

## Confessions of a Mosaic Manager

By JR Kerr

I'M A MOSAIC AND I'M A MANAGER. I also have absolutely no idea what I'm doing.

As I write these words in follow-up to an interview CMA has done with me and other members of the pastoral team at North Way Community Church\*, I'm searching for categories and principles Mosaics can employ when managing Boomers, and Boomers can employ when managing Mosaics. The reality, though, is that it's simply too early for principles and best practices.

Instead, I think we must begin by recognizing this tremendous shift taking place in the culture of organizations all throughout society.

### The Shift is the Movement

that's occurring between the Boomers, the key leaders and managers, and the Mosaics, the emerging generation of leaders within the organization. As I understand this shift, there are a number of primary issues I think need to be addressed, in order to grow through this shift and build stronger organizations and leaders on the other side.

**The Shift is Real.** The first and perhaps primary issue is to simply admit that this shift is taking place. I graduated from one of the most highly regarded evangelical seminaries in the nation only five years ago and

not one word was mentioned of this shift and the implications it might have on the church. I'd suggest that the beginning of any resolution is conversation. Don't be afraid to talk about it. In fact, if we at North Way have done any thing right it's this: we talk about this shift like we talk about the Steelers. It has simply become part of our everyday conversation and, as a result, we're beginning to deal with its implications.

**The Shift is Personal.** Like any organizational issue, it's never purely business, because organizations are living and breathing things, made of living and breathing people. The implications here are that the people involved in this shift have an emotional response to it and, unless you deal with these responses head on, I'd suggest you'll never really make any headway.

The two primary emotions I see from the respective gen-

erations are impatience in the Mosaics and fear in the Boomers. As a Mosaic, I'm completely guilty of this impatience. To be honest, I really just want the Boomers to get out of my way, so I can do what I think is best.

There are obviously many problems with this emotion, but perhaps the greatest is that it plays into the fear I believe is growing among the Boomers that they'll be tossed aside and forgotten, or that the Mosaics will mess up everything they've accomplished. If we're to make any headway in this

matter, we must admit that we care about this shift and that it's impacting us on a personal level. Until we get that honest, I'm not certain we'll be able to address the shift at any significant level.

**The Shift is Necessary.** This may perhaps be the most difficult area to address within the shift. History tells us that generations correct each others' mistakes and build on each others' successes. It's time for the Boomers to become mentors and coaches to the Mosaics, so these emerging leaders may learn from their mistakes and grow their remarkable successes in the coming years. And it's time for the Mosaics to become learners and receivers, as they inherit some remarkable organizations and successes from the Boomer

nation, while at the same time having the courage to address the failures and weaknesses that are inevitably present within the legacy of any generation.

I suggest the only place for Mosaics to do this is within a relationship with an actual Boomer, from whom they can learn and gain understanding as to the rationale behind certain organizational realities. These relationships will be the fabric of our organizations for years to come, and the place where the shift actually takes place.

I'm a Mosaic and I'm a manager. I also have absolutely no idea what I am doing. Thank God for the Boomers to help show me the way. That's quite a legacy.

\*Please see article titled, "Intergenerational Teams: How One Ministry Shows They Can Work," on page 17 of this issue.

**JR Kerr** is teaching pastor at North Way Community Church, Wexford, Pa. Visit [northway.org](http://northway.org) or contact him at [jrk@northway.org](mailto:jrk@northway.org).

History tells us that generations correct each others' mistakes and build on each others' successes. It's time for the Boomers to become mentors and coaches to the Mosaics, so these emerging leaders may learn from their mistakes and grow their remarkable successes in the coming years. And it's time for the Mosaics to become learners and receivers, as they inherit some remarkable organizations and successes from the Boomer nation...