

Managing Gen-Z Effectively: 9 Tips for Team Leaders and Managers



Introduction

A new generation of workers is entering the workplace, and its members have radically different expectations from the generations before them. You may know them, they are in their 20s, and they believe the world is theirs to change.

Many CEOs, human resource departments, and team leaders around the world are learning that managing and working with generation Z takes practice since this generation has unique and bold expectations for how an ideal workplace should operate. Considering that this generation already makes up more than 20% of the global workforce and that the number is only expected to grow, leaders from the older generation must learn how to speak the language of this new one effectively.

This ebook mentions nine strategies that have been tested and proven to work with this generation of workers. We have also gone on to mention pitfalls that must be avoided at all costs when working with generation Z.

Are you a team lead from the older generation trying to understand this generation? Would you like to know how to work with Gen Z (as they are popularly called) to maximize their strengths and manage their weaknesses as a CEO who recognizes this group's unique creativity? The insights shared here will show you how to utilize your Gen Z team and workforce to its full potential.

Who are the Generation Z?

According to Investopedia, generation Z is a term used to refer to individuals born from 1997 to 2012.

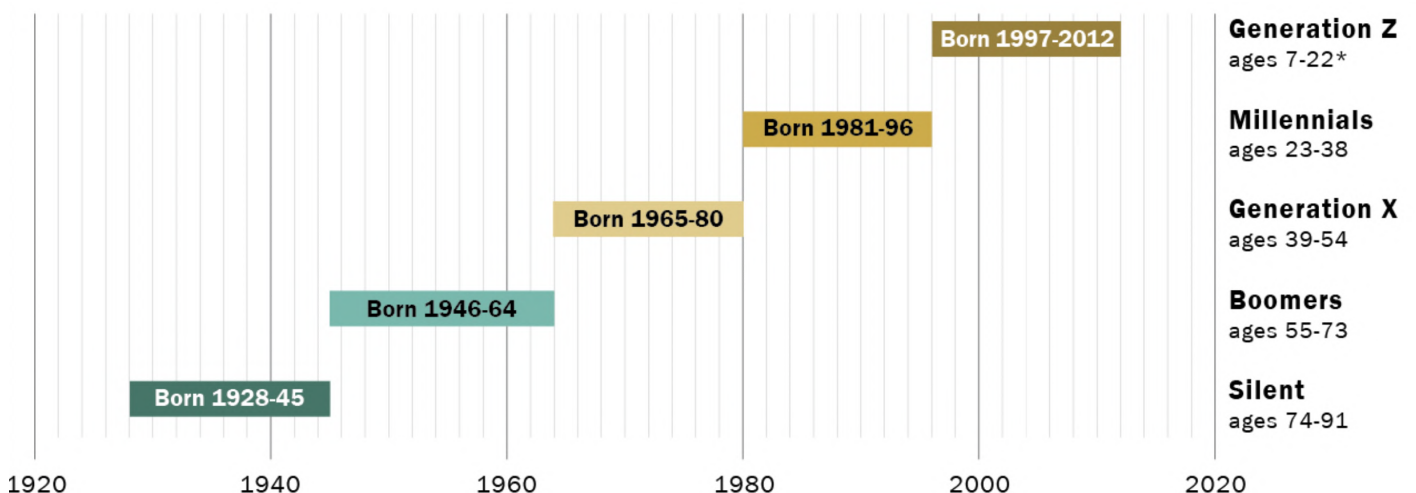


Several studies have analyzed Generation Z's behavior and sociological settings, and they have helped to highlight key characteristics of Gen Z. As a manager or employer, you must be aware of these features because they will help you understand some of the reasons behind the behavior and ideas that you will find in your Gen Z workforce and employees. Furthermore, a thorough understanding of the core values and attributes that define this generation helps you know how best to manage and work with them.

Let's get into it then.

Here are five core attributes that distinguish generation Z

The generations defined



Several studies have analyzed Generation Z's behavior and sociological settings

Generation Z are Digital Natives

While the generation before them (Millennials) were referred to as "digital pioneers," Gen Z are the true digital natives. Millennials witnessed the boom of technology and the digital world. However, Generation Z was born right into the digital explosion. The oldest members of Generation Z were 10 when the iPhone came into being.

This means that Generation Z has only lived in a world of instant communication and technology with no borders. They don't know an analog world, and what was a serious shift for the generations before them is a basic necessity for them. They really can't imagine a world without phones, digital music, movies, or even social media.

