

# Are You Ready for Generation Z?

INSIGHTS FOR RECRUITING, TRAINING AND RETAINING

For the first time in American history, there are five generations in the workforce. We're already familiar with the Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y/Millennials. Now it's time to meet the new kids on the block: Generation Z.



**TRADITIONALISTS:  
BORN BEFORE 1946**

Currently retiring at a rate of  
10,000 a day.



**BABY BOOMERS:  
BORN 1946 – 1964**

Currently 80 million  
in the workforce.



**GENERATION X:  
BORN 1965 – 1976**

Currently 60 million  
in the workforce.



**MILLENNIALS (GEN Y)  
BORN 1977 – 1997**

Currently 82 million  
in the workforce.



**GENERATION Z  
BORN 1998 – 2005**

61 million in the  
workforce by 2025.

With Traditionalists mostly retired, Baby Boomers retiring at the rate of 10,000 per day and 61 million Gen Zers now coming of working age, younger generations will dominate the workforce by 2025.<sup>1</sup> So it's critical that companies begin aligning their messaging and workplace now to become the employer of choice in the years ahead.

Generation Z has never known a world without smartphones, WiFi, Google or social media. They were babies or not yet born when 9/11 happened.

In terms of their priorities and expectations in the workplace, Gen Z has both similarities to and differences from Millennials. Here are some of the traits which will affect how they choose their career path, along with strategies employers can use to get the inside track with this emerging group of talent.

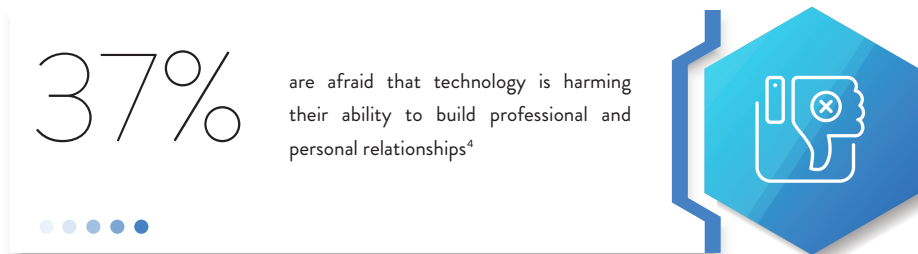
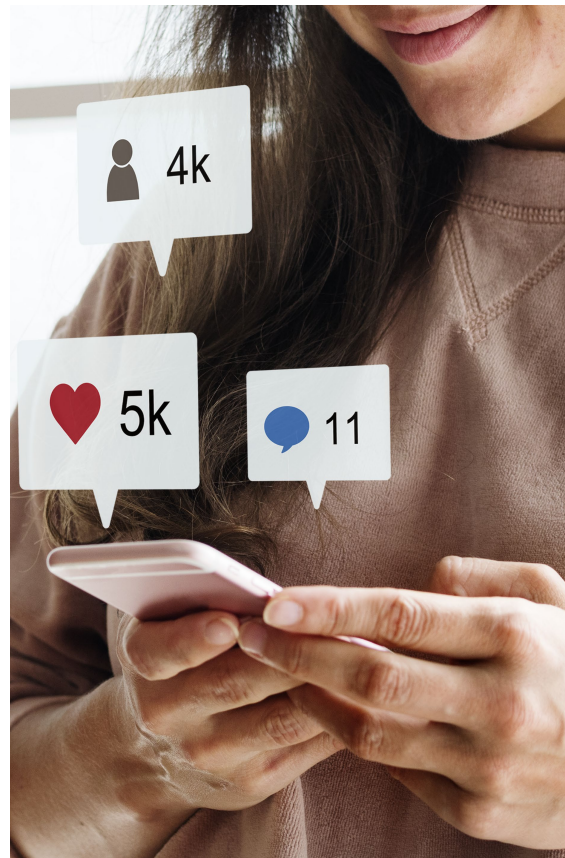
## Hyper-Connected

Generation Z lives with smartphone(s) in hand. For them, it's normal to frequently check for messages or status updates, and access information or people instantly.

**A digitally enabled workplace is a high priority for Gen Z, with Google, Amazon and Apple being among the most desirable employers.<sup>2</sup>** Companies can position themselves as tech-savvy by installing collaborative workspace options and file management systems.

Because Gen Z will unfailingly read reviews of a prospective employer on sites such as Glassdoor, **the smart company will pay attention to its online approval score. Recruiters should focus on digital media for advertising job openings.**

While digital skills are welcome in a time when they're required even for many entry level positions, they also bring drawbacks.

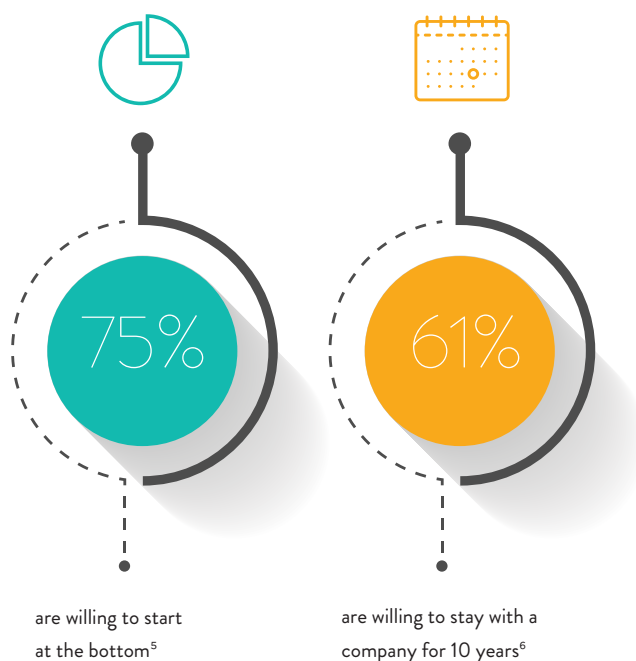


Compare these statistics with the 92% of HR leaders who believe that emotional and social skills are increasingly important.<sup>4</sup>

