

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO MANAGING AND HIRING GEN Z EMPLOYEES

AN INCLUSIVE RECRUITMENT GUIDE BY
AAI EMPLOYABILITY



A new generation of employees have arrived.

Generation Z, the youngest generation to approach the working world, will soon surpass Millennials as the most populous generation on earth. By 2030, this group will make up a **huge 30%** of the workforce, bringing new expectations, and priorities for employers to consider.

Gen Z is the most diverse and educated age group in the professional world today. They were born into a connected, digital, and empathetic world and spend approximately half of their waking hours interacting with technology.

They have a unique sensibility and a strong stance regarding ethical business practices and equity.

Though Generation Z bring several valuable characteristics, their approach to the workplace may cause challenges for business leaders.

Gen Z isn't motivated or moved by the same things as their millennial parents. This means to engage and successfully manage your new workforce, you may need to implement different strategies.

Today, we will define the Gen Z employee, what they need and how you can manage your youngest team.

Joy Lewis
CEO
AAI Employability



DEFINING THE GENERATION Z WORKFORCE

The workplace is on the brink of a massive transformation. Just as the arrival of the millennial worker prompted significant changes in the management of teams and employees, the introduction of Generation Z will alter the way we think about "business-as-usual" forever.

While generational cut-off points aren't an exact science, anyone born between 1997 and 2012 is generally considered to be part of "**Generation Z**". These fast-paced, highly educated, and motivated individuals are already developing a reputation as hard workers.

However, they also have unique priorities and expectations, which can confuse business leaders.

Some of the key characteristics defining Gen Z include:

FOCUS ON HEALTH AND EMPATHY

Gen Z has grown up in a difficult world, exposed to significant stress levels and economic turmoil. As a result, according to a recent McKinsey report, many would choose a job **promoting a healthy lifestyle** over a role with a high income. Gen Z employees want a high level of empathy from their employers, and they expect leaders to be invested in protecting their physical and emotional health.

More than 1 in 3 working Gen Zers say they find it difficult to cope with excessive pressure and stress at work. **Around 91%** of Gen Z employees already experience at least one symptom of stress.





TECHNOLOGY SAVVY

Gen Z has been brought up in a world surrounded by technology. They spend a huge portion of their time on social media and browsing the internet. According to a global survey, **around 98%** of Gen Zers own a smartphone, and half spend about 10 hours a day using it.

They expect to work for firms with a strong investment in the latest tools and services. Companies with outdated tools and software will quickly lose the interest of Gen Z team members.

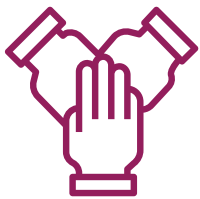
CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Gen Z is the most welcoming, accepting, and diverse generation so far. Hailing from countless different groups and orientations, this group believes everyone should have the freedom to "be themselves". Many of these employees are more at home in a diverse workplace.

Gen Z will prioritise companies that commit to strong Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion practices. Additionally, around **68% of these workers** say they think it's important to work for a business with an active commitment to supporting social causes.

HOW TO MANAGE GENERATION Z IN THE WORKPLACE

Managing Gen Z employees means committing to a new leadership style. Here are some of the most important points leaders will need to consider.



1. PRIORITISE COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION

Gen Z values social interaction. This generation was raised in the age of social media, and they like being connected to the people they work with. As such, business leaders will need to create a culture of team spirit, camaraderie, and collaboration.

For Gen Z, collaboration and communication doesn't always have to take place on a face-to-face basis. These employees are just as happy connecting with their colleagues over video conferences and phone calls, and they like having access to instant messaging applications.



2. ALLOW FOR INDEPENDENCE AND AUTONOMY

Gen Zers are ambitious individuals who like having their own independence. Although they appreciate feedback and guidance from leaders, they also want the room to explore their own strategies and work how they feel most comfortable. This means leaders will need to give their Gen Z employees ownership over their projects.

Allowing team members to choose their schedules or suggest their methods of tackling projects will make them feel more respected and engaged in their work.



3. IMPLEMENT STRATEGIES FOR WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Burnout and stress have been significant problems for the millennial group, with around **28% saying** they suffer from this issue regularly in the workplace. Generation Z has learned from the struggles of their parents and now prioritises work-life balance more than most.

