

Hiring Gen Z

How to hire and inspire Generation Z
to thrive at your workplace and ensure
their future success.

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Intro- duction

Gen Z consists of everyone born after 1996

Generation Z, or simply, Gen Z is entering the workforce en masse. They face challenges that are truly unique to their generation such as an ongoing global pandemic. **oneflow** together with **Teamtaylor** authored a report on how to inspire those from this generation to apply, thrive, and ultimately succeed in the professional atmosphere at your workplace. Setting the company, and the employees from Gen Z up for success in the long term.



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Who is Gen Z?

Gen Z consists of everyone born after 1996

and according to the Pew research center, there has been no end date set for this generation yet (Though some people that may be 12 and under (born after 2010) may later be classified in Generation Alpha). They now account for roughly 2.5 billion of the 7.7 billion inhabitants of Planet Earth according to the World Economic Forum from 2019. They go by Generation Z, or are sometimes referred to as “Zoomers,” a play on the “Boomer” tagline, and partially because they are the first generation to be true digital natives. Gen Zers have never known a world without

the internet and have grown up with the widespread use of smartphones, social media playing an integral role in their lives, and tech giants becoming the biggest companies in existence. They live on YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, and Snapchat. They are accustomed to digital and virtual worlds, friendships, and experiences. To say they are the tech savviest generation is not an exaggeration by any means.

They are on track to make up at least 35% of the workforce by the middle of the 2020s.



They are the most educated generation

To date, the zoomers are the most well-educated generation that we've seen thus far. Many of them have attained university degrees or are on track to do (European Union 2020). With that in mind, Gen Zers also have forged their own path to success and are thirsty for knowledge and self-starting. Thanks to free online courses, the wide availability of information available on the internet, and how-to videos on youtube. There are a wide variety of educational resources available to this generation. They're aware of that and have found ways to leverage that access to increase their skills and knowledge.

They are the most diverse generation in the EU and US

Generation Z, in the European Union and the United States, is the **most diverse generation** to date. This isn't surprising when you consider the trends of immigration in these two areas in the past few decades. According to the European Union, **13.9% of those ages 14** and younger in 2019 were born in another EU Member State, and 6.6% were born outside of the EU. In the United States, according to a report from the Brookings Institution by William Frey, as of 2019, 50.9% of Generation Z is white, 13.8% is black, 25.0% Hispanic, and 5.3% Asian. 29% of Generation Z are children of immigrants or immigrants



themselves, compared to 23% of Millennials when they were at the same age. According to a 2022 Gallup survey about **one in five** members of Gen Z identify as LGBTQ+.

This diversity is reflected in Gen Z's experiences, attitudes, and viewpoints. They have grown up in a world that more accurately reflects the diversity of people, and is less homogenous. Being digitally connected at all times, they are more aware of others and less sheltered than previous generations.

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What does Gen Z want and need?

They want stability and economic security

Gen Z wants **stability** in their life because they have grown up in an era of compounding change. The world suffered a financial crisis and a pandemic during their younger years, two “once in a lifetime” events before some of them reached the age of 20. They’ve known nothing of the stability that the older generations went through in the post-war years up to the millennium. As when things are accounted for prices have steadily risen since the mid-1970s, while wages have stagnated since then. Thus, the quality goods and foundational life items that Boomers and some Gen X had cheaper access to are harder to come by for younger generations.



Access to higher education

Focus on quality education is of utmost importance for them, at a fair cost. While it's true that they have access to a wide range of educational materials, some more traditional universities as well as open-source information and learning hubs online. The value of formal education is still important as a way to enter the job market, gain experience through internships or other practical experiences.

Better mental health support and resources

Gen Z is more likely than other generations to record poor or negative feelings about their mental health and reports higher than usual levels of depression than previous generations according to a report from the European Union and the APA. They are constantly bombarded in media with negative news stories, are at risk of prevalent online bullying and residual effects of social media usage. They want and need companies and society at large to focus on their mental health and understand the importance of it.



37%

According to the Annie E. Casey Foundation, 37% of Gen Zers have or are seeking out therapy or mental health professionals to aid them with their troubles.

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Traits of Gen Z

Civically engaged

Being apolitical is not something that this generation agrees with. They take action. According to the Pew research center, about **70% of Gen Zers** believe that the government should be more active in addressing problems. And they are well aware of the power that they have and the strength of their voice. Gen Zers are very active and vocal on the platforms that they have available to them. Snapchat, Instagram, TikTok, and Youtube all have been used masterfully by this

generation to highlight issues, bring about awareness, and inspire the change they want to see in the world.