Generation Z want to change the world

Pew Research Center mentions that Generation Z in America is the most diverse generation that has ever lived. This ensures that they are very concerned with equality, racism, and other social issues like climate change and environmental degradation. Of course, this social awareness is not limited to just Gen Zers in America.

Thanks to technology, the entire generation easily catches fire and vigor on a global scale because they are very connected. Therefore, movements like #BlackLivesMatter

in the United States would also trend in faraway Togo, and #EndSars in Nigeria would spread to the United States. The global propagation of these ideas and movements is thanks to the digital natives concerned about it and ensuring they use their most important tool - tech- to make their voices heard.

As workers, they demand the same from organizations and companies. It is not surprising that Gen Z members walk away from jobs and roles because they are unsatisfied with organizations' social and political stances. Deloitte's generation Z survey revealed that Gen Zer's will reject a job if diversity and inclusion aren't at the forefront.

It would not be inappropriate to describe Gen Z as the activist generation. They will speak against toxicity in the workplace or action that demeans the identity of persons. Recently, in the Nigeria Twitter Space, there was a call out of Toxic Bosses and organizations. Guess who led that conversation? Generation Z

Generation Z place a high value on Independence

Generation Z grew up asking questions from google rather than seeking advice from adults. They expect to be given independence to do what they need to do. This generation also values individuality, and they believe that every human being is unique and hence, frown against anything that attempts to impugn their individuality.

A generation Z member will, for example, expect a manager to notice or listen to their unique strengths and weaknesses and deploy them accordingly rather than trying to make them just fit in with a role that was better suited for someone else. Furthermore, generation Z will expect to be given a task and the freedom to do it with their creativity rather than have a team leader looking over their shoulders.

Generation Z have access to so much information and this access to information is a critical factor that fuels their independence.

They believe that no matter how difficult the task is, a YouTube video or a Google search will be all they need to get all the information required- and they are not usually wrong.

Generation Z are a unique blend of Confidence and Anxiety

You may never meet a more odd combination, but Generation Z lives this oddity. Studies from a work institute that interviewed over 3000 members of Generation Z from different countries revealed that Generation Z is both very confident in their skills while at the same time very anxious about their performance and future.

There are many reasons for this interesting blend, but perhaps the most defining is the presence of social media and high-speed information.

Social media is one of the fundamental melting and meeting points for generation Z. The platform helps generation Z connect with stories miles away from them. Still, while this may be good, it also means that generation Z often live their lives in "public" with the pressure not to fail. They feel a need to curate a feed of their successes, and they feel anxious when it seems like they have not done enough compared to other people's feeds.

Another reason for confidence and anxiety is the awareness level characteristic of the generation. Information can both empower and paralyze, and for generation Z, it does both at different times. They know a great deal of what they need to know, including all that could go wrong and their possible shortcomings; this sometimes paralyzes them and makes them incredibly anxious about the future. A study of Gen Z members in the United Kingdom showed that anxiety was the most significant problem for 44% of them, with females experiencing it more.

However, you must not forget that Generation Z does not fail to act confidently on tasks and crave independence for themselves despite all the anxiety.

Generation Z just want to have fun

Yes, every generation and every individual wants to have fun and relax. Who wouldn't love a vacation or a beach party to hang out with friends? However, while the older generations may see this as a luxury and not an integral part of life, Generation Z is convinced otherwise.

Fun and relaxation are critical to generation Z, and they will not accept any work or role that will place strict limits on this.

Again, this is influenced by the access to information and the presence of social media. Many of those who serve as influencers on social media capture pictures and videos of vacations and traveling that subconsciously inform Gen Z that this is how life is supposed to be.

It is not uncommon for Gen Z teams to combine work and play simultaneously. Therefore, you see them holding work meetings at restaurants and having seminars in locations that allow them "chill and relax."

This generation has prioritized fun, and they expect the workplace to allow that. No wonder you can now get on TikTok and see nurses, doctors, and lawyers from Generation Z making TikTok's at their job or even concerning their profession. They expect to be able to do this with no backlash, especially if they deliver the results needed.

There you have them - some of the most important things you should consider when it comes to generation Z.

In the next chapter, we will discuss tips for working with Gen Z that take their unique attributes into consideration and ensure that you bring the best out of them.

