

## Gen Z & Gen X:

# Same same, but different when it comes to employment?

### Gen Z

Born between 1997 and 2012 - currently 11-26 years

#### They make up the youngest generation in the workforce, and:

- Are digital natives – they've grown up in a world where technology is ubiquitous. This allows them to have a greater level of self-awareness towards workplace expectations than many from older generations had when starting out.
- Have benefitted from infinite access information, communities and opportunities making them much more aware of the different career paths and life choices available to them.
- Have grown up with social media – with both the good and bad that comes with that.
- Are more likely to take a stand when companies fail to live up to their expectations.

#### At work expect Gen Z to look for:

- Economic security, and clear purpose and values that are authentically demonstrated.
- Clear opportunities for personal and professional development.
- An organisation culture that supports the mental health of their people.

#### A good culture for Gen Z looks like:

- Companies need to really follow through what they say they stand for. This means a clear purpose and set of values that are lived right through to the culture, behaviours and processes your organisation puts in place.
- Transparency – whether it be around money, how leaders invest in their employees, how and when they can level up, and how you can support them beyond professional needs.

### Gen X

Born between 1965 and 1980 - currently 42-58 years

#### Are the first generation where women entered higher education and the workforce en-masse, and:

- In a world that had previously been completely oriented around men.
- They Remember life before technology, and have better mental health and resilience as a result as they understand switching off occasionally is crucial – they remember when they weren't switched on!
- They are now at a point in their lives where they are balancing many things in their life, some caring for children and ageing parents, the demands of senior roles at organisations or juggling portfolio careers, and have striven hard to achieve a balanced work and family life.
- Perhaps have more confidence in their own ideas (rather than seeing first what others are doing/saying).

#### At work expect Gen X to look for:

- Purpose and meaning rather than status and power. If they don't feel valued, they are happy to go and start their own business or follow their other interests.

#### A good culture for Gen X looks like:

- A place where the wisdom, self-confidence & power that comes with age is valued.
- Where they have the autonomy to manage their work-life balance, and be trusted to use that flexibility responsibly.

in conversation with

# Action points for employers

## ● Amplify the value of age for all generations.

Companies need to think about actively campaigning and storytelling for all generations, and how people of different ages can take on roles that play to their strengths and beliefs. And we need to give people something to work towards throughout their career - don't let them expect to peak at 40!

## ● How can employers create space to boldly talk about this - internally and externally?

● For Gen Z, hook them with a clear brand proposition, a distinctive culture that values wellbeing and play as much as productivity, and confident and bold messaging. Use social media to amplify your brand voice across all touchpoints with customers, products, suppliers and employees. Ensure your messages are landing in the right channels if you are targeting a specific segment of Gen Z; for example, universities, students groups and societies are a great place to share graduate roles within your company, and equally allows you to connect with that segment specifically so you can understand their needs.

● For Gen X, a lot this generation left the workforce during the pandemic, and in many cases because they were seeking more autonomy. Many are keen to come back into employment now but don't see roles that suit what they need – flexibility and autonomy. They are an under-tapped, highly skilled resource that in many cases value things like flexibility and purpose over salary.

## ● Some radical solutions?

Think about Gen Z / Gen X job shares? Gen Z want flexibility and Gen X need flexibility. This would give cross-pollination of innovative ideas from different perspectives alongside sponsorship and mentoring.

Keep on storytelling what's going on in your organisation to showcase how you value all stages of life in your workforce, and bring them to life authentically through real life examples.

## ● If you would like to talk about making sure your employer brand has appeal across the generations, get in touch:

[theloves@wearetheloves.co.uk](mailto:theloves@wearetheloves.co.uk)  
[wearetheloves.co.uk](http://wearetheloves.co.uk)

in conversation with