



# FROM Z TO A:

RECRUIT, RETAIN AND REAP  
THE BENEFITS OF A NEW  
GENERATION OF WORKERS

***As Gen Z floods the workforce (and Gen Alpha lines up behind them), make sure you're doing everything possible to attract, retain and optimize the performance of younger workers. Start here:***

The oldest members of Gen Z turn 26 in 2022, which means many are already in the workforce – and have been for some time.

**As this new generation of workers enters the workforce, they bring new attitudes and expectations. In this eBook, you'll learn:**

- 🔔 How Gen Z differs from earlier generations – and why it matters to employers.
- 🔔 Ways to craft a candidate experience that attracts Gen Z workers.
- 🔔 What to change – and what to keep – in your training and mentoring programs.
- 🔔 Where to turn for help reaching these young professionals.



# WHO IS GEN Z?

The Pew Research Center defines Gen Z as those born after 1996. In 2022, the oldest members of the cohort turn 26, while the youngest are still in middle school.

## Gen Z stands out from previous U.S. generations in several ways:

They're more racially and ethnically diverse than preceding generations. Only 52% of Gen Z describe themselves as "White, non-Hispanic," compared to 61% of Millennials, 70% of Gen X, and 82 percent of Boomers. A record percentage of Gen Zers – 25% percent – are Hispanic.

They're on track to be the most-educated generation in US history. As of 2018, 57% of Gen Zers were enrolled in a college program, compared to 52% of Millennials and 43% of Gen Xers at the same age.

...But they're also starting their careers later. Compared to previous generations, Gen Z is somewhat less likely to start its working career during adolescence. Only 18% of Gen Z teens are employed, compared to 27% of Millennials at the same age. One reason for this lack of early work experience may be Gen Z's commitment to schooling.

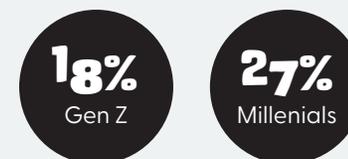
### Describes themselves as "White, non-Hispanic"



### Enrolled in a college program



### Working during adolescence



# GEN Z: THEY'RE NOT MILLENNIALS

While popular media tends to refer to all teenagers and young adults as “Millennials,” Gen Z differs from the preceding Millennial generation in several ways.

**For example:**



Millennials came of age in the Great Recession, which permanently changed their view of work and trust in a prosperous future. Gen Z stood to inherit a strong economy – **until the COVID-19 pandemic taught them that everything can change in an instant.**



Millennials grew up as the digital world did. **Gen Z has never known a world without instant connectivity and personalized digital experiences** – patterns they expect to see in non-digital life.



Millennials remember a world before 9/11 and a world after. For Gen Z, **post-9/11 world tensions, cultural clashes, and security concerns have always existed.**

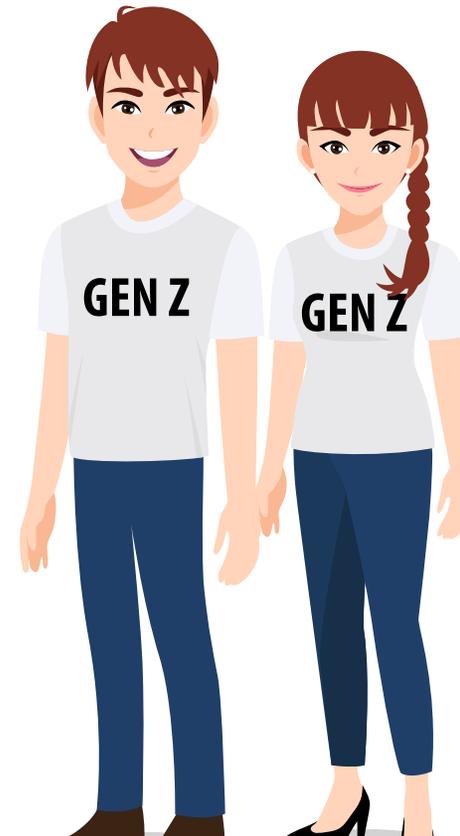
**In short, Gen Z aren't simply younger Millennials. This generation grew up in a different environment – economically, digitally, and culturally.**

# WHY YOU NEED TO MEET GEN Z

Currently, **Gen Z constitutes 100% of workers under the age of 27.** The vast majority of new college graduates are members of Gen Z, as are all entry-level workers starting their careers in their teens or early-to-mid-20s.

**Gen Z currently comprises 20.2% of the U.S. population.** That's 68.2 million tweens, teens, and young adults. **Worldwide, Gen Z constitutes about 30% of the total population,** and the internet supports their sharing of information and ideas like never before.

Gen Z's experiences, approaches, and attitudes will shape U.S. culture and policy for the next few decades – and they'll also have a profound effect on the hiring process.



