



HELP! GENERATION Z IN THE WORKPLACE

5 insights to fully utilize the power of Generation Z

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We believe in the power of Generation Z

INTRODUCTION

Generation Z, better known as Gen Z, is the first true digital generation. Born between 1997 and 2012, and growing up with the internet, smartphones, and social media. Like no other, this generation knows the opportunities and possibilities within your organization. Not only in the field of digital, but also think about:

- Stimulating innovation;
- Generating sustainable solutions;
- Improving inclusivity policies;
- Social responsibility;
- Flexibility of the organization.

Enough challenges for your organization, but... are you also familiar with the specific expectations that Gen Z has when it comes to work, the organizations and managers they work for? No? Good news: we have gathered everything for you in this whitepaper! The findings in this document are based on our online research, conducted among 818 Dutch Gen Z-ers between the ages of 18 and 29. Of these, 430 people were theoretically educated: the target group with whom we work on a daily basis. In the whitepaper, we will therefore mainly focus on their preferences and expectations. Where these differ significantly from the entire Gen Z, we will indicate this. We are happy to share the results of this research so that you can benefit from it!

The job market is still tight. This will not change in the coming years. The theoretically educated Gen Z is looking for a work environment that meets their needs and expectations. How to become (and remain) a talent magnet, you will discover in this whitepaper. We give you plenty of tips on how to remain attractive to Gen Z as an organization. To do so, we will discuss the 5 important insights from the research:

1. Attracting talent: Are your basics in order?
2. Retaining talent: How do you ensure that Gen Z stays?
3. Guiding talent: Frameworks versus freedom
4. Managing talent: How to be the best manager for Gen Z?
5. Managing expectations: Making an impact and contributing to a better world

Curious? Read on quickly. If you have any questions after reading or would like to explore the possibilities in your organization, please feel free to contact us. We are happy to think along with you.

Ingrid van Tienen
Ingrid.van.tienen@ormitalent.nl

Enjoy reading!

GEN Z: WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Gen Z, Generation Z, or Zoomers is the generation born between 1997 and 2012. They are currently entering the job market and are ready to build their careers. They are the first generation to grow up in an era where technology, such as the internet and smartphones, plays a major role in everyday life. They know nothing else than being constantly digitally connected to others. This has influenced their attitudes and behavior. They are more boundary-less, global citizens, and accustomed to constant change. Therefore, it is expected that Generation Z will have a significant impact on the use of technology, society, the economy, and the development of organizations.

Characteristics often associated with Generation Z are:

- Use of new technology and social media
- The ability to process information quickly
- A desire for independence and a longing for authenticity and inclusivity
- Placing a high value on a good work-life balance
- Concern for the future, especially when it comes to the consequences of climate change and social justice.

Curious if this image is accurate based on the research results? Read on!



O1

INSIGHT



ATTRACTING TALENT: ARE YOUR BASICS IN ORDER?

Gen Z-ers have high expectations when it comes to work and the organizations they work for. They are critical when choosing a job and employer.

These 5 essential points are what they consider most important when it comes to an employer:

01 Good salary

Salary seems to be a more important factor for Generation Z than for the millennials who preceded them. The theoretically educated Generation Z has high study costs. A good salary contributes to a feeling of financial stability and security. Especially now, in times of high inflation, rising energy costs and a shortage of affordable housing. They want to earn enough to not have to worry about money. In addition, they see a good salary as a sign of appreciation and recognition for their contribution.

79%

of the Gen Z-ers are satisfied with their current salary.

85%

of Gen Z-ers are happy with the atmosphere in their workplace.

02 Good atmosphere

A positive and inclusive work culture in which colleagues support and respect each other contributes to a good atmosphere in the workplace. For Generation Z, this is an important part of their work happiness. An organization with a good atmosphere contributes to the feeling of belonging and psychological safety. It creates a safe basis for learning, stepping out of your comfort zone, daring to experiment, and making mistakes. These are the ingredients for growth and a steep learning curve.

03 Content of the work

For Generation Z, the content of the work is an important decision factor. It is not just about being able to use their talent, knowledge, and skills in their work. They also want to have demonstrable added value and impact. Preferably at an organization that has a positive impact on society. They are looking for challenging projects and tasks that they can learn from and that enable them to further develop themselves. They also want the opportunity to contribute their own ideas and suggestions.

