



“FUTURE HR STRATEGIES FOR ALPHA GENERIC WORKFORCE”

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Abstract

Alpha generics are known for their reliance on technology as they are children of Millennials and siblings of Generation Z, who are regarded as being tech-savvy. The study aims at predicting future scenarios that will assist HR managers in meeting the needs of a rapidly changing environment and meeting the expectations of a changing generation. Based on a few research papers and articles, suggestions have been offered that can help HR strategists formulate policies for the newer generation of workers who are more proficient with technology than the traditional offline mode of work. This paper includes the hybrid work mode, flexible workplace, skill development, inclusion of a multigenerational workforce, technology over the human connection, and project/assignment tasks. As the study is descriptive in nature, several secondary sources are explored such as research papers, articles, websites, and blogs to synthesize the fragmented knowledge. The paper envisages a promising future for Generation Alpha and suggests HR strategies for Alpha's generic workforce.

Keywords: Alpha generic, Millennials, Tech-Savvy, Hybrid work mode, HR strategies.

Introduction

The first generation of the 21st century and the successors of the millennials, popularly known as Generation Alpha, are named after the first letter of the Greek alphabet, Alpha. Born in or after 2010, turned 10-12 years of age as of 2022, and are still in school. Gen A is born in an era of rapid technological advancement and operates globally as they are the children of millennials known as tech-savvy. The Alpha Generation inherited it from their parents and is very involved in technology. During the COVID-19 phase, their education was through information and communication technology or online, making them dependent on technology. Alpha Generic is growing up with technology, whether it be entertainment, gaming, transmission, or education. Students learn through visual, multimodal, and hands-on methods in their schools instead of structural and auditory ways.

Recently, the COVID-19 pandemic has been one of the many reasons for the rising dependency on technology. The tech sector is dominated by Gen Y and Gen Z and will be joined by Gen Alpha soon. This Generation has grown up seeing their parents working from home during Covid times, and some are still working from home or in a hybrid mode. This development impacted the minds of the Alpha Generic, and it is found that working from

home or in a hybrid mode is more feasible. Despite the slight differences between Gen Y, Z, and Alpha, all three generations are grouped as "tech-savvy" and "flexibility-seekers."

Gen A is expected to be a robust future asset of organizations worldwide, representing the most creative, racially diverse, and educationally advanced generation in history. The millennial generation has already adjusted to a hybrid work style, and these alphas will continue to follow the trend. Furthermore, their interest in skill-based learning and innovation makes them better suited to technical jobs. Since Generation Alpha represents the future, understanding their behavior patterns is essential for looking up to the next decade and beyond.

Moreover, this generation will be the most highly educated and sophisticated generation in the coming days. In comparison to predecessors, Generation Alpha will be able to access an ocean of information.

Literature Review

Gomes et al. (2018) investigated the behavior of the alpha generation and how it affects the organizational environment and discovered that generation alpha consists of creative, dynamic, and tech-savvy individuals. They concluded that these personality traits will influence people's career decisions, which will bias toward the technology field.

White (2020) Stated that Generation Alpha, who is the diversified, educated, attentive, and technologically skilled generation will value technology above human connection. Furthermore, he predicted that the pressure from both internal and external environments will affect mental health therefore they will need mental health support at the workplace.

Jha (2020) attempts to explain, analyze, and comprehend Generation Alpha within the ecological framework of the twenty-first century. Despite being the wealthiest, diversified, and tech-savvy generation, they have witnessed changes in their parent's workplaces and ever-shrinking families. The future of the world can be shaped with the perfect balance of outdoor activities, monitored technology use, education, and teaching 21st-century skills.

Karthikeyan (2022) examined the expectations and demands of generation alpha for the years to come and the likely impact of socioeconomic and psychological transformations on their wants and desires. He revealed that the Alpha Generation will be more technologically proficient and knowledgeable than the parent". The generation also adapted to the demands of the period because of the exposure to technology from an early age. He concluded that Generation Alpha was far superior to earlier generations because of the technical advancements, exposure to social media, quick message intake, and enhanced lifestyles.

Objective of the study

- An attempt has been made to identify the future HR strategies for the alpha generic workforce through this paper.

