

# WORKFORCE COMPOSITION

Currently in the **workforce** there are **5 different generations**, bringing distinct experiences during their formative years that have molded their perspectives on **work**. Consider the various **historical events** or **technology advancements** that occurred during the different generations and how that has shaped them in the **workforce**.<sup>19</sup>



**Silent Generation**

1928 - 1945



**Baby Boomers**

1946 - 1964



**Gen X**

1965 - 1980



**Millennials**

1981 - 1996



**Gen Z**

1997 - 2012

**Birth Year**

**Technology**

Less familiarity with current technology

Less familiarity with current technology

Can usually adapt to current technology

Comfortable with current technology

Comfortable with current technology

**Communication Style**

Prefers personal interactions

Prefers interactions through verbal communication

Prefers interactions through verbal communication

Prefers digital communication (e.g., email, IMs, and text)

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**Work priorities**

Retirement planning, mentorship to younger generations

Mentorship to younger generations, longevity

Pride in what they do

Quality of work and not hours worked

Diversity and creativity in the workplace

# REFRAMING STEREOTYPES

There are many **stereotypes** about **Gen Zers** in the **workforce**. Consider if you hold any of these negative stereotypes - and then try to reframe them into attributes.

## Instead of:

**Lazy**

"They never work late."

**Not loyal**

"They won't stay here long."

**Entitled**

"They only care about themselves."

**Short Attention Spans**

"They can't focus on one task."

**Addicted to Technology**

"They are always on their phone."

## Consider this:

Different from previous generations, **Gen Zers often want to understand the reason for doing a job** a certain way. If they do not agree with the reason, they may feel their values differ from the values of the **workplace**, and thus **do not want to engage more than necessary**. However, if they are given the chance to change the way a job is done, they will likely provide **creative and innovative solutions**.

Job searching has become a much more **competitive** and **lengthy process** than it was for previous generations. **Gen Zers** often want **straightforward answers** to compensation, job expectations, and benefits. They are also **more likely** to state **mental health concerns** due to their job than any other generation.<sup>20</sup> To enhance their mental health, they may seek advancement opportunities more quickly to further their earning potential and gain useful experience.

**Gen Z** has grown up during a time of inflation, a housing crisis, climate change, polarizing politics, social unrest, and school violence - all of which they have had **little control over** and will **impact their future**. However, they do have control over how **work** impacts their personal lives, making **work/life balance** a priority for them.

**Gen Zers** may appear to have short attention spans, but in reality they are **operating with high efficiency** due to how they engage in their personal lives. They have grown up **communicating their thoughts and experiences on social media**, where character counts are emphasized.

**Gen Zers** lived through a time when working-from-home and virtual school was the norm, and still continues to be in many instances. They also are the first generation to grow up using **cell phones** and having access to the **internet** from a **very young age**. Their parents/caregivers may have used phone apps or TV programs to help teach them **important skills**, like vocabulary, shape recognition, and reading. Because of the normalcy and emphasis on technology for communication, **Gen Zers** are a big **asset to workplaces** because of their **knowledge** and ability to **teach generations about newer technology**.