Chapter—02

Tips for Managing GenZs Effectively

A large, stylized graphic of the number '02'. The digits are white with a thick black outline. A teal shadow is cast behind the numbers, giving them a 3D effect. The '0' is a simple circle, and the '2' is a bold, blocky numeral.

If you belong to the older generation, especially the generation before the millennials (26 to 41), the demands and expectations of generation Z may come as a shock, and you might find yourself at odds with them very often. Surveys have revealed complaints about Gen Z such as “ they want instant gratification,” “they are entitled,” and “ they believe they know everything.” Nevertheless, you cannot just assume that you can get by without them.

They already form a good part of the workforce, and their numbers will only grow. Furthermore, they are the most equipped generation to deal with the present age of the world - the digital age. Lastly, you may also be losing out on some of the most creative, hardworking, and innovative workers that the world has to offer. For all their supposed faults, Gen Z is incredibly smart, creative, and informed, and these are attributes that every workplace needs.

So, do you want to get the best from this unique generation of workers, maximize their strength and create an environment where they thrive? Let’s dive into nine things you should absolutely incorporate.

Use Digital Technology and Create a Tech-Friendly Environment

You are dealing with Digital Natives - a generation born into a world where digital technology is commonplace, not novel. Therefore, this is a non-negotiable element of working with generation Z. If you intend to hire and effectively work with generation Z, you must optimize your workplace for technology, or at least be ready to adopt tech solutions that they advise will help your work process

This only means adopting technology into work processes to make them easier.

It could be as simple as allowing reports to be sent in by mail, using digital productivity tools like Beam to manage teams and tasks, and allowing for Zoom meetings instead of physical meetings for an emergency during the weekend. It could also be as simple as researching productivity apps that enhance work and introducing them to your team of Gen Zer's. In fact, this is likely to get them excited because nobody loves to try new technology and applications more than Generation Z. However, remember that if they come back to make complaints about the app and then suggest another one, listen to them. You may love the app, but this is their world, not yours.

Be Genuine and Authentic About Your Values and Mission.

Nobody wants to be lied to, but especially not generation Z regarding company values. Don't forget that this generation is incredibly socially aware, and a company's values and mission are critical to them joining. They prioritize issues like human dignity, climate change, and equality, and they want to work with organizations that do the same.

Therefore, if you intend to hire and manage them effectively, you must be authentic to these values. You cannot just place these values as placeholders while your company processes actively work against such values. By doing so, you will lose the respect and cooperation of Gen Z members on your team. It is also a surefire way to make them leave, and not just leave your company but also begin an active campaign against you through social media and the rest of the internet.

Working with Gen Z means communicating your values clearly and ensuring that you stick to them in all authenticity. If you promise a close-knit team where everyone supports each other, you can't expect to act otherwise without getting a pushback from this generation. If you have tight deadlines, mention them rather than say "flexible work environment," only to greet them with rigid structures.

Dear CEOs, business owners, and managers, you cannot compromise on authenticity to work with Gen Z effectively. Be open about your work culture, values, and demands and stay true to them.

Help them settle into life!

Generation Z may be all hustle and bustle, but at the end of the day, the oldest are just young adults trying to find their way through life. They suffer greatly from anxiety and the fear of failure, which is only worsened by the presence of social media and the Internet. You will score a big goal with the Gen Zers on your team if you don't only come off like a boss but as that "uncle," "aunty," or "mentor" who allays their fears and helps them navigate their way through life.

Create an environment where they can speak freely about fears, befriend them and let them allow you into their world.

When something goes wrong in their personal lives, don't just give them a day off; show genuine care about their wellbeing.

This show of compassion will reflect in the quality of work they'll deliver and their loyalty to you. They will take on tasks not just from duty but from love and appreciation; they will stay in the company or team not only because of the pay but because of friendship and community.

However, two quick disclaimers here. First, don't assume that befriending them will make them look away from underpaying them or overworking them. Secondly, befriending them doesn't mean you can't be strict about work ethics and deadlines. The key is to be authentic about trying to allay their fears, helping them navigate life and settle into a role.

Prioritize Mental Health.

Generation Z is very concerned about mental health and stability, which is one reason why they prioritize relaxation and fun. To work with them and manage them effectively, you must create an environment that safeguards their mental health. Protecting their mental health might seem like a vague concept, so here is a list of practical steps you can take to create a mentally healthy workplace.

