



# 5 Things the Generations Are Looking for Today

Generation X (born from 1965 - 1980), Millennials (born from 1981 - 1996) and Generation Z (born after 1996)<sup>1</sup> have been a hot topic for a long time. Perhaps, because they are the most diverse, connected, educated and idealistic generations we have had<sup>2</sup>.

But what are they looking for? Here is a peek at what these generations expect.

## 01. Modern Technology

It's no surprise that Gen X, Millennials and Gen Z are more tech-savvy than any other generations before them. After all, Gen Z and Millennials witnessed the birth of the Internet and cell phones, and these technologies were already around by the time Gen Xers were born. In fact, 92% of Gen Z have some form of digital footprint<sup>3</sup>.

About 25% of millennials admit to being addicted to mobile devices, while 40% of Gen Zers say the same<sup>4</sup>. This means that they are comfortable working with various technological tools, including tablets, computers and smartphones, along with learning new software or programs.

It's safe to say that all these generations use devices and modern technology to fix, change and create new solutions and opportunities in hopes of finding better and easier ways of doing things.

## **02. Work-Life Balance**

Who doesn't want a healthy work-life balance?

These generations are focused on finding roles where they can work hard and still find enough time to socialize, travel, spend time with loved ones, and even pursue personal goals or side gigs. Every generation wants a better work-life balance, but Gen Z is more vocal about their needs. About 41% of Generation Z indicate time off as the number one perk when working<sup>5</sup>.

The desire for work-life balance may help develop strong time-management skills as well as improved strategic-thinking skills when planning daily tasks and overall life goals.

## **03. Stability and Flexibility**

Generation X, Gen Y and Z prefer a working environment that offers stability and flexibility. They have a "work hard, play hard" mentality, value diversity and appreciate humor. More freedom and flexibility in a job is a highly attractive factor for Gen Z. Half of Gen Z prioritize flexibility<sup>8</sup> when choosing a career.

Working independently is just as important to all these generations as setting their own schedule. Many prefer to manage projects on their own to showcase their skills and abilities. An environment where they can demonstrate their skills and resourcefulness, as well as allowing for creativity, can help them thrive and be more productive.

## **04. Recognition and Rewards**

While recognition is a great motivator for all generations, the actual difference lies in how every generation prefers their praise and rewards to be delivered.

Gen Z, millennials and Gen X respond better to recognition with praise and rewards<sup>6</sup>. This can include positive feedback, experiential rewards and perks. They want to know that their work impacts the organization and acknowledging their accomplishments will go a long way in improving their morale. This translates to higher chances of retaining them.

## 05. Prefer Collaboration

Rather than working individually and focusing on a set of tasks, Millennials and Gen Z enjoy working together to complete tasks. Roughly 61% of millennial workers<sup>7</sup> indicate that cross functional collaboration increases their likelihood to stay at an organization.

Collaboration results in diverse ideas and fosters a results-oriented work environment with everyone working towards a shared goal.

**Rather than addressing each work preference in a silo, organizations should consider how to systematically evolve their employee value proposition to meet these needs and drive towards organizational outcomes**

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- 1 On the Cusp of Adulthood and Facing an Uncertain Future: What We Know About Gen Z So Far, Pew Research Center (May 2020)
  - 2 'True Gen': Generation Z and its implications for companies, McKinsey & Company (Nov. 2018)
  - 3 8 Key Differences between Gen Z and Millennials, Huffpost (Nov. 2016)
  - 4 What's the actual difference between Millennials and Gen Z?, HelloGiggles (Feb. 2017)
  - 5 On workers' wish list: More time off and flexibility, Businesswire (Dec. 2019)
  - 6 Generation Z and Millennials Seek Recognition at Work, SHRM (Sept. 2019)
  - 7 The future workforce—new research reveals how Millennials and Gen Xers approach work, Adobe Experience Cloud (Nov. 2020)
  - 8 What Gen Z Wants In A Career (And How To Give It To Them), Forbes (Aug. 2018)