**100%**

of workers under the  
age of 27

**20.2%**

of the US population

**30%**

of the world  
population

# GEN Z AND THE CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE

Because members of Gen Z reach working age each year, they're new to the world of job seeking, interviews, and working with recruiters.

- 📣 Only 25% of Gen Z job seekers understand what recruiters do.
- 📣 24% of Gen Z applicants have walked away from a job application process midstream because the employer's communication was so poor as to be confusing. Many of these applicants dropped out because they took an offer from a more responsive company.
- 📣 19% of Gen Z candidates will abandon an application process if it's too complicated or time-consuming.
- 📣 85% of Gen Z job seekers say the entire job search process is outdated.

**Gen Z is especially sensitive to application processes' uses of technology.** For instance, Gen Z workers are far more likely to abandon an application process that demands information be entered more than once. As digital natives, Gen Z is used to responsive forms and personalized online experiences – **and they'll abandon an application process that doesn't offer them.**



# KEEPING GEN Z WORKERS

Gen Z continues a trend that began with Gen X and the Millennials: Treating their work as a means to an end, not as an identity.

-  **Gen Z assumes their career path will include several employers.** Only 77 percent of Gen Z workers say they'll stay in their job "for a long time," compared to 81% of Millennials, 88% of Gen X, and 90% of Boomers.
-  **Gen Z finds their work less meaningful.** Only 76% of Gen Z workers agree that "my work is meaningful," compared to 79% of Millennials, 87% of Gen X, and 90 percent of Boomers. When work isn't meaningful, Gen Z is more willing to quit in search of work that is.

**For Gen Z, loyalty to an employer isn't presumed. These workers expect their employers to earn that loyalty.**



# GEN Z AND THE OFFICE

Offering flexible work opportunities is a must. Having grown up with digital connectivity, Gen Z assumes it will be a natural part of their work. For instance:

- 📣 45% of Gen Zers prefer hybrid work.
- 📣 29% prefer fully remote job opportunities.

Both of these numbers tower over the percentage of Gen Z who want to be in an office full-time. Fewer than one in 4 (24%) say they want office-based work.



# GEN Z AND STRONGER WORKPLACE CULTURES

**What does work for Gen Z mean in the office?** Working-age members of the cohort say a strong, supportive culture is a must.

**Specifically, these workers look for:**

- 📣 “Drama-free” workplaces where gossip, politicking, and backstabbing aren’t concerns.
- 📣 Organizations where promotions and raises are awarded fairly, based on achievement.
- 📣 Leadership that doesn’t play favorites. Rather, they prefer environments where workers are assessed on their skill and execution.
- 📣 Managers who seek input. When a decision affects day-to-day work, management involves workers in the discussion.



# TRAINING FOR GEN Z TEAMS

Gen Z's commitment to higher education translates readily to its participation in the workforce. **Nearly 1 in 3 Gen Z workers (32%) chose their current job because it offered opportunities for ongoing education.**

After a record number of years spent in classrooms, Gen Z expects employers to extend the learning experience by providing upskilling and reskilling opportunities.

**If Gen Z isn't learning, they'll move on.**



# CROSS-MENTORING FOR YOUNGER WORKERS

A digitally connected childhood also made one thing abundantly clear to Gen Z: There's a lot in the world they do not know. **Consequently, mentoring programs for Gen Z are a must.**

Mentoring builds a stronger workplace culture. It also allows Gen Z to teach older generations the things these workers do know – such as how to navigate a digital world comfortably and how to adapt with learning and skill-building when work conditions change.



# AFTER GEN Z: MEET GEN ALPHA

Most estimates see Gen Z ending in 2010. Children born in 2010 or later are still in elementary or middle school - but they'll be heading for the workforce soon.

Unofficially known as "Gen Alpha," these future workers share some characteristics with Gen Z. They're also starting to stand out as their own cohort.

## For instance:

- 📣 Gen Alpha may be even better educated than Gen Z.
- 📣 Gen Alpha is positioned to be the first generation in history that spent most of its waking hours with grandparents, aunts and uncles, or other adults who aren't their parents.
- 📣 The oldest members of Gen Alpha already seem to care deeply about social issues, such as ensuring food and housing for everyone.

Most social scientists say it's too early to make predictions about Gen Alpha. As they develop their own outlook and approach, however, employers will need to consider their view.



# WHERE TO TURN FOR HELP

Gen Z is still learning how staffing firms can help them connect with better jobs – but they're overwhelmingly enthusiastic about recruiters. 95% of Gen Z workers think a recruiter can help them find a job more effectively.

**Staffing partners can help employers connect to Gen Z workers, too. Talk to your recruiter for help with:**

- 🔔 creating a strategic staffing plan,
- 🔔 connecting to young talent, and
- 🔔 understanding what benefits and work arrangements appeal to candidates – at every age.

