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ATTRACTING A MULTI-GENERATIONAL  
WORKFORCE: THE TOP 5 THINGS  
EVERYONE WANTS

WHAT COMPANIES CAN DO  
TO COMPETE FOR TALENT

THE ROLE OF SPACE IN  
EMPLOYEE ATTRACTION

WHAT DOES TOP TALENT  
REALLY WANT?



# WINNING THE TALENT WAR



# ATTRACTING THE BEST & BRIGHTEST TO YOUR ORGANIZATION

With an estimated 60 million Baby Boomers leaving the workforce by 2025 and only 40 million newly entering workers estimated to replace them, there's an impending crisis of talent shortage on the horizon. But beyond the need for acquiring physical bodies to do the work, recruitment efforts should be aimed at hiring top performers who, according to research, have a tendency to be eight times more productive than their counterparts. When it comes to attracting top talent to your organization, your company culture, management practices, and even facility design and furniture all play a vital role in being an employer of choice.



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# Attracting A Multi-Generational Workforce: The Top 5 Things Everyone Wants

It's not uncommon today to see organizations with as many as four generations working together. But as members of the Silent Generation and Baby Boomers delay retirement to continue working either full time or part time and the first wave of Gen Z has started to enter the workforce as of late 2018, there will now be an unprecedented 5 generations at work. And they all have different work styles, talents and desires that organizations will need to consider.

While your current recruitment strategy may only be focused on attracting Millennials and Gen Z employees, it's important to note that there's been much research to support that diversity drives organizational innovation and growth. This includes the diversity of age and experience. Leveraging the wide range of ideas, knowledge, and expertise that comes with a multigenerational workforce can actually create a distinct advantage for your company, especially for businesses who serve a diverse demographic of customers. But this advantage requires an understanding of what unique skills each group brings to the table as well as the wants and needs that will keep them motivated to perform at their best.

According to multiple studies, Generation X workers are viewed as adaptable problem-solvers who make some of the best managers. The Silent Generation (aka Traditionalists) tend to be hard-working and loyal rule-followers, while Baby Boomers are characterized as goal-oriented team players who are highly dedicated and value face-to-face communications. Millennials prefer an entrepreneurial and collaborative approach to work and expect immediate access to information. Gen Z, on the other hand, prefers autonomy and independent work and value continuous skill development.

While it may be all too easy to focus on how different these generations are, there are many similarities across generations when it comes to what attracts them to a potential employer. For example, most people, regardless of age, appreciate personal growth and work/life balance. They also welcome the opportunity to exchange ideas, receive constructive feedback, feel valued and respected, and to understand how they contribute to the big picture. By recognizing these similarities, companies can develop strategic programs and benefits designed to attract a multigeneration workforce:



### 1. Learning & Growth.

Workplaces that provide continuous development opportunities to help workers build the skills they need not only get the benefit of improved job performance, they also convey an attractive employer culture of life-long learning and belief in employee potential. Consider implementing reverse mentoring opportunities where younger employees can learn from more seasoned workers and vice versa. This not only allows opportunities for personal growth but also creates avenues to exchange ideas and expertise across generations.

### 2. Well-being Initiatives.

Employee well-being programs that are geared toward the various stages of life (think flexible work arrangements, financial education, stress management, nutritional education) are more attractive to potential employees of all generations. In addition to being a great recruiting strategy, it also helps companies cultivate happier and more productive employees.

### 3. Connection to Mission/Purpose.

Make sure that your organization’s mission and purpose are genuine and clearly communicated in your branding so that potential new hires can easily understand how working with you can make a difference.

### 4. Open Communication.

Foster more transparency at the management level by encouraging frequent formal and informal check-ins and make job candidates aware of this open communication style.

### 5. Workspace Variety.

From a physical workplace perspective, all generations value access to nature and natural light and crave separate, distinct areas for collaboration and privacy. Companies that design their workspaces around these values will appeal to all workstyle preferences, regardless of generation.

