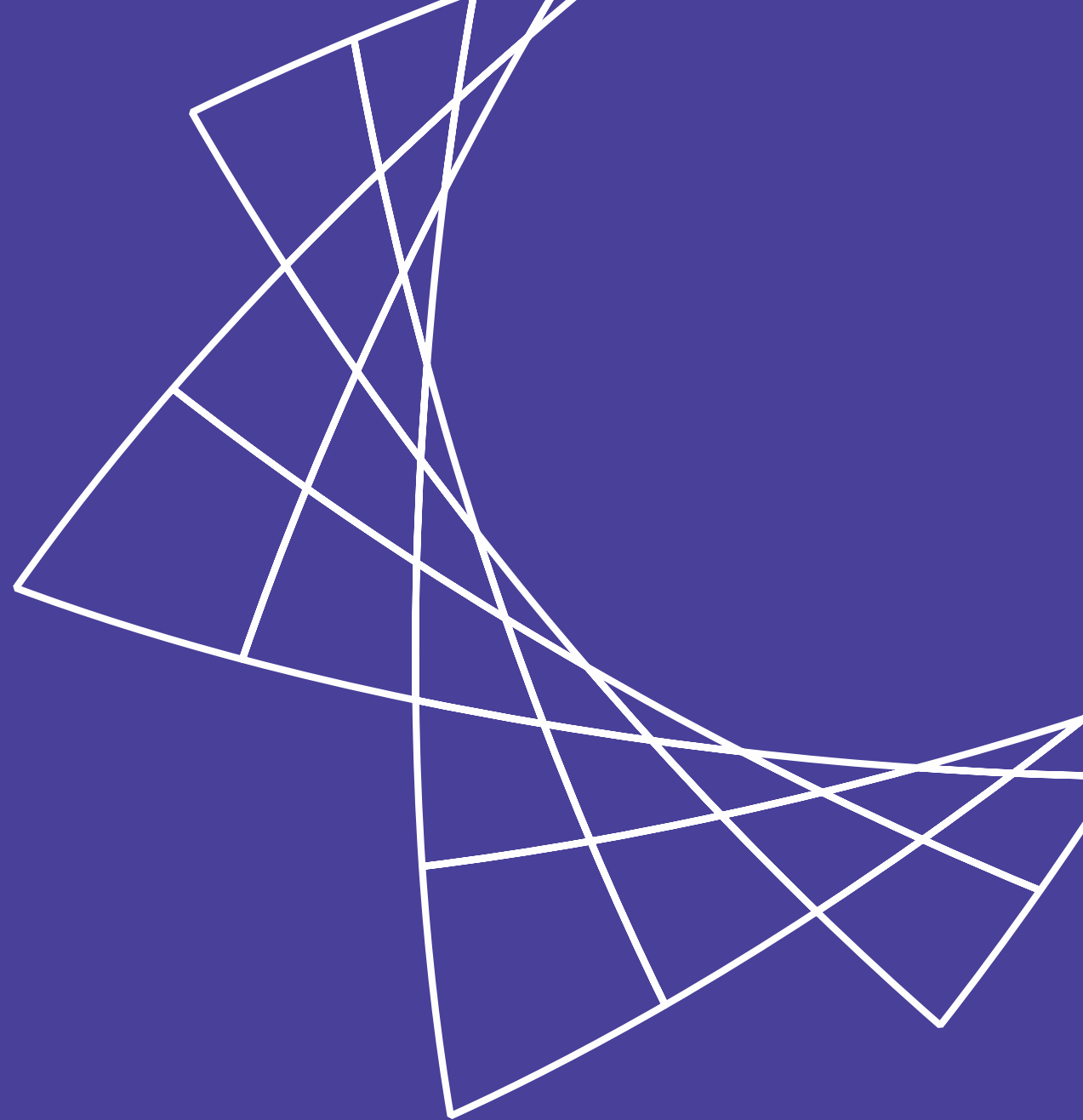




# RECRUITING AND RETAINING YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

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# INTRODUCTIONS



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## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ➔ Current recruiting challenges and tips on giving your organization a competitive advantage.
  - ➔ Steps to raise awareness and attract new young professionals to enter our industry.
  - ➔ Creating a culture that positively impacts employee retention and engagement.
- 



**LOOKING BACK  
TO MOVE FORWARD**



What are some of the current challenges with recruiting?