Research Methodology

- This paper is based on the researcher's own observations. The information collected for the study was mainly from secondary sources. Academic journals, articles, and websites were used to collect data to achieve the objectives. This research acknowledges the requirement for HR strategies for "Gen A." Furthermore, it will direct the strategist to formulate effective policies in the near future.

Strategies

Generation Alpha is still young, so much is not yet known about them. Putting yourself in someone else's shoes is the best way to understand them. The changed Alpha Generation can be clearly witnessed once they grow up. Therefore, HR strategists must prepare themselves for a workforce that may be more efficient, tech-savvy, and might be in a hurry. What is foreseen for the future is a situation where the employer will have to make extra efforts to make himself responsive to the dynamic expectations of his employees. It can be termed as a journey where the driver will also have to give equal or sometimes more attention to his back. Therefore, the employer must identify the requirements of the Alpha Generation and meet their demands once the generation enters adulthood and start working. The workforce, working patterns, and technology will undergo massive changes, resulting in new job opportunities and challenges. Thus, strategists need to understand them from an early age and predict future strategies for them so that Alpha Generation can get satisfaction and excel in their careers.

Hybrid work modes

It is a recent change in the corporate world nowadays and a blessing in disguise in the form of COVID that corporates and the workforce are giving recognition and importance to hybrid workplaces. Randstad Workmonitor report 2022 reveals that nearly 83% of Indians value flexibility in their work hours and workplace. Identifying and appreciating the need for flexibility is already a major HR concern, and it has opened the way for practices like hybrid working (A New Era in the Homework Revolution, 2022).

In the global world, digitalization has become an established norm. Every workplace must maximize its potential, cope with innovations, and do away with barriers in transitioning to a hybrid workplace. The COVID-19 pandemic triggered a boost in demand for hybrid workplaces. Even though the lockdown is over, businesses still find hybrid work arrangements more practical and cost-effective. The employees are also satisfied with these arrangements and feel that they are more productive and beneficial to their organizations. The pandemic has brought this development somewhat prematurely which was inevitably fated in the future.

Additionally, there is the lesson of adaptability and flexibility in the profession. The strategists must promote the hybrid workplace model to prioritize future work. The hybrid workplace is undoubtedly the approach to the workplace in the future.

Flexible workplaces

The idea of flexible working allows employees to choose the workplace from where they want to work within their allotted time. The advancement in the area of information and technology has helped the establishment of this revolutionary concept. Currently, there are many corporate houses offering flexible work arrangements. New working practices have been developed in India for the last ten years or so, the credit goes to advancements in information technology, organizational work patterns, and employee expectations. Catering to the demands of global clients, the availability of various types of services 24*7 and worldwide competition have resulted in establishing flexible workplaces as a new normal.

The new generation will demand a flexible workplace since they are already adapted to it because of the COVID-19 pandemic, which compelled them to take their classes online and form the habit of studying from home and saw their parents or elders “working from home”- “anytime and anywhere”.

Skill development

The acquisition of knowledge, abilities, and experiences required by a job is called skill development (Doyle, 2020). The Alpha Generation is much more involved and interested in technology than the preceding generations and they expect that their skills are enriched by working in organizations. The skill that employers demand is also similar to what is required for many job positions. A person with a variety of skills makes a good impression and is seen as a creative person eager to learn new skills by an employer. As they will be lifelong learners with different jobs throughout multiple careers, skill development becomes definitive. As the Alpha Generation progresses through their working lives, they will also need to be adaptable, continuously improving their skills and retraining to stay current with the changes expected to happen in the future. Businesses must implement various skill-development programs to properly train staff members and encourage them to stick with the company.

Inclusion of a multigenerational workforce

Baby boomers (born between 1946 and 1964), Generation X (born between 1965 and 1981), Generation Y (also known as millennials), Generation Z (born between 1997 and 2010), and in the future, the Alpha Generation will join them as the fifth generation and make a diversified workforce. Business executives may find it challenging to create effective retention strategies for their multigenerational workforce due to the variations across generational cohorts. The main areas where generations differ are attitudes, views, values, work ethics, perceptions of the workplace, and expectations.