**87%**

of workers believe a multigenerational workforce fosters innovation and problem-solving

Source: Randstad, 2018

## 5 GENERATIONS AT WORK

	The Silent Generation	Baby Boomers	Generation X	Millennials	Generation Z
<b>Born</b>	1922-1945	1946-1964	1965-1980	1981-1996	1997-2015
<b>Core Values</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respect for authority</li> <li>Dutiful</li> <li>Compliance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Optimism</li> <li>Acceptance</li> <li>“Workaholic”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self-reliance</li> <li>Pragmatism</li> <li>Informality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achievement</li> <li>Purpose</li> <li>Self-confidence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Authenticity</li> <li>Creativity</li> <li>Uniqueness</li> </ul>
<b>Attitude Toward Technology</b>	Adapted	Acquired	Assimilated	Integral	Native
<b>Work Attributes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hard-working</li> <li>Task oriented</li> <li>Detail oriented</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good communication</li> <li>Strong work ethic</li> <li>Consensus leadership</li> <li>Good at seeing the big picture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Results driven</li> <li>Adapts well to change</li> <li>Good task managers</li> <li>Value feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Innovative</li> <li>Entrepreneurial</li> <li>Team-oriented</li> <li>Collaborative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Value transparency</li> <li>Multitaskers</li> <li>Seek responsibility</li> </ul>
<b>Work Motivators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognition for experience</li> <li>Company with good reputation &amp; ethics</li> <li>Clearly defined rules/policies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Goal achievement through teams</li> <li>Fit with company mission/purpose</li> <li>Enjoys public recognition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flexible schedules</li> <li>Engagement/ challenges</li> <li>Forward thinking company</li> <li>Prefer regular constructive feedback with rewards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social network</li> <li>Acquiring new knowledge &amp; skills</li> <li>Flexible schedules</li> <li>Expects regular feedback and recognition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Values mentorship</li> <li>Requires constant feedback</li> <li>Craves meaningful work</li> </ul>



# What Companies Can Do To Compete For Talent

Great people are what makes great companies. No matter how amazing your products or services are, the caliber of your employees has the ability to make or break your long-term success. It's no wonder that 76% of hiring decision-makers say that attracting quality candidates is their #1 challenge. That's why forward-thinking companies invest time and effort into recruiting strategies that make them stand out from everyone else.

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**76%** of hiring decision makers say attracting quality candidates is their #1 challenge

*Source: Aptitude Research Partners, August 2017*

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## Know Thyself

It all begins with introspection. Understanding what makes your organization unique to employees will allow you to develop a meaningful Employee Value Proposition (EVP) that will help attract and retain the best talent. An EVP is essentially what employees get in return for the skills, talents, and experience they bring to your company. It's why they want to be there and what's going to motivate them to stay. It's more than just the tangible things like a compensation and benefits package but includes also the intangible rewards that they receive such as meaningful work, supportive leadership, creative company culture, flexible hours, etc.

To be effective, an EVP needs to differentiate your company from every other potential employer. What can you provide to new hires that others can't? It also needs to be genuine. With sites such as Glassdoor that offer peer reviews of the employee experience at different companies, job seekers will be able to distinguish the reality from the hype. Once developed, an EVP won't do much to attract anyone if it's not available for anyone to see. Make sure that you promote it through various channels such as the Careers page on your website, through your social media accounts, and through any talent networking events you participate in.





## Pitch a Fit

When there's a job vacancy to be filled, the goal of any effective recruiting strategy should be to focus on quality over quantity. What good is having a thousand experienced job applicants if none of them can connect with your organization's mission and purpose or work collaboratively with a team if that's an expectation? What looks like the perfect resume on paper is still no indication of how well that candidate will fit in with your company culture, so make sure that it's clearly defined and communicated with applicants whether that's through your online presence or in an interview.

This means being honest with applicants about what they can expect and not glossing over things like leadership style, how achievement is recognized, and how much autonomy they will actually have in their work. In return, ask them open-ended questions about what they most value from a workplace and what appeals to them about your company's mission. If you don't offer what's important to them, chances are that this will not be a good long-term fit.

## Get On the Brand Wagon

Your brand is what sets you apart from your competitors and influences your customers' perceptions of what they will experience through all of their interactions with you. It establishes an emotional connection, creates trust, and improves recognition. Just as your brand matters to a customer, so does it matter to a potential employee.