# RECRUITING CHALLENGES

- Finding candidates
- Sourcing passive candidates
- Increased competition
- High compensation expectations
- Speed to hire



# TOP 5 QUESTIONS FROM CANDIDATES

**1**  
Can I work remotely?

**2**  
Will there be travel?

**3**  
Do you reimburse home equipment?

**4**  
Do you support professional development?

**5**  
Do you have resource/mentorship programs?



# HOW TO GIVE YOURSELF A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

- Widen your recruiting efforts
- Communicate early and often with candidates
- Give candidates a feel for the culture, even in a remote environment
- Speak about DEI efforts
- Meet and exceed candidates' shifting expectations
- Build a strategy that raises awareness for your industry
- Create talent pools for the future



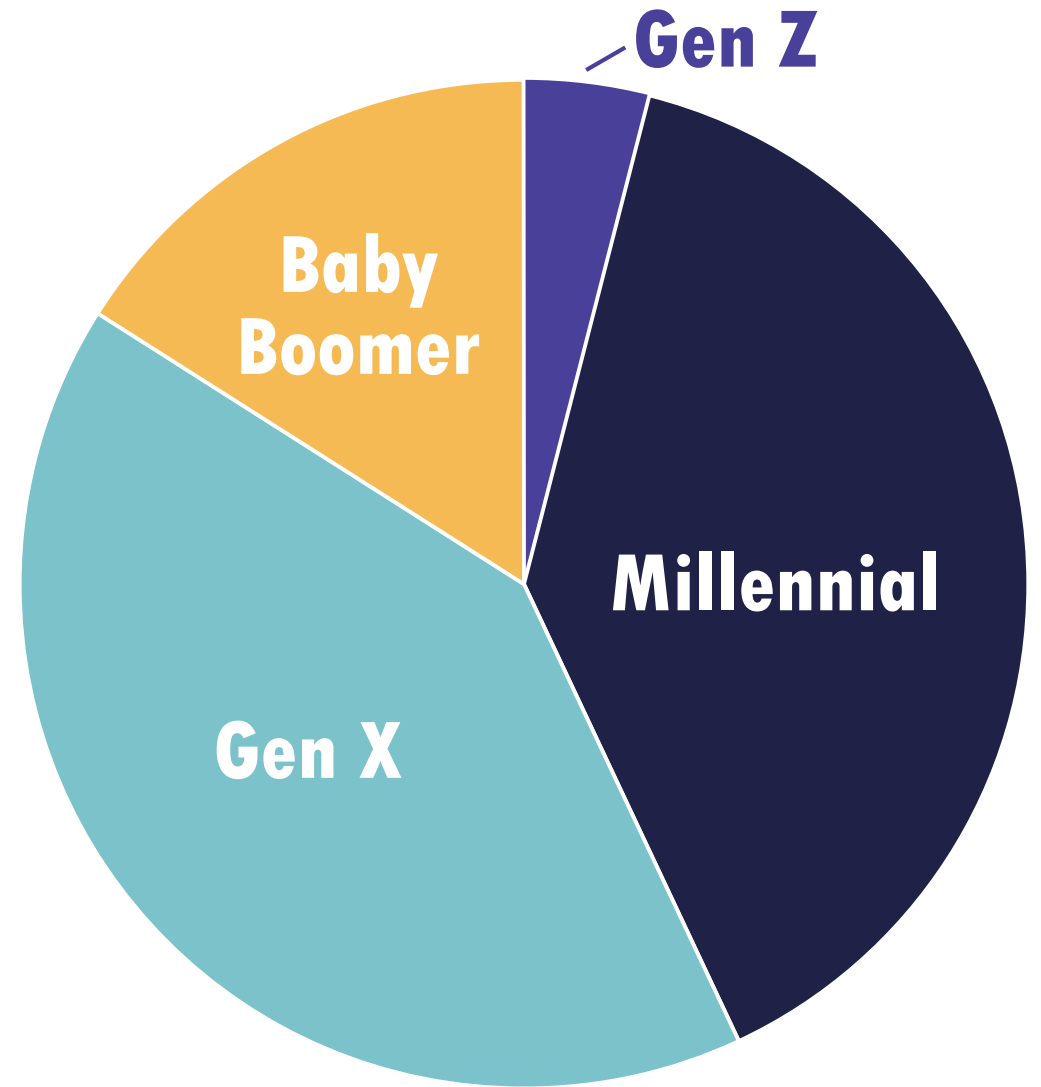




How is your organization  
recruiting Young  
Professionals?

