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# GENERATION Z ATTITUDES AND PRACTISES TOWARDS WATER CONSERVATION: A CASE STUDY

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**Purpose:** The purpose of this research study is to examine how members of Generation Z view the issue of water conservation and recycling, and to what extent the characteristics attributed to this generation influence their performance.

**Design/methodology/approach**: The method used was to observe a group of Generation Z students during a PBL project.

**Findings:** Generation Z presents certain characteristic traits that can lead to disagreements in teamwork. Leaders who strive for a deeper understanding of these characteristics and attitudes are able to work more effectively with representatives of this generation.

**Research limitations/implications**: The work is a subjective, qualitative evaluation of a small team of six students. Serious limitations of this work are the defining influence of observers on the subjects and the lack of control of variables that may affect the behaviour of the subjects.

**Practical implications:** For leaders and managers but also educators in universities and training institutions, understanding the characteristics of Generation Z is the key to effective collaboration. An authoritarian approach may not work, so it is necessary to open up to a more collaborative management style. It seems that understanding the attitudes and expectations of this generation and providing them with better, tailored support can bring the expected results in business, education.

**Social implications:** Understanding the differences in attitudes and expectations of Generation Z relative to older generations can lead to better integration of different age groups in society and especially in workplaces.

**Originality/value:** The value of the work lies in providing insights into generational dynamics, which can be useful for leaders, managers, HR professionals, educators and anyone who wants to better understand and work with the younger generation. The work also points out the advantages of design thinking methodologies for working with Generation Z.

**Keywords:** Water conservation, Generation Z, advertising, Project Based Learning (PBL), Design Thinking.

Category of the paper: Case study.

### 1. Introduction

Awareness of the protection of water resources and consumer behaviour to modern and necessary requirements for the benefit of the environment implies the inevitable discussions of many researchers of this issue. The resulting theoretical assumptions point quite clearly to the typical activity of protecting the earth's natural resources but also to conscious and qualitatively desirable activities in the daily functioning of man. Unfortunately, the concepts developed raise a lot of questions about the level of knowledge and purposeful reactivity of the younger generation for the protection of nature and water in particular. However, referring to the cultural approach to assessing water demand, it helps to understand consumption patterns as they are embedded in daily life and social conventions (Sofoulis, 2005). Looking at today from the perspective of qualitative ecological and social changes in the approach to the efficient and rational use of water resources, one sees many important and interesting solutions to implement practical concepts for the conservation of these resources. Nevertheless, modern technologies aimed at individual consumers are not achievable for most, not only because of the high cost of installation and low range of availability, but, above all, knowledge of the rightness of their application. The solution seems to be progressive advertising, which in its message will allow us to understand both the problems of the modern environment, but also the dynamics of these changes, the end result of which should be the expected revision of the environmental behaviour of all generations.

In this context, of particular interest are the attitudes and practises of Generation Z about water conservation. This paper uses a Project Based Learning (PBL) and Design Thinking approach to explore how members of Generation Z perceive the issue of water conservation and recycling and to what extent the attributes attributed to this generation impinge on the design work of advertising and information messages.

#### 1.1. Water resources and their qualitative protection in the concepts of researchers

According to environmental protection researchers, water has been identified as one of the most important natural resources and differs somewhat from the rest, as it is perceived as a key to prosperity and wealth (Arbués, Garcia-Valias, Martinez-Espineira, 2003). However, the observed depletion and pollution of water today are among the main environmental problems facing the world in the 21st century (Aprile, Fiorillo, 2017). As a result, water may soon become a "commodity" in short supply in many sectors of the economy, as well as in everyday human functioning. However, in a more pessimistic scenario, it is necessary to assume its temporal regulation, as the amount of water used to produce many goods does not keep up with the amount of resources existing on the planet.

Taking into account the growing demand for freshwater reserves, as noted by April and Fiorillo, this is primarily due to population growth, pollution, and climate change. The authors emphasise that it is crucial to consider and implement specific approaches to combating water scarcity problems. Simha et al. (Simha et al., 2017), on the other hand, consider water conservation and wastewater reuse to be significant, but these are two different and interrelated strategies. In reality, while water protection is focused on the demand and source side of the problem, wastewater reuse aims to reduce demand by closing the water cycle and promoting a closed-loop flow of resources (waste) from the built environment to the natural environment.