According to a survey conducted through ManpowerGroup Solutions, experienced candidates are more likely to approach recruiters based on branding perception. That's why companies need to consider their employer branding along with their customer branding and develop marketing strategies to raise awareness for both. Your company's website and LinkedIn page are highly effective platforms to communicate employer branding and build differentiation. Social media channels such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter have also emerged as essential tools for promoting brand, driving dialogue, and encouraging continuous engagement with prospective customers or would-be employees. Closely monitor your online reputation and respond quickly—and respectfully—to any negative reviews or comments. By addressing issues directly and sincerely, you'll have an opportunity to right any wrongs and improve the perception of your brand.

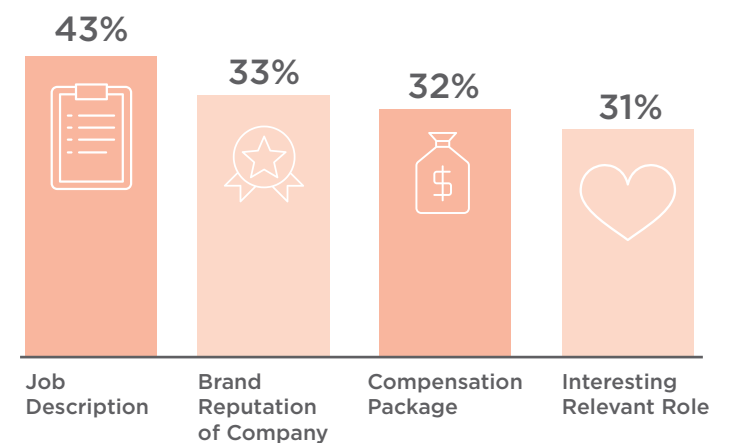
**93%**

of job seekers say it is important to be thoughtful and informed about all aspects of a company (e.g., culture, values, mission, future plans) prior to accepting a job offer

Source: Glassdoor, Harris Poll, April 2017



## BRAND REPUTATION MATTERS TO AND MOTIVATES JOB SEEKERS



Source: ManpowerGroup Solutions





# The Role of Space

## In Employee Attraction

When it comes to attracting talent, don't overlook the power of your workspace as an essential recruitment tool. Just as a company's space represents the physical manifestation of its brand with customers, so does it have the ability to convey culture and purpose with potential new hires. Everything about the design of your workspace, from the color on the walls to the type and placement of the furniture, can communicate what matters most to your organization.

When someone enters your building, will they see a place that promotes collaboration and creativity or one that focuses on individual contribution and hierarchy? Will they get a vibe that is more traditional and conservative or one that is more relaxed and casual? When job candidates can make the visual connection between their values and aspirations with your company culture and purpose, it becomes easier to attract talent for fit. Here are some specific workplace design strategies to consider and what they help say about an organization:



### Offering choice and variety

Job seekers appreciate choices and want options as to how and where they can work. According to Gensler, a global architecture and design firm, companies that offer a variety of settings are viewed as more innovative and creative. And, providing choice and flexibility conveys a sense of autonomy for employees, an attribute which contributes to trust and employee engagement.

Offering choice and variety means providing a balance of spaces to formally and informally collaborate as well as quiet areas for independent thinking and reflection. Providing collaborative spaces sends the message that an organization values teamwork, social connections and the sharing of information while allocating sufficient quiet zones communicates support for focus and the fundamental need for privacy. And, for companies that do encourage choice of where to work, make sure to address personal storage needs whether that's with centralized storage lockers or mobile storage solutions. This shows you understand people's need for security.

### Providing access to nature and light

There is substantial research which suggests that human beings benefit from exposure to nature and daylight. A 2018 study published in the *Harvard Business Review* found that access to natural light and outdoor views was the most desired workplace environment perk, outranking other on-site amenities such as cafeterias or fitness centers. Implementing design strategies that better connect your employees to natural light and natural elements such as plants and waterfeatures can have a significant effect on health and productivity in the workplace and communicates a commitment to their wellbeing.