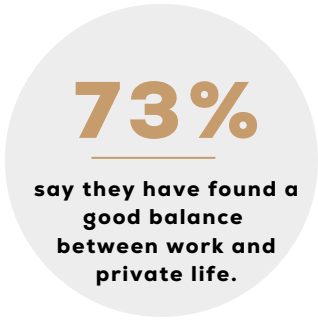
77%

of Gen Z-ers are satisfied with the content of their current work



04 Challenge

Challenge is another important aspect when choosing an organization. Gen Z wants to work in an environment where they can continuously develop new skills and take on challenges. They want to gain new experiences, learn from their work, and continually develop themselves. In addition, the opportunity to grow within the organization is an important factor.



05 Work-life balance¹

Generation Z is ambitious, both in their work and in their private lives. They want to maintain a balance between their work and private life. Therefore, they need flexibility. For example, through flexible working hours, the possibility of working from home, and sufficient vacation days. A good work-life balance contributes to their happiness and can increase productivity.

¹ Strikingly, when the selection is made on theoretically educated people, on the 5th place work-life balance comes back. For those with a practical education, a permanent contract is in 5th place.

What can be improved?

Physical and mental health are also important for Gen Z-ers. An important foundation to be able to make lasting impact. The fact that they are least satisfied with the opportunities to relax during work (59% satisfied) is therefore an attention point. Think, for example, of creating opportunities for fitness, yoga, and breaks. Another point of attention is creating opportunities to work from home. Employers receive a poor score for this as well (61% satisfied).

How do you reach Gen Z?

You want Gen Z to see your job vacancy and apply for it. In the table below, you will see the most important channels that play a role in influencing whether or not they apply. The most popular channels are the company website and LinkedIn. But recommendations from friends, family or acquaintances, and online reviews also play a crucial role in their decision to apply. Don't forget social media channels such as Instagram, Facebook, and Tiktok. Through these channels, you can grab their attention and give them an impression of the company culture and work environment. The right message and tone of voice will do the rest.

Channels consulted for application	Percentage of respondents
The company website	59,1%
LinkedIn	40,5%
Recommendations from friends/family/acquaintances	35,3%
Online reviews	33,6%
Instagram	27,2%
Facebook	25,2%
TikTok	14%

Are you looking for talent? we can help! [Read more here.](#)

02

INSIGHT



RETAINING TALENT: HOW TO KEEP GEN Z HAPPY?

Pay attention! Of the surveyed Gen Z-ers, no less than 41% are considering switching jobs! Why? Because employers do not always meet the desires and demands of this generation. And this in the current tight labor market, where retaining young talent is crucial, of course. If you want to retain your young talent, responding to their needs and expectations is a critical success factor.

In addition to the top 5 factors mentioned in the first insight, 9 out of 10 respondents indicate that the following factors are important to them in their job:

- 01** Good atmosphere
- 02** Flexibility
- 03** Good salary
- 04** Health
- 05** Clear vision
- 06** Clear goals and frameworks
- 07** Content of the work
- 08** Sense of freedom
- 09** Own responsibility
- 10** Ability to choose development activities that fit them
- 11** Challenge
- 12** Personal development guidance



The feeling of freedom to make their own choices and having their own responsibility are important values for Gen Z-ers. At the same time, they also need a clear vision, goals, and frameworks. So they know where they stand and when they are 'doing well'. Gen Z-ers are mainly looking for how they can add optimal value and have an impact. The balance between clear frameworks and autonomy is therefore very important. In the next chapter, we will delve deeper into this.

Gen Z is concerned about the future of our world. More than previous generations. They want to make an impact on the organizations they work for and the world they live in to make it a little better. Working for an organization with a clear vision on sustainability and a positive impact on society is important to them.

Gen Z is highly development-oriented. They want to be able to use and further develop all their talents and gain as many new experiences as possible. They seek this in the content of their work, in development activities, in guidance, and outside of work. They see development opportunities everywhere. And want to get started with this quickly. Preferably in line with their individual wishes.

03

INSIGHT

GUIDING TALENT: FRAMEWORKS AND GOALS VS. FREEDOM

Gen Z has grown up in a world full of choices. Through the internet and social media, they have access to an endless stream of information and opportunities. This sounds fantastic, but sometimes leads to choice stress and FOMO (Fear Of Missing Out). They indicate a need for both freedom and clear frameworks and goals.

