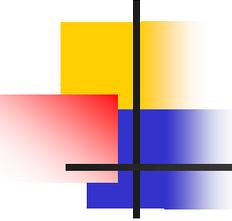
Communication Preferences

- It has long been noted that generations communicate differently (“Cool!” “Dude!”)
- This can be a major challenge for leaders, trainers, and team members
- Knowing some general preferences so you can use tailored or blended techniques helps
- Again, there are always exceptions



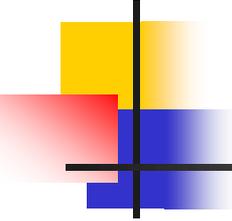
Boomer Preferences

- Person-to-person over electronic
- Phone call over e-mail
- Live meetings over online meetings
- Written (memo, policy, letter) is fine



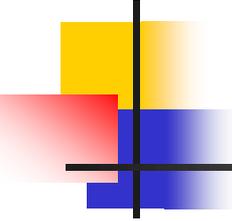
Gen X'er Preferences

- Email over person-to-person (efficiency)
- Cell phone calls OK if short
- Meetings acceptable if quick and if facilitated by Gen X'er (get the work done)
- Please, no paper if possible



Millennial Preferences

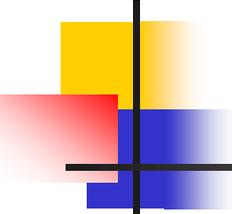
- No meetings (in fact, no people in person if possible) – “I ❤️ Technology!”
- Text or short email preferred over phones
- Smart phone communication the best (more apps, please)
- Relaxed work environment – team projects good if kept flexible and fun



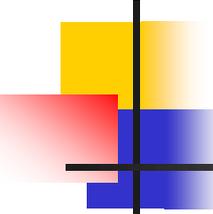
Generational Concerns: The Heart of the Matter

- For any organization, generational transition brings about two emotions: fear and control
- FEAR: Fear of new things
- CONTROL: Who is in charge?
- We have to address both, using education and open communication in the workplace

Group Exercise: Welcome Aboard!



- In your table groups, you will work together to design a welcome and training program in your school (or work team)
- Assume your school/work team has a mix of the three generations (Millennial, Gen X, and Baby Boomer) and is led by a Boomer or X'er
- Focus on teambuilding and open communication techniques



Welcome Aboard (continued)

- You will receive a short summary about a new employee who is joining your team
- Please read the description and decide:
 - Which generation they come from?
 - What would be the best training and onboarding techniques for the new employee?
 - What are their (likely) preferred communication methods at work?
 - What challenges may you encounter from them?
- You have 9 minutes – pick a spokesperson!



SCENARIO 1

- Scenario One: Your new colleague, **Marge**, is 59 years old and on her third career. She has a bachelor's degree and is working on a master's degree in educational leadership. Marge is widowed and has three children and four grand-children; she lives with her oldest daughter.



SCENARIO 2

- Scenario Two: Your new colleague, **Megan**, is 26 years old. She recently earned a master's degree in curriculum and instruction, seeking the advanced degree after job-hunting for a year. She is single and lives with her divorced father.



SCENARIO 3

- Scenario Three: Your new colleague, **Jose**, is 35 years old. He has an elementary teaching certificate. He worked as a barista and in sales before getting his college degree. He is married with a new baby; his wife works from home.



SCENARIO 4

- Scenario Four: Your new colleague, **Ed**, is 56 years old. He has a professional degree in chemistry and has taught AP classes for 15 years. He has served as a teacher and assistant principal during his 30-year career. Ed is new to your team; he just moved to your town and wants to return to teaching. He is married to a social worker and has one child in college.



SCENARIO 5

- Scenario Five: Your new colleague, **Amy**, is 40 years old. She has a bachelor's degree in communication and an ABCTE certification for teaching. Amy has learned a great deal from specialized training and on-the-job experience. She is married with 2 kids in high school; her husband is an engineer.