81% of Gen Z employees say flexibility in choosing how and when they work is important. Many team members in the current landscape expect access to fully remote or hybrid working strategies.

To appeal to Gen Z employees and keep them happy, managers will have to offer various working styles outside the standard 9-to-5 experience. It will also be important for leadership to encourage good work-life balance among team members by convincing them to take regular breaks and manage their schedules effectively.



4. EMPATHISE WITH MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS

Empathy is everything to **Gen Z employees**. Around 82% of employed Gen Zers today say it's important for managers to offer "mental health days" when they're feeling burned out or stressed. Gen Z staff members want to know that their business leaders are committed to keeping them happy and healthy.

Business leaders will have to look for ways to showcase their empathy. For instance, it might be useful to implement a wellness strategy in the workplace which focuses on giving team members ways to manage stress and avoid burnout. For example, through offering certain perks like access to counselling.



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HOW TO MOTIVATE YOUR GEN Z EMPLOYEES

To motivate and retain your Gen Z staff, you'll need to follow these steps:



STEP 1: PROVIDE REGULAR FEEDBACK

While Gen Z employees like the freedom to explore their own strategies and work styles, this doesn't mean they don't want regular feedback. These employees are highly motivated by positive acknowledgement and recognition. Like their millennial counterparts, Gen Z employees need to know when they're **doing a job well** and want real-time performance updates.

Rather than waiting for an annual performance review to explore the strengths and weaknesses of your Gen Z employees, focus on developing a more fast-paced feedback scenario. Simple messages to your staff members letting them know they're doing a good job can help them stay focused and engaged in their role.

Clear expectations are also extremely important when working with Gen Z employees. These competitive professionals want to deliver their best work, but they can only do so when they clearly understand what's expected.



STEP 2: PROMOTE INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Gen Z employees might spend most of their time using online communication methods, but they still want to feel connected to the rest of their team. **Around 73% of Gen Zers** say they feel isolated or lonely from time to time at work.

Promoting interpersonal relationships is a great way to boost the engagement of your staff and make them feel more committed to the workplace. Organisations can invest everything from bonding days with gamification elements to leverage Gen Z's competitive nature to regular video conferencing between remote workers.

It's also important to ensure Gen Z employees have a chance to develop a relationship with their business leaders. These employees want to be able to connect regularly with managers and supervisors, as well as colleagues.



STEP 3: PROVIDE GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

Because Gen Z employees are interested in future-proof jobs, you need to ensure their team members can see a future with the business. In a climate where the skills required to succeed in any workplace are constantly evolving, Gen Z professionals need to be able to expand their knowledge and talents continually.

37% of Gen Z team members say professional growth and learning opportunities are their number one priority when looking for a new job. This may be why many technology companies with strong reputations for innovation and development have captured the attention of so many new candidates. So, it's important to have a clear development strategy.



GEN Z EMPLOYEES ARE PROACTIVE, INNOVATIVE INDIVIDUALS KEEN TO INFLECT SIGNIFICANT CHANGE ON THE WORLD AROUND THEM. THEY'RE REALISTIC AND CAUTIOUS DUE TO GROWING UP DURING ECONOMIC TURMOIL.

GENERATION Z HAS STRONG GOALS AND A CLEAR VISION OF WHAT THEY WANT TO ACCOMPLISH IN THE INDUSTRY.

GEN Z FOCUSES MORE ON STABILITY AND JOB SECURITY. THEY WANT TO EXPAND THEIR EDUCATION AND EXPLORE NEW RESPONSIBILITIES WHEN THEY ARISE, BUT THEY MAY BE LESS LIKELY TO HOP BETWEEN JOBS.



STEP 4: PROMOTE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Gen Z employees feel most comfortable in a diverse workplace, capable of accepting and supporting all kinds of team members. Around **63% of Gen Z employees** say it's important to be able to share ideas and learn from people with unique backgrounds.

To keep teams motivated, managers will need to ensure their Gen Z employees have plenty of opportunities to work with people who have different skills and lives to their own. A strong DEI strategy will make it easier for companies to build a diverse selection of staff members.

Inclusivity is particularly important for Gen Z teams. This means business leaders must implement campaigns ensuring their staff members feel valued, no matter their background. Ensuring every staff member feels listened to and respected is critical for ongoing motivation. You can help your Gen Z employees thrive by inviting them to more strategy meetings, listening to their business ideas, and gathering regular feedback.