A prime example of this is Greta Thunberg, the Swedish climate change activist who sparked a worldwide movement to aggressively tackle the global issue of climate change. This, is one of the biggest issues that this generation cares about and will constantly be dealing with for the rest of their lives.

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Culturally aware and socially open

According to a study done by the Pew Research Center, Gen Z is more culturally aware and socially open. While they have similar attitudes in this regard to those of Millennials. They care about social values and are widely accepting of those who are perceived as “different” from them. They have favorable views of diversity and actively seek out diverse attitudes, experiences, and people.



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Gen Z at the workplace

Gen Z and Millennials are somewhat similar in their work preferences, but that's likely because the older Gen Z and younger Millennials have shared experiences and are close in age. And the ones who are further along in their professional lives are on the older side of the Gen Z spectrum. That being said, there are some stark differences and strong opinions on work that Gen Zers have.

Culture is vital

The traits of companies that they want to work for tend to be more technologically advanced. They want to work for a company that has values that are aligned with their own as a person. Putting profits before people is not something they agree within the slightest. Neither is simply having a ping pong table and a keg on Fridays, there needs to be more substance there.

William Alestam, SDR Team Lead at Oneflow and a member of Gen Z, says that **culture and future growth** are the most important things that he looks for when deciding where he wants to work. Also, the product is important, as a salesperson, it makes his job easier, and the company more profitable if the product he's selling is actually a good one.

“Company culture and career growth/opportunities would be the most important things for me. As I said, I'm motivated by the people around me and I like to motivate them back. If we have a great culture and can work wonders while having fun at the same time, that's just a win-win situation.”

Gen Zers want to work for a company that has a positive culture. It literally can be the deciding factor on whether they want to work for a company or not. As of now in 2022, it's a worker's job market, and they are aware of that. They can find a position somewhere that suits them they greatly care about work-life balance and know that working for the rest of their lives, getting burnt out is not for them. They're aware that life isn't meant to be spent working all the time.



They want to have an impact and are doers

Zoomers take action and **want to get things done.** They won't wait for the right time or moment per se. If they see an opportunity to make a change, or take action, they'll go for it. They would rather ask for forgiveness than ask for permission.

This desire to have an impact translates into the fact that zoomers focus on growth and career development when choosing where to work. They want to grow as people and professionals, and it's up to companies to aid them in their development.

Front End Developer
at Oneflow

Ernest
Perkowski

"I believe me and fellow Zoomers bring a lot of energy to any organization. We're very open minded and proactive in making a change if we don't stand by something. It's in our nature to challenge things that have been a norm for a long time. Sometimes we are wrong and sometimes we are right, but there's always lessons to be learned from the dialogue."



"I think Zoomers bring a lot of new perspectives regarding company culture, company structure & put more pressure on having a diverse workplace. Also Zoomers bring a lot of new thinking ideas that can interrupt old thinking ways."

Also for them, they want to work for a company that has a solid product or service. It's got to be something that they believe in. That matches their values of putting people first, before profits. As they don't want to spend years of their life working for a faceless corporation that is profitable, but harmful to other segments of society. That's the type of place or company that they look for when job hunting and expect a good candidate experience.

“An important factor when going through the hiring process is how you get treated by the HR. Sometimes you can tell by just having a conversation with them, whether you would enjoy working there or not. The company culture can be quickly validated. Besides that, having the chance to meet the people you'll actually work with is very important. If you can get a good feeling of how they approach their work, and whether they enjoy it, could be a green flag. Being able to somehow connect with them even during that short period of time is extremely important. You as a candidate want to feel wanted, appreciated, and respected during the hiring process”



Digital Job Hunters

They primarily job hunt digitally, as the old-school way of walking into a store or company and hand-delivering a resume is very outdated. LinkedIn tends to be the primary platform where zoomers find jobs, but they are very familiar with Indeed, and other job-hunting websites.



“I think we, young candidates, go to all lengths when it comes to job searching. LinkedIn, local governmental job searching websites, Indeed, Glassdoor, you name it. For me personally, LinkedIn turned out to be the most useful platform due to the abundance and ease of use.”