SCENARIO 6

- Scenario Six: Your new colleague, **Antonio**, is 41 years old. He has almost 10 years' experience as a school counselor. He has worked in three distinct career fields before coming to your team. He and his partner, an attorney, have two dogs.



SCENARIO 7

- Scenario Seven: Your new colleague, **Malik**, is 30 years old. He has a bachelor's degree (funded by the GI Bill) in history. He had 5 years of active duty US Army service, including 2 tours in Afghanistan. He is single and lives alone.



SCENARIO 8

- Scenario Eight: Your new colleague, **Kiara**, is 20 years old. She just graduated from high school and is working as a part-time paraprofessional. She is taking some college classes and considering a career as a flight attendant. She is single and lives with her parents.



SCENARIO 9

- Scenario Nine: Your new colleague, **Galen**, is 61 years old. He has a Ph.D. degree in psychology and over thirty-five years of experience as a psychologist. He is returning to the education field after many years of private practice. He is married with 10 children and 25 grandchildren.



SCENARIO 10

- Scenario Ten: Your new colleague, **Raven**, is 33 years old. She just earned her teaching certificate after seven years on active duty in the Air Force. She is divorced with two children.



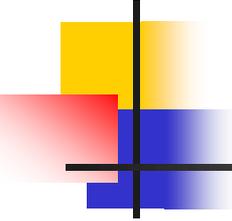
SCENARIO 11

- Scenario Eleven: Your new colleague, **Josh**, is 28 years old. He is transferring from a school in Montana, where he was a well-liked janitorial services employee. He is single and lives with his three dogs.



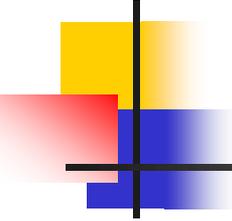
SCENARIO 12

- Scenario Twelve: Your new colleague, **Leilani**, is 46 years old. She retired as a police officer in California, and she has bachelor's and master's degrees in criminal justice. She is married and lives with her husband, four cats, and two horses.



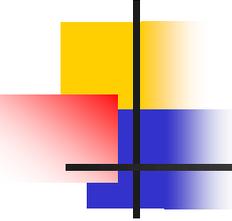
Welcome Aboard – Tables

- After I display the description of each new employee, please share your table's answers to the four questions
 - Generation?
 - Design of your training and onboarding?
 - Communication techniques they will prefer?
 - Potential challenges from the new employee?
- One minute per table, please



Welcome Aboard – De-Brief

- What did you think of the group exercise?
- This is hard – and important – stuff
- Lessons Learned
 - Tailoring training/onboarding is vitally important
 - Communication preferences DO matter
 - We will **always** have a mix of new employees
- What else?

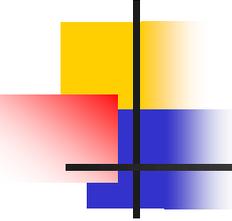


Commonalities in Teams

- As we work together, you will often find common events, experiences, and memories for generations
- Being aware of these assist in both collaboration and teambuilding
- Remember, again, there are always exceptions to these examples

Commonalities in Conversation

Boomers and X'ers



- Boomers
 - **TV Shows** (just 3 networks with an aerial or rabbit ears)
 - Cartoons (almost all on Saturday mornings)
 - Movies (reruns on the three networks or at a drive-in)
 - Wall phones with a dial (and a really long cord)
- Gen X'ers
 - Cable TV (lots of choices; no ability to recall just 1 show)
 - **Early video games**
 - Touch-tone phones/pagers/answering machines
 - Movies on cable with no parental controls

Commonalities in Conversation

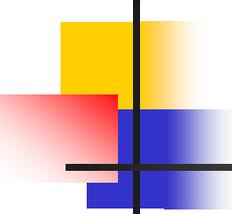
Millennials and Gen Z

- Millennials

- Satellite TV shows (a few when younger, now tons)
- Movies on Netflix (wide range of choices)
- **Video games** (Sims, Call of Duty)
- Cell phones, texting, and early Facebook/Linked In