STEP 5: OFFER THE RIGHT BENEFITS

Keeping your Gen Z employees motivated ensures you're offering the right perks and benefits for working with you. Though Gen Z staff members still want to be paid the right salary for their skills, they're also highly motivated by security and benefits.

Compensation perks, wellness benefits and attractive maternity and paternity policies will likely appeal to this security-focused generation. However, it's worth talking to your team members and tailoring benefits packages to different needs where possible.

UNDERSTAND AND OPTIMISE YOUR GEN Z WORKFORCE

The rise of Gen Z in the landscape marks a transformational time for business leaders and managers. How you motivate and support your youngest employees will differ from how you've served those from differing generations.

Fortunately, with a strong understanding of the characteristics of the Gen Z community, you'll be better prepared to attract and retain the right talent.

Of course, one of the easiest ways to ensure you're collecting the right talent for your team from the Gen Z employee landscape is to work with a **progressive recruiter like AAI EmployAbility**. We can help you tailor your job descriptions and offers to speak to the youngest generation.

We'll also help you find diverse Gen Z professionals to add to your pipeline who share the same values as your business.

Attracting the right team members from day one will make it much easier to build a phenomenal team of hard-working, diverse, and highly educated Gen Z staff.

YOUR NEXT ACTIONS:

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT OUR SERVICES, CONTACT US
TODAY AT
[AAI-EMPLOYABILITY.ORG.UK](https://www.aai-employability.org.uk)

GET IN TOUCH WITH THE TEAM: TEAM@AAI-EMPLOYABILITY.ORG.UK

GET IN TOUCH WITH THE CEO: JOY@AAI-EMPLOYABILITY.ORG.UK

ABOUT AAI EMPLOYABILITY

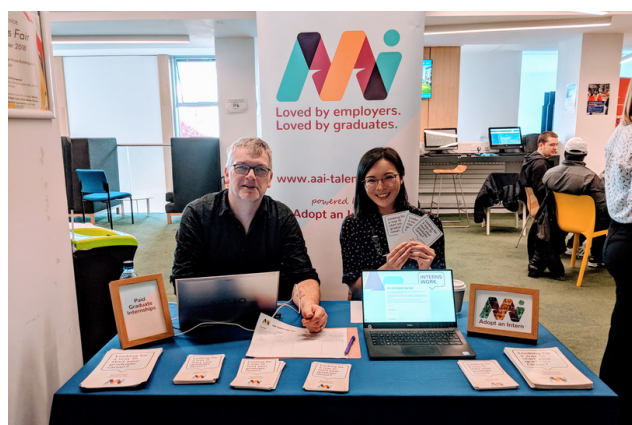


AAI is an award-winning social enterprise that supports the private, public and third sectors to access talent of all ages, skillsets and backgrounds. It also helps businesses to better attract and retain diversity.

AAI has been a highly respected name for 12 years now, offering tried, tested and flexible inclusive recruitment services from ad hoc, short-term projects, including internships and maternity leave, to permanent positions. It has worked with over 1100+ growing businesses of all sizes, including Scottish Government, the NHS, Phoenix, SMEs and an array of startups and charities.



AAI will support both employers and candidates before, during and after the post, as the need arises. It uses its surplus to support disadvantaged people and marginalised groups struggling to enter the workforce.



AAI also works with private-sector businesses offering tailored social-impact projects around the themes of gender and racial diversity, disability and supporting the third/voluntary sector. These projects are aimed at improving attraction and retention of staff as well as providing tangible and reportable social and financial impact.

ABOUT JOY LEWIS



Joy joined the Centre for Scottish Public Policy in January 2009 and spun out AAI EmployAbility (then, Adopt an Intern) a year later. The company has since gone from strength to strength, placing over 1800 graduates and returners into valuable paid work across the UK.

She served for 20 years in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and has lived and worked in Brazil, Argentina and Germany. Joy also worked for many years in fashion retail where she recruited, trained and mentored women for Sales Manager posts, culminating in a successful business in Germany.

After addressing their first employment injustice of unpaid graduate internships, Joy and the AAI team have widened their scope of inclusive employment to include diversity and inclusion services to help more businesses to grow and more talented people to access opportunity.