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COVID's impact on Gen Z

Covid's impact was felt worldwide and no one escaped its wrath. Yet, for Gen Z, they were dealt the shorthand of the stick in most regards. As a whole, they've now experienced a global pandemic and are entering a job market still flush with uncertainties from it. This is after experiencing a "once-in-a-lifetime" event with the financial crisis caused by the housing bubble popping in 2008/09 in the United States. They continue to experience so-called "once in a lifetime" crises at an uncommon rate. The effects of these events are spread amongst various areas.

Educational

An immediate impact was felt on education as remote learning became the de facto way of schooling. According to a study from the European Union, **1.6 Billion children** were affected by remote learning. While this was good for some students, depending on the economic background of certain students, it was worse for others. As students from lower socioeconomic families reported more struggles with the remote learning experience.

Each student will react differently, and respond better to some new ways of learning, but the value of in-person instruction, interaction with classmates and access to facilities, afterschool tutors, etc was noticed due to distance learning.

According to the U.S Census Bureau, **41%** of current college students credited the pandemic with causing them to **not graduate on time**. And according to the European Union, the long-term consequences will be felt at a larger economic level. Students in the first phase of the pandemic up to the age of 18 potentially lost up to one-third of a school year of learning. This could potentially reduce their lifetime incomes by 3%, and lower a country's GDP by an average of 1.5% over the next 100 years.

Emotional and mental health

Suffering through a pandemic while you're young is not good for you in the long term. Especially one where you are forced to be away from friends and family. Gen Z is hyper-aware of their mental health and it suffered acutely during the pandemic. During the pandemic, Gen Z reported the highest rate of feeling lonely and the lowest level of well-being. They've also been affected by growing anxiety and depression (European Union).

Financial and professional

In 2020, Gen Zers saw their early-stage financial foundations began to fall apart. **Roughly a third** said the pandemic has had an extreme or very negative impact on their financial security. They will likely be a few steps behind other generations as they will have to recover from this initial setback in their working career. As research shows that young workers entering the labor market in recessions suffer various consequences. One is a significant impact on earnings and jobs **for 10 to 15 years** (European Union).

There is also a job market that is looking for skilled people, so an upside of the pandemic's effects is that labor has increased its power. And workers are able to find more lucrative positions with better benefits, pay, and aligned with their values. This trend is likely to continue, as lots of workers, in Gen Z will be overqualified for jobs and recruiters will have to lure them away from their current companies.

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“I want a company’s job application process to reflect who they are culturally, amazing employer branding, with an engaging careers site and quick and easy application process.”

– Cai Daniels



“When I look for a job I want to understand who that company is, what they want to achieve and who I will be working with before I even click apply. As a former recruiter, I want to be included and updated in each stage of the interview process, even if it isn’t good news. Being left out to dry without contact is a horrible feeling.”

– Conor Ryan



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The future of Gen Z: Bright or cloudy?

For Gen Z, the future outlook is... a mixed bag. According to a study by Hedvig on Scandinavian twenty somethings, over 60% of them are optimistic about their own future, which is great! Yet, according to the same study, on average only **30% are optimistic about the future** of society in general. Which, when we consider everything that they've been through and the prospects of what the future looks like for them, it's somewhat understandable. They are a generation that will face great challenges in the years ahead from multiple different sources. Navigating a professional environment in a constantly changing world will require adaptability skills that other generations before them have not needed. The days of being a company person, working 40+ years at a factory job are behind us.

Adapting and upskilling is a requirement now just to survive.

Some bright spots come from their drive for change and refusal to accept the status quo. They will do the work necessary to ensure that the future will be aligned with and reflect the values that they hold dear. It's genuinely up to them to determine what the future will look like, despite not having complete autonomy yet.

They are the generation that will truly start to feel the full effects of climate change, and the uncertainty it's going to cause around the world. Though they crave stability, it's going to be tough to actually achieve.

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Institutions such as the European Union will also implement and employ measures to ensure that their entry and continued workforce efforts are successful and they have a good landing in the professional world. As it's in the best interest of the entire bloc, and the world at large that the young entering the workforce become as successful as possible. This generation is well educated and skilled for the jobs that are out there, and has the ability to adapt and invent new jobs that suit them as well.

With the right tools, they can be incredibly successful inside of your organization, as they have the drive, motivation, and skills to do so. It's a matter of time until they are the largest generation in the workforce and by the time that happens, you'll want them to be thriving inside and outside your organization.

If you'd like even more tips on hiring Gen Z, [**click here**](#) for some takeaways from our joint event on building tomorrow's workforce.

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Thank
you!