- Gen Z

- Streaming movies on Netflix (or online)
- Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest (the list goes on)
- **Smart phones** (and much more to come)
- Video games on handheld devices



Final Tips for Teambuilding

- Build an ideal team with all four generations and their skill sets
 - Boomers: interpersonal communication, “life stories,” and strong work ethic
 - X’ers: work-life balance, pragmatism, and flexibility in work and teams
 - Millennials: project management skills, knowledge of technology, and challenge focus
 - Gen Z: portable technology (“digital natives”) skills, comfort with diversity, and online teams

Even More Ways to Build a Strong Multi-Generational Team

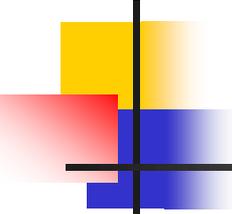
- Mentor and support members of all generations, not just someone “your age”
- Encourage discussion of generational perspectives in meetings and classes
- Find common ground, don't build walls



Final Ways for Generations to Collaborate

- **Listen to stories**
 - Experiences at home and at workplaces provide excellent information
- **Share control, lose the fear**
 - Build consensus as you develop policy, deliver training, and serve the public
- **Be open minded**
 - Not everyone is the same: using an iPad is no better or worse than listening to The Drifters on a 33 1/3 RPM LP
- **Remember the Group Goal**
 - Focus on the team, not your own success (recall *Saving Private Ryan*)





References for Generations

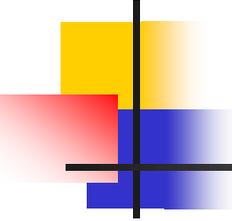
- The Web is filled with many excellent sites for generational discussions – please review these five:
 - <http://www.slideshare.net/lorrainerinker/ra-master-series-team-building-across-generations>
 - [alaskaspe.org/files/Seminar/**Teams**Article.doc](http://alaskaspe.org/files/Seminar/TeamsArticle.doc)
 - <http://nctaf.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/Karen-Smith-Multi-faceted-Cross-gen-LTs-for-21C-MASCD-Perspectives-Spring-2010.pdf>
 - <https://uminntilt.wordpress.com/2014/07/09/teaching-across-generations-part-i/>
 - <https://uminntilt.wordpress.com/2014/07/14/teaching-across-generations-part-ii/>

Final Comments on Generations



- We are all unique
- Whether or not you like to watch *The Voice*, *Seinfeld*, *The Cosby Show*, or *Bonanza* doesn't matter
- What matters is our ability to work with our students, juvenile justice partners, educational colleagues, team members, customers, and families, **regardless of when they were born**



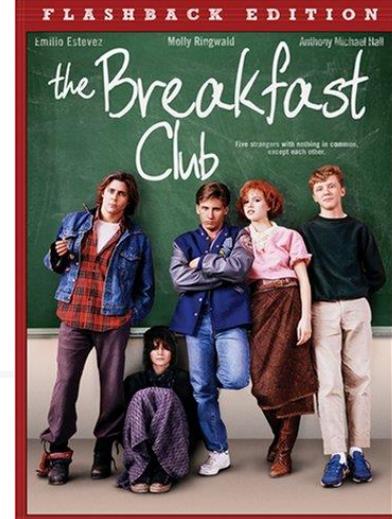


Review of Objectives



- At the end of this block of instruction, the student will be able to:
 - State the five generations in our schools and communities
 - List at least three collaboration techniques to help bridge generational gaps
 - Describe at least one trait for each generation
 - Demonstrate cross-generational communication skills in a group exercise

Additional Resource



- I also provide tailored generational and team building training to organizations across Idaho
- Please feel free to contact me at:
 - Ken Jenkins, Training & Planning Solutions
 - 208-401-8367
 - ekenj3@gmail.com

Conclusion



- Thank you for your attention – and for not texting during my presentation 😊
- Please email or call if you have any additional questions about today
 - Ken Jenkins, ACJCS Training
 - 208-577-4854
 - kjenkins@adaweb.net