

UNDERSTANDING THE NEW ENTRANTS TO THE WORKPLACE: GEN Z

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Abstract: Gen Z employees are the new entrants to the workforce. It is important for organizations to know about this new generation who are born after 1995 as they are different from their previous generations. This paper is a review of Gen Z, their characteristics, Preferences and motivating factors in workplaces. This knowledge will help organizations to create or modify the organizational culture in order to accommodate the work values of Gen Z.

IndexTerms - Gen Z, Generation, Characteristics, Preferences, Workplace, Motivation

INTRODUCTION

Five different generations identified in the modern world

a) The traditionalists (Silent Generation or the Greatest Generation), born between 1928 and 1944, who value authority and a top-down management approach, b) The Baby Boomer Generation, born between 1945 and 1965, who tend to be workaholics, c) Generation X, born between 1965 and 1979, a generation who is comfortable with authority and view the work-life balance as important, d) Generation Y, born between 1980 and 1995 and who generally grew up in prosperity and have technology savvy, e) Generation Z, born after 1995 (Cilliers, 2017, pp. 189–190)

I. Gen Z

Generation Z are the generation born in the 1990's and raised in the 2000s during the most important changes in the century exists in a world with web, internet, smart phones, laptops, freely available networks and digital media (Bascha, 2011; Brue Tulgan & Rain maker Inc., 2013). Gen Z, also been called I Gen, Founders, and Centennials are born between 1995 and 2012. They are digital centric and technology is their identity (Dangmei, 2016). They are also known as 'Digital naives' (Singh Anjali, 2014). They are the hardest working generation but demand flexibility. They are the current entrants to the workplace and voting centers and they are going to become the fastest growing group of employees (Gaidhani et.al, 2019).

Through their need for freedom, integration, speed, and innovation, Generation Z is transforming the work culture in companies today. Companies will also need to adapt their culture to suit the work values of this generation (Ravikiran Dwivedula, 2020).

II. Characteristics of Gen Z

Generation Z tends to be impatient, instant minded, lacking the ambitions of previous generations, have acquired attention deficit disorder with a high dependency on the technology and a low attention span, individualistic, self-directed, most demanding, acquisitive, materialistic and entitled generation so far (Generational White Paper, 2011). Generation Z is the most ethnically diverse and technologically sophisticated generation (Institute for Emerging Issues, 2012). Technology is a part of their identity and they are tech savvy but lack problem-solving skills and have not demonstrated the ability to look at a situation, put in context, analyze it and make a decision (Joseph Coombs, 2013). They also appear to be less inclined toward voting and to participating in their communities than earlier generations (Institute for emerging issues, 2015). But Generation Z are very much concerned with environmental issues, very conscious of looming shortages and water shortages which indicates that they have a high sense of responsibility towards the natural resources (Max Mihelich, 2013).

Generation Z tend to be more entrepreneurial, trustworthy, tolerant and less motivated by money than Gen Y (Dan Schawbel , 2014). Generation Z can function in both the real and virtual worlds. They can easily switch between these two worlds, as they perceive them as complementary to one another (Żarczyńska-Dobiesz, Chomątowska, 2014). Generation Z wants to be heard irrespective of their young age (Amanda Slavin ,2015). They look for a job all over the world, as their characteristics are mobility and knowledge of foreign languages. They do not care about stability at work; they easily change their workplace, looking for versatility and to escape from routine. They are the most educated and sophisticated generation ever (Hysa, Steinerowska-Streb, Wziętek-Staško, 2016).

Gen Z are characterized as multitaskers, progressives, and purposeful souls, already aware of their capabilities and the power they can achieve. They are also hardworking, financially responsible, independent, and determined. They also hold more conservative views of success regarding money, education, and career advancement. So, we can say they have more in common with their grandparents and great-grandparents than with Millennials (AMA STAFF, 2018).

III. Preferences of Generation Z at the Workplace:

Gen Z prefer transparency, self-reliance, flexibility and personal freedom (Bascha ,2011). The three most important work motivators for Generation Z are opportunities for advancement, more money, and meaningful work (Schwabel 2014). Gen z prefers independent and challenging tasks. they are helpful and expect the work environment to be equally helpful. They prefer those companies which will give them opportunity to grow and they can stay for long time and build their career. They want to have work life balance along with a happy work environment. As Gen Z care for the society, they value those companies which care for the society (Agarwal & Vaghela, 2018).

GEN Z also prefer transparency, self- reliance flexibility and personal freedom. They expect their ideas to be listened and feelings to be valued. They prefer work environment that nurture mentoring, learning and professional development opportunities, encourages their entrepreneurial skills, and sociable and allowance for flexible schedules (Teresa Bridges, 2015). They prefer a leader with honesty and integrity (Robert Half, 2015) and a work place that is easy to adjust (Knoll, 2014). Gen Z prefer to work for an organization that demonstrate genuine ties with community and social responsibility (Nicola Middlemiss, 2015). People belong to this generation are willing to be employed for a longer time by one employer (even if it is entire lifetime), but the work needs to be attractive (Anna Dolot, 2018).

IV. How to motivate Gen Z in workplace

- As career growth is important to Gen Z, provide them with opportunities to grow in their job. Provide Gen Z with challenging work and use reward to motivate them. Managers can customize rewards and incentives to best fit an employee's need (i.e., gift certificates or day off).
- A fun, safe and comfortable working environment can greatly motivate Gen Z. So, create a safe, comfortable working environment for Gen Z workers.
- Increased responsibilities are great motivator for Gen Z. so give increased responsibilities as reward for Gen Z employee's good performance.
- As Gen Z spends most of their time in social media, organizations can leverage this platform to their advantage (Arthur M. Baldonado, 2018).

Enjoyable work environment, achievement, reward, peers and relationship at the workplace are the major motivating factors for Gen Z employees (Zuzana Kirchmayer, 2018).

V. Conclusion

Leaders and managers who understand Gen Z needs of growth and work/life balance will gain the competitive edge of an organization, increase recruitment and retention, and ultimately create a stronger organization (Arthur M. Baldonado, 2018). Thus, it is important for organizations to understand this new generation and adapt the culture to accommodate their workplace values in order to remain competent.

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