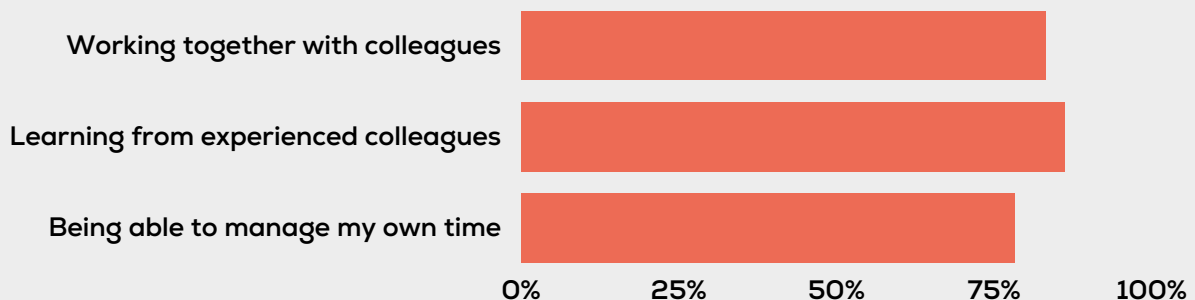
Generation Z wants to know what is expected of them and what goals they need to achieve to be successful. In every organization, there are more than enough opportunities for development. Change is constant. How do you bring focus and make choices? Clear frameworks and goals help them with this, so they know what is expected of them. Without these frameworks and goals, they can feel lost and not know when they are doing well and what they need to do to move forward.

Once this is clear, they value the freedom to make choices and take responsibility for achieving the goals.

A good balance between freedom and autonomy and clear frameworks and goals helps Gen Z find their way. They also greatly appreciate support in making important decisions and choices. Their manager can play an important role in this. In the next chapter, we will delve deeper into this.

Collaborating with colleagues (83%) and learning from experienced colleagues (86%) are also important to Gen Z in a job. This requires 'relational autonomy'. That means finding a good balance between being autonomous and standing firm and being connected to others. This requires an open attitude, a development mindset, and 'giving-and-taking'.

What factors are important to Gen Z in their work?



04 INSIGHT



MANAGING TALENT: HOW TO BE THE BEST MANAGER FOR GEN Z?

Gen Z has clear expectations of their managers. Good luck! Gen Z does not find it important to look up to their manager, only 10% indicate this in their top 5 most important qualities of a manager. 26% of Gen Z-ers say their manager gives too little feedback. 23% say they do not receive enough positive feedback. "Not letting me fall when I make mistakes" is something that Gen Z considers an important quality in a manager, yet only 16% of those surveyed indicate that they experience this now.

These 5 qualities are what they would like to see in their manager:

01 Listens to me

One of the most important expectations of Generation Z is that their leaders listen to them. This generation has grown up in a world where their opinions and feedback were requested and valued. They are used to communicating through various channels, including social media. They also expect their ideas to be taken seriously.

This means that as a manager, you take the time to listen and ask questions. By listening to their ideas and feedback, you show that you hear them and value their opinion. It also means that as a manager, you are open to feedback and take it seriously.

03 Gives me freedom

Generation Z has grown up in a world where they constantly have access to unlimited information. They can work from any device at any location and value flexibility and freedom greatly. They expect the freedom to do their work in their own way and determine their own schedule. A flexible work environment gives Generation Z more control over their work and life balance.

02 Treats me equally

Generation Z places great value on equality and diversity. This generation has grown up in a world where equality and inclusivity are more important than ever before. They have learned to appreciate people for who they are, not for what they do or what position they have.

As a manager, it is important to treat everyone equally and with respect. By creating an inclusive and diverse work environment, you create a community where everyone is treated equally. This also means an equal relationship between employee and manager. As mentioned, they don't want to look up to a manager.

04 Doesn't let me fall when I make mistakes

Generation Z has grown up in a world where they are allowed to learn from their mistakes. They are encouraged to take risks and experiment. They also expect this from their manager, to challenge and support them, but also guide and catch them when they make mistakes. As a manager, it is important to create an atmosphere where employees feel safe to take risks, make mistakes, and learn from them. By challenging and supporting them in their development, you bring out the best in them.

16%

feel that their manager supports them unconditionally.



05 Gives regular positive feedback

Generation Z is a generation that has grown up in a world where they constantly receive feedback. They expect their performance to be recognized and appreciated. Just like the likes on social media, they want to know how they are doing and what their contribution is. They expect their manager to give regular positive feedback, so they feel appreciated for their efforts and performance. Giving positive feedback is not only reserved for managers. It should be part of the company culture. Gen Z thrives in a culture where it is customary to give each other feedback, compliment each other and help each other grow and develop. They like to work together and learn from experienced colleagues.

