

new views: youth engagement

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defining youth

City of Peterborough: 12 – 18 years

Government of Ontario: 12 – 25 years

Government of Canada: 15 – 30 years

United Nations: 15 – 24 years

age

≠

experience

intelligence

maturity

29%

the proportion of our population considered
'youth' in Greater Peterborough (ages 10-34)

- Greater Peterborough's Vital Signs, 2013

“Canadian Youth Perceive Age
Discrimination while volunteering”

- Volunteer Canada, 2012

“Youth need to be noticed . . . then they need to be accommodated . . . then they need to be inspired.”

- Penelope Burk, BurksBlog, 2009 + 2014

challenges

- youth don't participate
- youth don't stick around
- youth don't have the skills/knowledge/capacity

youth don't participate *because . . .*

- don't know you
- don't feel welcome
- don't have the resources

- R. Edge & J. Reid, Kawartha World Issues Centre, 2010

youth don't stick around
because . . .

- don't connect with you and your organization
- don't feel useful or valuable

youth don't have the capacity
because . . .

- capacity building isn't supported
- unique contributions are overlooked

challenges

- youth don't participate
- youth don't stick around
- youth don't have the skills/knowledge/capacity

barriers

- youth don't know you
- youth don't feel welcome
- youth don't have adequate resources
- youth didn't connect with real people
- youth didn't feel useful or needed
- youth capacity wasn't supported

starting points

- how can youth get to know you (and your org)?
- how can you make youth feel welcome?
- how can you ensure youth have resources to participate?
- how can youth connect with real people in your org?
- how can you ensure that youth feel useful and needed?
- how can you support youth capacity building?

how can youth get to know you?

- put a name and a face to your org
- go where youth go
- develop youth ambassadors and make friends
- communicate with relevant language and tools

how can you make youth feel welcome?

- model diversity in your organization
- think about accessibility
- use inclusive language and processes
- facilitate meaningful connections

how can you ensure that youth have the resources needed to participate?

- plan low barrier programs or meetings
- dedicate resources to youth engagement

how can youth connect with real people in your organization?

- put names and faces to your org
- think about succession planning
- more relationship building!

how can you ensure youth feel useful?

- give youth responsibility
- include youth in decision making
- foster leadership development

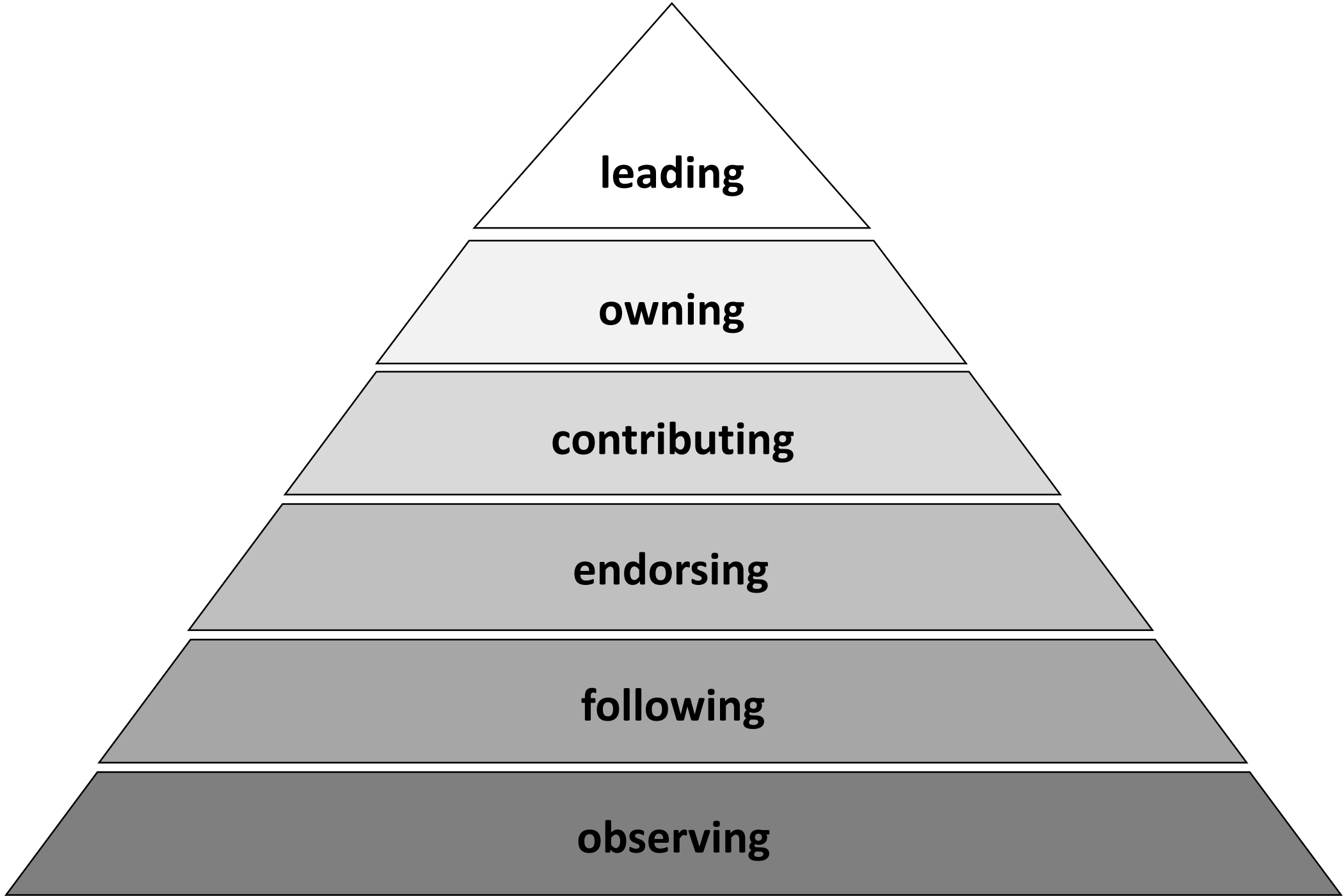
how can you support youth capacity building?

- create opportunities for mentorship
- support youth development generally & individually

evaluate often & be willing
to change things up

“Trickle-down community engagement sucks and is insulting.”

- Vu Le, nonprofitwithballs.com, 2014



adopt a 'generations' approach to
youth engagement


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