- **Encourage employees to have a life outside the office.**
Create spaces and breaks for vacations and trips

- **Talk about it.** Allow and encourage discussions on depression, stress, and the effect of the workplace on individuals. Just talking about it may help individuals deal with it.
- **Create benefits that include access to mental health professionals.**
- **Organize in-house training on stress management, self-care, and building mental resilience.**
- **Make use of screening tools that will help employees check for risk levels. You can do it anonymously to help them open up.**

Promote a healthy work-life balance

Generation Z wants to have a life outside of work, and you will get the best of them when you support this. They want free days and paid leaves. They want to be able to travel the world and work from anywhere. They want the time to go home to friends and family and not spend all their life at the workplace. To manage and work with them effectively, ensure that your work structure allows them to have free time to attend to life, and ensure that you pay them nicely to do more than just survive.

Listen to their ideas... but remain firm.

One thing you must realize when managing generation Z is that they have a lot of ideas, and justifiably so. Don't forget that this generation is incredibly well-informed and can access high-quality information in seconds. This means that they have a lot to say and process, which naturally may give birth to new ideas. Trying to get the most out of them, you must pay attention to their ideas and make sure they know you value them.

Don't shut them down or insist on your way without listening to them. By doing this, you will not only reduce their drive, but you will also give them the idea that you are doing it wrong and that they have a better strategy. However, listening and considering their thoughts will encourage and motivate them. Even if you firmly say no with good reason after listening to them, it only makes them more motivated to think up new and better ideas.

Generation Z wants to be heard; to work with them effectively, you have to listen to them and make them feel heard.

Support their growth

Don't just make them work; help them grow in their careers. Studies show that Generation Z will be more fulfilled and loyal to a role that contributes to their personal and career development than a role that doesn't. To manage gen Z effectively as a team leader or business owner, you must invest in their growth. Organize accelerators for employees, give them access to paid opportunities and let them trace career development to you. Helping them grow also means that they get more effective at tasks and that they have a sense of advancement and fulfillment.

Communicate in Detail

Generation Z loves clear communication and instructions. They want to know precisely what they need to do and why it needs to be done. They want to get feedback on their work, ideas, and questions. Therefore, you must communicate clearly to them and help them see what you want them to see. Lack of communication makes being a part of any team more tedious. Now, with a generation used to high-speed and quality information, failing to communicate goals, needs, and feedback can be a disaster.

Clear Communication is also important for generation Z because they are easily distracted, and if you fail to be clear, they may not understand you well. This will only lead to faceoffs between you and your Gen Zers in the long run.

Be Fun

Generation Z loves to play and have fun. They are on TikTok and Instagram, making funny videos every other day. Therefore, you cannot see them thrive in a bland, "anti-fun" environment. Loosen up the workplace a bit. Let there be games and hangouts, allow lighthearted conversations, and maybe some informal dressing and language. This generation does not believe that you cannot do high-quality work while having fun, and they have proven it. The excellence in video editing that can be seen on some random TikTok video is just one proof. So, loosen up and allow them to thrive in a fun environment.

Three Pitfalls that you must avoid when working with Generation Z

When working with generation Z, you want to avoid some things like a plague because they will only come back to bite you. We'll discuss three of such things in this chapter.



Seeing Just Numbers and Not People

Generation Z craves empathy and prioritizes it. They are major advocates for mental health, and they are social superheroes. These traits ensure that failing to communicate with or treat them as humans will lead to rebellion, resignation, social media "call out," or all three. Don't dehumanize generation Z, don't speak to them without empathy, and don't rationalize toxicity. The older generation may endure some of these, but generation Z will meet it head-on with strong resistance.

Stifling Curiosity and Questions

You will lose their interest and creativity if you fail to allow them to ask questions and explore their curiosity. Let them question processes and products, allow them to research new ways of doing things, and let them stretch the borders of their creativity. If you do not allow them to do these things, they'll get bored quickly and won't give their best.

Failing to communicate and give feedback

Generation Z is used to getting comments and backlash instantly on social media, and they are used to instant communication and detailed tutorials on YouTube. You may find they get distracted, lose motivation, or remain confused about their roles if you fail to clearly communicate what you want and how you want it. When working with a Gen Z team, ensure that you communicate very clearly at every stage. It is one of the sure-fire ways to get them to give their best.

Now, we know that you are equipped to work with your Gen Z team. You know what makes them unique and how to manage them effectively. You can now get on social media and boast about getting the best from your team of Gen Zers.