The organization must recognize the needs of every generation and develop successful retention tactics. Since each age of the workforce has a unique importance for effective business operations, inclusion is important. The earlier generations lacked the Alpha Generation's level of technological sophistication. To meet each other's requirements, workers from all generations must communicate and settle to work together. The older generations can pass on their experience, expertise, and insight to the younger generations, and the new generation can assist the previous generation by teaching them how to use technology.

Table 1. Timeline of twentieth-century generations

S. no.	Generations	Timeline
1	Greatest Generation/ G.I. Generation	1901- 1924
2	Silents	1925- 1945
3	Baby Boomers	1946- 1964
4	Generation X	1965- 1980
5	Generation Y/ Millennials	1981- 1996
6	Generation Z	1997- 2010
7	Generation Alpha	2010- 2025

Note: Based on the works of Strauss and Howe (1991); Howe and Strauss (2000); McCrindle, (2008); Pew Research Centre (2019).
Generation Alpha=Twenty-first century

The timeline of the twentieth century begins with the greatest generation, born between 1901 and 1924, followed by the silents, born between 1925 and 1945, then the baby boomers, born between 1946 and 1964, then Generation X, born between 1965 and 1980, followed by Generation Y, or Millennials, born between 1981 and 1996, followed by Generation Z, born between 1997 and 2010, and finally the latest and twenty-first-century generation, known as Generation Alpha.

Technology over the human connection

The Alpha Generation becomes more habituated to technology as they grow. Gen Alpha has been given the nicknames "generation glass," "screenagers," "digital natives," and "connected or wired generation" (Tootell *et al.*, 2014; Williams, 2015) because research shows that from an early age, they can easily use devices such as smartphones and explore through various apps on them, whereas it took their predecessors years to learn how to do this (Turk, 2017). Alphas started using technology for their education as well. This "digital first" element has influenced to a great extent the way they operate. Future collaboration between them would be heavily reliant on technology. Real-time information is what this generation wants. As a result, their phone calls and emails may be replaced by other forms of communication. In continuation of the concept "Glass Enterprise Edition 2" has developed making the employees smarter and more efficient. A day may come when all communication may be done through a chip inserted somewhere in the head and operated by bodily energy. It may not be fiction as the enlightened ones communicate mentally, and time and space were not a barrier. The Alpha Generation may also demand access to personal assistants that are artificially intelligent while they are at work. The company must consider future expectations and prepare itself and its employees.

Project/Assignment tasks

Project and assignment tasks are just a few of the modifications that all corporate members are experiencing today which is due to the quick transformation in the business environment. In the modern world, people want to work on a project in which they are experts. Employees must make it a point to work through the project's completion under this new working environment. Due to its short duration and lack of monotony, many are now adopting

this working style because it feels more advantageous to them. Project or task management is affordable and manageable for the employer as well. This specific working pattern is frequently used in the business world and in the information and technology sector. HR strategists can anticipate from the trend that the alpha generic will soon also be interested in project and assignment work. Future employers must be prepared to meet the expectations of the Alpha Generation in this regard.

Conclusion

It is essential that HR managers take the time to fully understand and anticipate future HR strategies for the Alpha Generation. In the coming decade, managers need to make strategies for coping, handling, and utilising the abilities of the Alpha Generation to the fullest and effectively. HR strategists must be prepared to engage with all the Alpha Generation and maintain a connection to better understand them. Generation Alpha must be given the knowledge and abilities necessary for success in this time of transformation. Generation Alpha does not require the same hierarchies, political systems, or standard power dynamics because times have changed and have become more collaborative. Since Generation Alpha is anticipated to be the most technologically advanced generation ever, therefore, the present generation of society and HR managers should be in a “take off” mode armed with advanced tools like robotics and micro communication skills. The researcher attempted to present future HR strategies for the Alpha Generation based on current industry trends and approaches, such as hybrid work modes, flexible workplaces, the incorporation of a multigenerational workforce, technology over the human connection, and project assignment tasks. Generation Alpha is evolving and changing along with technology and is coping with it. Generation Alpha is involved in the educational system, which is transforming and evolving fast and connected to technology from an early age. The present generation can prepare Generation Alpha well for the future by involving, empowering, and investing in them. For that, an understanding has to be developed and the behavioral pattern of the Alpha Generation should be anticipated and strategies are made accordingly.

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