### Supporting ergonomics

Workplace ergonomics used to be primarily addressed by providing employees with adjustable task chairs. While that's still as critical as ever, enhancing worker performance and health these days also means offering sit-to-stand furniture options and different settings to encourage postural variety and movement. Consideration should be given to task lighting and adjustable monitor arms to prevent eye strain and headaches. Workplace design also can address sedentary behavior through the thoughtful placement of shared amenities, such as hospitality stations, which can entice employees to get up and move around.

### Creating connected communities

Integrated community spaces, such as cafés and lounges, provide places to unwind, informally socialize and casually collaborate with others. You can further communicate a culture of transparency and interconnectedness by encouraging leadership to visit the spaces as well. When employees feel more connected to each other, they also feel more connected to their work and to the mission of the organization. By including “residential” touches—think sofas, lounge chairs, and ottomans—community spaces can feel more relaxed and like home, which not only makes employees more comfortable but also attracts talent who've become used to working from home or in co-working spaces.







# What Does Top Talent Really Want?

Business visionary and co-founder of Apple, Steve Jobs, was legendary in his hiring practices and advised the following, “Go after the cream of the cream. A small team of A+ players can run circles around a giant team of B and C players.” However, the number of job opportunities far outpaces the supply of high-quality job candidates. Population and demographic forecasts only reinforce an impending overall talent shortage.

This poses an enormous challenge for companies who are looking to attract the best and brightest. So, what exactly is top talent looking for when it comes to an employer? While every individual has their own unique needs and personal motivations, according to Gallup research, there are some common characteristics that high-quality job candidates, regardless of role or industry, tend to look for in a company:



### Having a say on where and when to work.

But does that mean having a choice in different workplace settings or is it more flexible hours and work-from-home opportunities or does it mean more vacation time? Try all of the above. Flexibility may seem like an overused buzzword these days, but top talent no longer considers it a “nice to have” but, rather, a “must-have” employee perk. Top performers especially value autonomy and consider it a vital ingredient to job satisfaction and engagement.

### Access to growth and development opportunities.

High-quality job seekers tend to be attracted to organizations and roles that provide ample opportunities to learn and grow. This includes having a well-defined career advancement ladder and access to professional development and mentorship resources. According to Ceridian’s 2017 Pulse of Talent Report, 91% of high performers reported that working for an employer that offered learning and development opportunities was important to them. Because top talent craves intellectual and creative challenges that push them to acquire new skills, organizations that foster a culture of continuous learning will be seen as much more attractive employers.

### Open and supportive leadership.

Leadership style within an organization is a defining element of company culture. High performers value transparency and the ability to share opinions and ideas openly. They want candid communication about both the good and the bad—whether that’s about the company, a project, or their own performance. Leaders who are able to serve as advisors are appreciated and help to motivate high achievers. And, for a job well done, top talent values when leaders recognize and acknowledge their hard work and contributions.

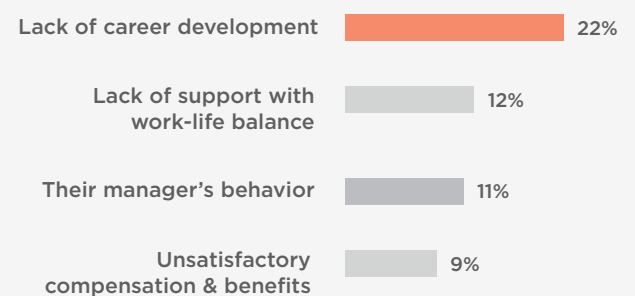
### Programs that support total well-being.

Mercer’s 2018 Global Talent Trends survey found that one in two employees would like to see a greater focus on well-being at their company and top performers are no different. They know that employers who have established well-being programs—ones that address not only physical but psychological and financial health as well—are walking the talk that people come first in their organizations.

Another way to get the best is by learning from your best. Discover what works within your business by interviewing your own top performers to find out what attracted them in the first place and what has made them stay. This will allow you to craft tailored messaging to draw in other high-performance candidates who will appreciate your company culture and employee experience.



#### Top Reasons Why Employees Leave Their Jobs



Source: Work Institute, 2017 Retention Report

**66%** of workers agree that a strong benefits and perks package is the largest determining factor when considering job offer

Source: Ranstad US Survey, June 2018



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