# GES GLOBAL GENERATIONAL BREAKDOWN

Generation	Current Ages	% of Employees
Gen Z	9 – 24	4%
Millennial	25 – 40	39%
Gen X	41 – 56	41%
Baby Boomer	57 – 75	16%



# NEW APPROACH TO RECRUITING YPS

## Account Associate Program

- Program started in 2014
- Full-time Position
- 4 to 5 Account Associates hired each year
- Chicago, Orlando and Las Vegas

## Position Overview

- Training with various GES departments
- Work directly with national account teams to learn about GES and the events industry
- Mentors to provide coaching, guidance and assignments
- Combination of remote work and in-person at GES offices, partner hotels, convention centers and production facilities
- Leads to role in Business Development or Client Services



# ACCOUNT ASSOCIATE PROGRAM

JUNE, ANNUALLY: • Start date

JUNE - AUGUST: • Initial onboarding and GES overview  
• Training with GES departments  
• Cross training with convention centers, hotels, associations, etc.  
• Show visits

AUGUST: • Mentor assignments  
• Account/show reveal

AUGUST – MAY: • Work with account teams on assigned shows  
• Attend planning meetings, site visits, presentations, etc.  
• Proposal development and ongoing sales training  
• Mentor rotation  
• Career planning

JUNE: • Transition into next GES position/role





## ACCOUNT ASSOCIATE RECRUITMENT

- GES YPs attend college job fairs
- Previous Account Associates participate in interviews
- Promotional videos and photos of Account Associates
- Quotes from current employees on job post
- Industry outreach
- Referral incentive



# ACCOUNT ASSOCIATE PROGRAM **SUCCESS**

**40**

**Account Associates  
hired since 2014**

**53%**

21/40

**Currently work for**



**70%**

28/40

**Currently work in  
the events  
industry**

## Awards/Scholarships:

- PCMA Twenty in their Twenties (4 recipients)
- IAEE MWC Expo! Expo! Scholarship (4 recipients)
- Exhibit City News 40 Under Forty
- IAEE Midwestern Chapter President's Award
- IAEE Midwestern Chapter Volunteer of the Year
- IAEE Midwestern Chapter Emerging Leader

## Current Industry Involvement:

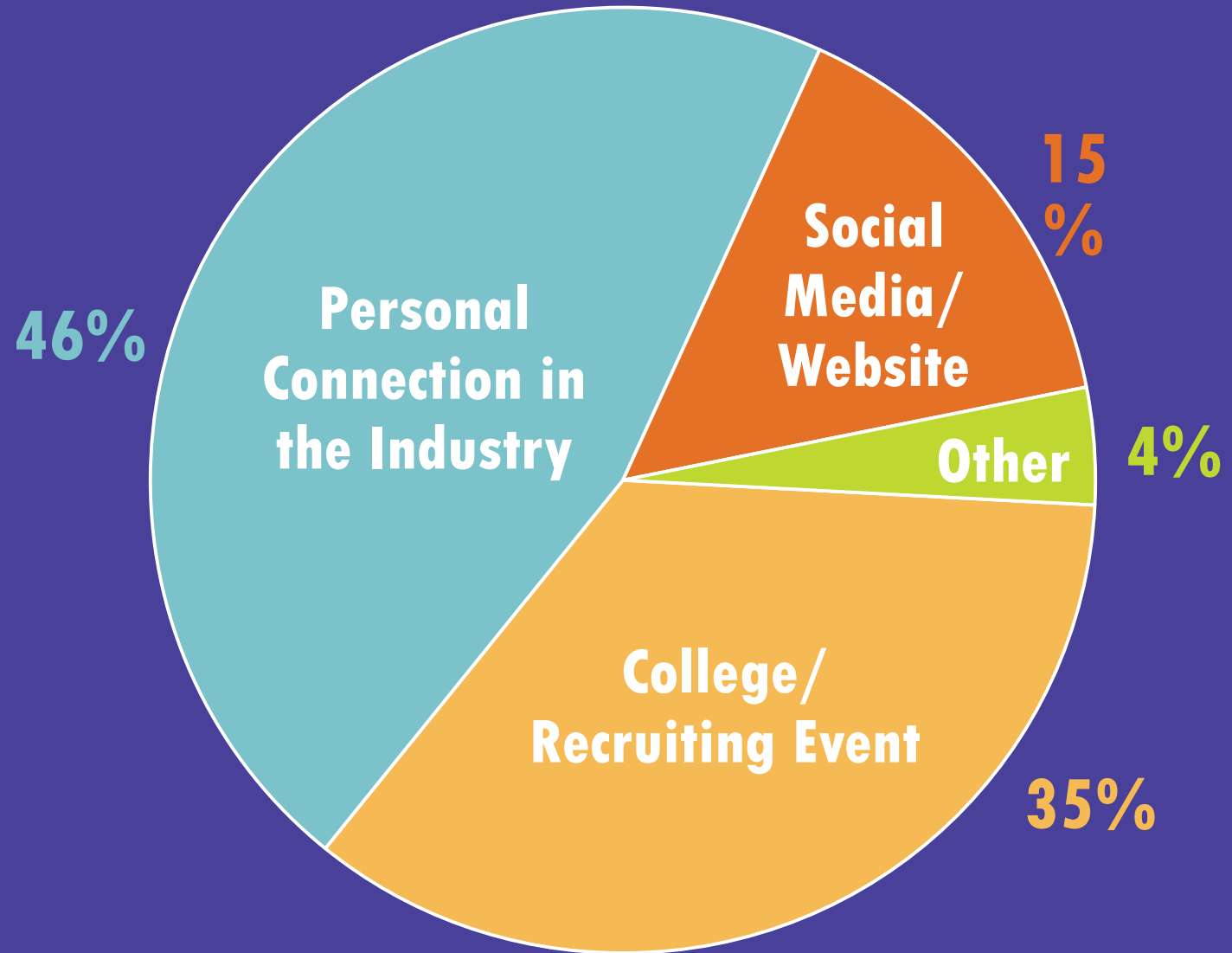
- IAEE Midwestern Chapter Executive Committee and Board of Directors
- PCMA Greater Midwest Chapter Board of Directors
- ESCA Membership Chair
- IAEE Women's Leadership Committee
- IAEE Midwestern Chapter Young Professionals, Scholarship and Membership Committees
- PCMA Southeast Chapter Program Committee