26%

indicates they do not receive enough feedback from their manager.

05

INSIGHT

MANAGING EXPECTATIONS: MAKING AN IMPACT AND CONTRIBUTING TO A BETTER WORLD

Gen Z is concerned about the future of our world. They want to make an impact to make the organizations they work for and the world they live in a better place. Working for an organization with a clear vision on this matter is important to them. They are more than happy to contribute to a positive impact on society, even through their work. However, this point is not decisive in their choice of an organization they want to work for, as it does not appear in their top 5 criteria for choosing an organization.

Climate change

Climate change is one of the biggest concerns, not only for Gen Z. However, they have already seen the consequences of global warming at a young age. Think of the increasing drought, floods, and wildfires.

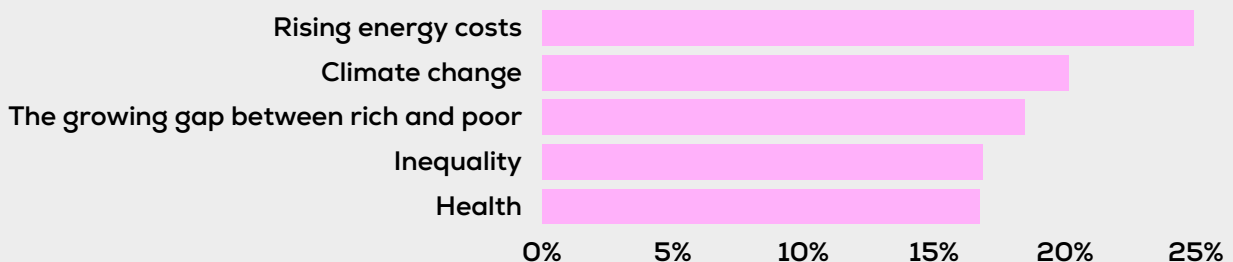
Gen Z, therefore, wants to have a positive impact on the climate and is highly involved in sustainability initiatives. They, for example, like to play a greater role in the transition to green energy or work on ways to reduce CO2 emissions.

Inequality

Gen Z is also concerned about inequality in the world. They see how people of different genders, ethnicities, and cultures are discriminated against and excluded.

Many young people strive for equality and justice. They want to contribute to creating a more inclusive world. Therefore, they are committed to social justice, such as promoting gender, sexuality, race, religion, and cultural equality.

What problems in the world are Gen Z most concerned about?





Health

This generation is known for its focus on personal growth and development, and their willingness to try new things and take on challenges. They want to make an impact and continue to do so. This requires energy and vitality. Being healthy and staying healthy is important to them. A good work-life balance is also part of this.

Mental health is a major concern for this generation. They are confronted with various forms of stress, including performance pressure, social pressure, and the "always on" mentality created by social media or other digital platforms. Therefore, they want to contribute to a world where mental health and well-being are a priority. They want to break down stigmas surrounding mental health and make mental health and psychological issues discussable.

How do they want to make an impact?

Gen Z has already proven that they have the power to bring change to the world. They are very active on social media and use this platform to make their voices heard and share their ideas and values. They also often take the lead in creating positive change and are actively involved in communities that focus on this.

Gen Z wants to make a difference through concrete actions and solutions. They take responsibility for their own impact on the world. For example, by changing their own behavior and living more sustainably. They also want to be involved in policy changes and influence political decisions that change the world.

WE BELIEVE IN THE POWER OF GENERATION Z

We believe in the power of the new generation to bring about change. We didn't need this research to tell us that. For over 25 years, we have been working with young talent. We know better than anyone what interests them. But with the results of this study, we can help organizations in a more concrete way.

It is important for organizations to remain attractive to Generation Z. Not only do you want them to choose you, but you also want to retain and help them grow within your organization.

This can be achieved, for example, by offering flexibility and encouraging development. But above all, it is important for the organization to be innovative and to work towards diversity and inclusion. Ensure that your employment conditions are in order and that you invest in sustainability. By taking into account the needs of Generation Z, your organization can become and remain a talent magnet for this group.

Would you like our honest and non-binding advice on how to make your organization more attractive to Generation Z? We are happy to use our experience and knowledge to help you achieve this goal.



www.ormittalent.nl



info@ormittalent.nl



030-2984300

[Get in touch](#)