Congratulations!

In the next chapter, we will expose you to a tool that makes working with generation Z extraordinarily easier.

Chapter—04

Introducing BEAM

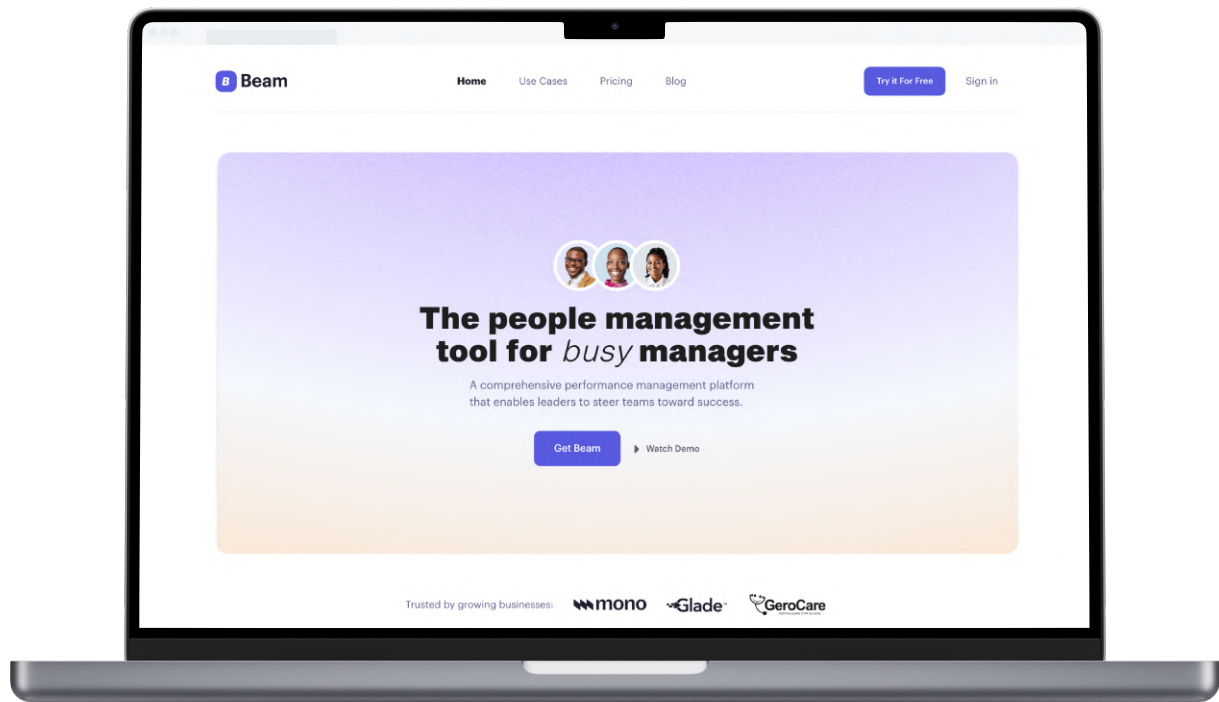
The people management tool for busy managers.

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The people management tool for busy managers.





Experts on effective Generation Z management emphasize the importance of incorporating digital tools to ease the process. Forbes also advises that next-gen tech is key to working with this generation of workers.

It then goes without saying that working with Gen Z, you need a performance management platform that ticks all the right boxes. One that supports their growth, promotes a healthy work-life balance and helps them prioritize what is important.



Beam vs No people management system

How people work with Beam

-  Disciplined thinking and focused effort.
-  Enabled colleagues to communicate effectively.
-  The whole organization stayed tuned in and coordinated.
-  Indicators for measuring progress were established.
-  Performance review conversations were based on data.

How people worked before Beam

-  Longer time spent on individual tasks.
-  Communication was more complex and tedious.
-  None defined goals meant growth was slow.
-  Proliferation of freeloaders within the organization.
-  Performance review conversations were mostly based on sentiments.

Empower any team to deliver exceptional results

 **Engineering**

 **People Ops**

 **Marketing**

 **Sales**

 **Product Management**

Beam is for you if:

- You are a team leader that wants to get the best out of your generation Z workforce
- You are seeking for digital tech solutions to make work processes easier
- You need an objective and data-driven way to measure the performance of your team members.
- It is essential that your members can access your organization's goals and vision in a way that helps them work toward them.
- You want a tech tool that is easy to use and understand

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