Ask the YPs!

# HOW DID YOU FIND THE EXHIBITION AND EVENTS INDUSTRY?





# WHAT INITIALLY INTERESTED YOU IN THE EXHIBITION AND EVENTS INDUSTRY?

*"Seeing other trade shows as an attendee, all the moving parts to make a show come to life"*

*"Knowing that every day would be different and also the travel!"*

*"I've always been interested in the small details of things and being highly organized - event planning incorporates all those things"*

*"The ability to travel and make connections throughout the industry with people all over"*

*"What initially interested me in the events industry was the before and after process of it all. I love how everyone comes together to create a special event for so many people."*

## COMMON THEMES:

- ❖ Event planning
- ❖ Travel
- ❖ Every day is different
- ❖ Seeing an event from beginning to end

*"How each day was going to be so different! That I got to be client facing, creative, and not sit in a cube each day"*

*"Like planning. Enjoy seeing how an event starts with nothing and with hard work turns into this amazing event that people enjoy"*

*"The opportunity to travel, interest in the marketing and design process that goes into planning live events"*

*"Intricacy of tradeshow and all the moving parts that take place in building a show"*

*"Exhibitions are the most unique way of bringing communities together for professional development and a celebration of common interests. Their large scale and mobility around the country are exciting"*



WHAT ENCOURAGES YOU TO STAY IN THE EXHIBITION AND EVENTS INDUSTRY?

ARE THERE SPECIFIC FACTORS THAT MAKE YOU CONTINUE TO CHOOSE THIS INDUSTRY?

- ❖ People/community
- ❖ Each day is different/always changing
- ❖ Building something from nothing
- ❖ Travel
- ❖ New challenges

These are all advantages of working on a large show!

*"I did leave the industry to pursue a role in digital marketing/social media marketing, but I came back because I prefer the close-knit culture within the events industry, the opportunity to work with multiple clients in different industries (medical, tech, machinery, etc)"*



# WHAT WOULD MAKE YOU LEAVE THE EXHIBITION AND EVENTS INDUSTRY?

1. Work Life Balance
2. Higher Pay
3. New Opportunity

## ADDITIONAL RESPONSES:

- Travel
- Long hours
- Pandemic/instability of industry
- Lack of support
- Not feeling valued or appreciated

*"If I was overworked and burnt out with traveling or was offered a big pay bump elsewhere (even so, it would still be hard to leave the industry)"*

*"If there comes a time when I prefer to no longer travel or more 'standard' 9-5 hours"*

*"Not being appreciated enough for all of the hard work that we put in."*

*"Do not think I will be leaving the exhibition/ events industry"*

*"The possible instability of the industry. COVID tested a lot and it is scary to think that that kind of thing could happen again at any moment"*





WHAT CAN YOUR EMPLOYER DO TO KEEP YOU IN THE EXHIBITION AND EVENTS INDUSTRY?

WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU AS A YOUNG PROFESSIONAL?

- Competitive salaries
- Opportunities for growth
- Career mapping
- Sense of community
- Schedule flexibility
- Supportive leadership
- Ongoing feedback

*"I think it's so important for employers to **create a community** that a YP feels comfortable reaching out to for **guidance and support**. Making sure YPs have the **building blocks** to find the answers, be confident in their decisions, and not to be afraid to ask for help."*



What do you do to create a culture of engagement?

# EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

## New Initiatives:

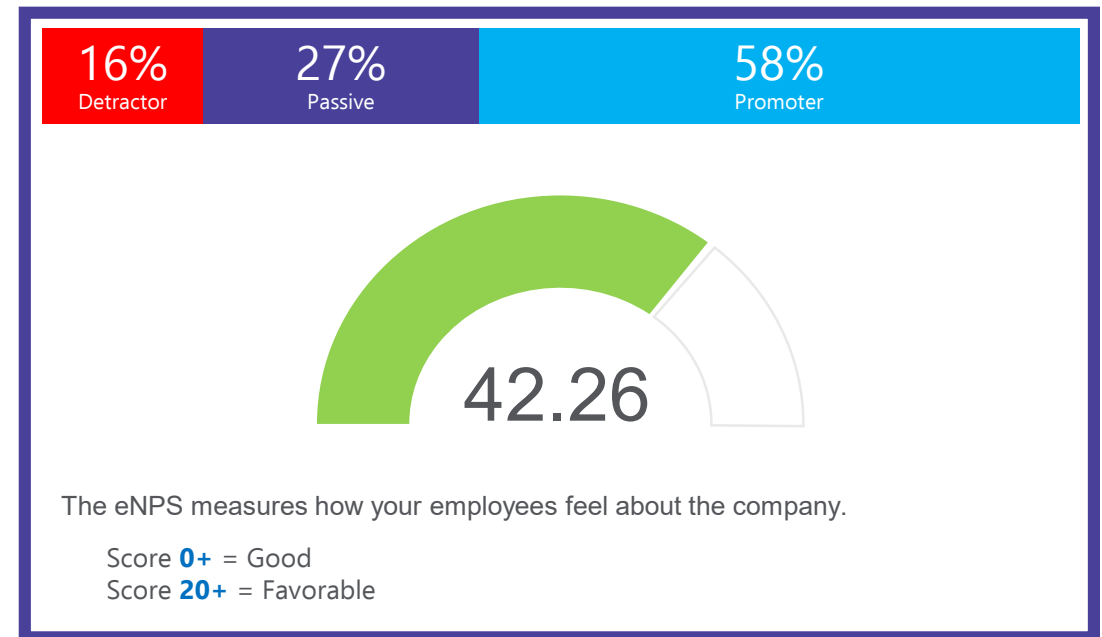
- Cross functional focus groups
- Reengineered GES Values
- TRUE Honors Program
- Rollout of paternity and enhanced maternity benefits
- Partner with mental health provider to provide specific training and enhanced awareness
- Rollout of LinkedIn training for managers



**2022 eNPS**



**2023 eNPS**



# GES POD MENTORING PROGRAM

## Program Benefits:

- Engage remote employees and improve retention
- Create synergies and a support system
- Mentoring for all

## POD Overview

- Assigned groups of 6-8
- Varying years of experience and geographical locations
- Pod Leader in each group
- Meet on a monthly basis
- Each POD meeting has a suggested focus topic and open discussion
- 12-month timeframe



# CREATING A POSITIVE CULTURE

- Listen to your employees
- Create focus groups
- Career Pathing
- Mentorship Program
- Help employees feel included and have a sense of community at work
- Reevaluate benefit offerings
- Provide Remote and hybrid options
- Enhance your mental health offerings and awareness
- Rewards & Recognition
- Have Fun!







2023

START



**THANK YOU!**