For managers who worry about this trend, the solution may be to introduce an apprenticeship system, where new hires are paired with more experienced team members. This gives them the opportunity to learn people skills, problem solving, critical thinking and the types of corporate knowledge and culture that can only be learned by watching (not digitally).

## Willing to Work Their Way Up

The watershed life event for Generation Z was the Great Recession of 2008. Many of them saw their parents lose jobs and homes. As well, they're aware that Social Security may not be there for them by the time they retire. So they don't take financial stability for granted.



This realistic, security-oriented attitude is good news for employers. Promises of job security and regular raises are likely to get a good response from job candidates. And remember, while they'll work hard, they expect to be rewarded for it.

## Want a Balanced Lifestyle

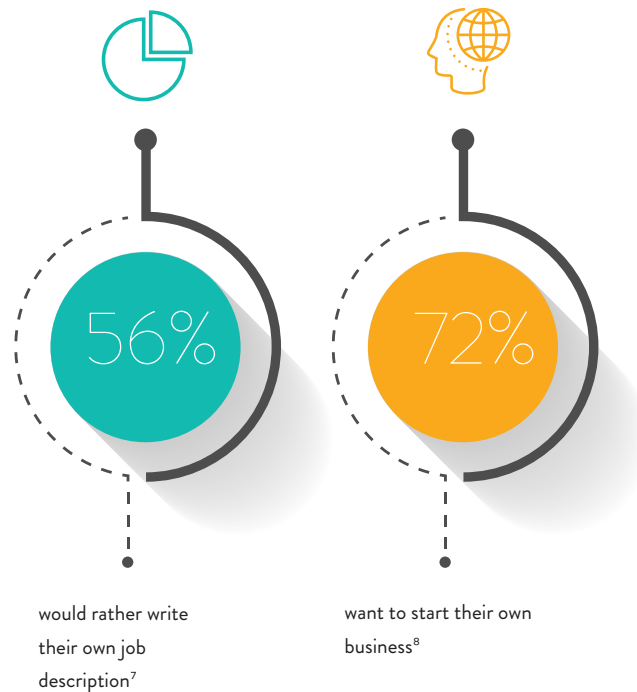
**Generation Z will look for higher values in the culture and growth opportunities a prospective employer offers.**

They look for work/life balance as well as a corporate mission they can care about.

**Flexible schedules, telecommuting opportunities, benefits such as a Wellness Spending Account, and an update of the company's ethical and charitable activities may help woo people with these priorities.**

## Will Carve Their Own Career Path

While Millennials are team oriented, Generation Zers prefer to work alone and succeed by their own individual merits. They'll pursue a wide variety of skill building opportunities, rather than take one straight route up a career ladder.



The Gen Z employee loves to listen, learn and meet many different challenges on the way to fulfilling their entrepreneurial dreams. Offer this individual opportunities to "cross-train" in different departments throughout your company.

64%

 are considering an advanced degree<sup>9</sup>

That's lower than any generation since the Traditionalists. With fewer Gen Zers willing or able to take on the burden of student debt, hiring managers will be seeing more high school graduates or those who chose more affordable online options.

## Need Face-to-Face Feedback

You might think the opposite attitude would prevail with the first true digital native generation. It's not clear why they want so much in-person engagement; perhaps because they saw Millennials criticized for their reliance on technology. Whatever the case, an annual performance review won't cut it with Generation Z.

This may require some new procedures on the part of the company's managers. They should schedule regular meetings to discuss the employee's projects and career development.



## Expect the Workplace to Conform to Their Needs

This trend, which started with the Baby Boomers, has continued to grow with every subsequent generation. We've already mentioned some of the ways a company could meet this expectation, such as **control over working hours and wellness perks**. Showing that you care about their well-being could be as simple and affordable as a vending machine with healthy options, or as expensive as hiring a rock group for the company picnic.



## Conclusion

While this overview details some of the characteristics you're likely to meet in Generation Z, due to the social conditions they grew up in, it's important to remember that each candidate is an individual, with his or her own unique set of traits.

What's more, they are not strange beings from another planet. Some of their attitudes are simply the result of youth and inexperience — a stage that all of us have gone through. Thinking back to your own early days in the workforce will go a long way towards helping you relate to them.

Keep these points in mind as you prepare to welcome Generation Z to your company, and you're ahead of the game.

## ABOUT US

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<sup>1</sup>U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and U.S. Census Bureau

<sup>2</sup>2018 Career Interest Survey, National Society of High School Scholars

<sup>3</sup>Gen Z @ Work by David Stillman and Jonah Stillman

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>8 Key Differences between Gen Z and Millennials by George Beall, Huffington Post

<sup>9</sup>Generation Z Enters the Workforce by Carolyn O'Boyle, Josefin Atack and Kelly Monahan, Deloitte Insights