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## HELPING CHURCH LEADERS MAKE THE TRANSITION FROM THE PRESENT TO THE FUTURE

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### Generation X...Three Myths and Realities

One of the richest sources of new learning about Generation X is emerging Gen X leaders who can describe major shifts in thinking within their own generation. Cassidy Dale, 25, (cassidydale@juno.com) has identified three common myths and corresponding realities of Generation X as part of a larger presentation on Gen X.

**Myth: Gen Xers are disloyal and uncommitted.**

**Reality: Xers are cautious investors.**

Xers are not disloyal and uncommitted as so many people claim, but rather they are cautious investors in a world which has taught them to expect little from institutional relationships.

**Myth: Gen Xers have short attention spans.**

**Reality: Xers are voracious learners who can quickly process information**

It is a misperception that Xers have short attention spans. Xers want so many answers to so many questions from so many sources in such a hurry because their learning and communication skills were shaped by the forces of the information revolution. Xers are voracious learners who love to sort through and digest massive quantities of information at a very fast pace.

**Myth: Gen Xers are independent, selfish and arrogant.**

**Reality: Xers' values are expressed quietly and differ from Boomers.**

The intense attitude expressed by so many Xers is not arrogance, but rather a powerful independence which grows out of a life experience in which they have always felt they had only themselves on whom to depend at a very dangerous and unstable time in history. Xers grew up with a powerful sense of personal danger. From the arms race, violent crime, drugs, and AIDS to the expanding national debt, they have been exposed to a sense of constant jeopardy, as well as many patently false reassurances from figures of authority.

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### GEN X FORUM, Version 2

Boomers concentrated on creating bridges of relevancy to a generation that thought religion was irrelevant. They did it well and it worked. But what about Gen X? They are not "junior boomers" who one day are going to "grow up." Scholars say Generation X is the first generation to exhibit a whole new way of thinking called "postmodernism." How do you reach a generation whose art forms and music are full of spiritual themes? What happens when you design events to answer the question "is it relevant?" when the actual question is "is it *real*?" What does it look like to create authentic expressions of Generation X's heart, community, and God?

Leadership Network is hosting its second Gen X forum April 29-May 2 at the Mt. Hermon Conference Center in northern California. General sessions will feature Mark Driscoll, Tim Celek, Dieter Zander, Chris Seay, and the UBC band while dialogue sessions will focus on three tracks: church planting, Gen X churches within churches, and supporters of Gen X ministries (like senior pastors). Attendance is by invitation only.

**For more information or an invitation to the Gen X forum, contact Leadership Network  
at 1-800-765-5323 or visit our web site at <http://www.leadnet.org/genx.html>**

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