As can be seen, this diverse protection of water resources is now a global action focused on water conservation processes. This issue, which environmental researchers clearly emphasise (Bagatin et al., 2014), results from growing global water shortages, as well as the amount of wastewater from industrial areas and urban agglomerations, whose urbanisation is becoming increasingly alarming for the environment, economy and society. Unfortunately, the scale of the problem seems to be increasing, resulting in drought periods in regions that have not experienced it before.

#### 1.2. Generation Z and socio-economic views

Generation Z (also known as Gen Z or iGen), colloquially referred to as "zoomers", is a demographic cohort of people born between 1995 and 2012, following the Millennials and preceding Generation Alpha. As the first social generation to grow up with access to the Internet and portable digital technology from a young age, members of Generation Z were called "digital natives." Currently, this term should be understood as an indicator of the preferred mode of communication but not necessarily digital proficiency. Due to the unprecedented change in communication processes, cross-sectional publications dedicated to Generation Z began to appear relatively quickly, for example (Carrington et al., 2016; Weise, 2019; Seemiller, Grace, 2018). It is emphasised that compared to previous generations, Gen Z spends more time on electronic devices and less time reading books than before (Twenge, Martin, Spitzberg, 2019), which has implications for their concentration abilities, vocabulary, academic performance, and future functioning. At the same time, research on teenagers (Horowitz, Graf, 2019) shows that members of the Generation Z cohort are less hedonistic, better behaved, and more lonely than any generation previously studied. At the same time, the study reports very worrying information on mental health, with 70% of respondents believing that anxiety and depression are the main problems among their peers. A broader view of issues from a practical perspective - the Z cohort in the workplace - can be obtained by analysing the literature indicated in the literature review (Benítez-Márquez et al., 2022).

In the context of this work, it is also necessary to outline the image of Generation Z's attitude towards nature, environmental protection, climate, etc. The distinctiveness of this group is studied in many directions; for example, in (Tran et al., 2022), researchers try to determine which factors have a greater impact on consumer loyalty and purchasing intentions towards

eco-fashion. Comparative studies of age cohorts indicate that more and more young people are taking personal responsibility, using environmentally friendly alternatives to cars, and considering the carbon footprint before purchasing a product, unlike older generations (Skeirytė, Krikštolaitis, Liobikienė, 2022; Poortinga, Demski, Steentjes, 2023; Dragolea et al., 2023). The literature review did not indicate positions that referred to the views and practises of Gen Z on socio-economic processes of direct water conservation. It should also be noted that scientific publications mostly present a declarative image, which translates to a small extent into the sphere of behaviour. On the one hand, we can observe the commitment and willingness to protect the environment, but, on the other hand, not necessarily the willingness to bear the costs for high-quality water. Therefore, ecology specialists recommend directions of action focused on strengthening social-human values, developing skills leading to individual and social practises, and implementing appropriate educational and environmental policies (Lazăr et al., 2022). Only in this way can natural resources, including water, be fully protected in the context of Generation Z's attitudes.

### 2. Methodology

The issue of environmental protection and, in particular, the opinion-forming role of the young generation on this topic raises a number of questions not so much about their knowledge, but about practical activities in this area. This unique research space, which over the course of several years has changed its forms and contemporary perception of the problem of protecting our planet's resources, does not clearly indicate that the knowledge of young people will coincide not only with practical activities for the protection of water resources and their recycling, but also with the implementation of possible technological solutions for their benefit. Therefore, in order to diagnose and verify the position and knowledge of the young generation, it was decided to verify this information as part of the Project Based Learning (PBL) project, implemented in the academic year 2022/2023.

When designing the topic of the PBL project and embarking on its implementation with a group of students, the authors of this study posed the following questions:

- (1) How do members of Generation Z perceive the issue of water conservation and recycling?
- (2) Can a self-organising team of Generation Z students develop a model or product that is a progressive informational-advertising message regarding an extremely important problem facing humanity?
- (3) To what extent do the attributes attributed to this generation precisely fit the attitudes and skills that this cohort pretends to have for working on this type of social project?

Recognition of opinions on water conservation and recycling was designed as a process based on independent knowledge acquisition (regarding water issues) by students.

The answer to the second question was established as a clear final effect of the work, supported by a report that concludes the project.

To answer the third question, based on the reading of the literature mentioned above, several attributes (AT) of Generation Z were abstracted, which differentiate them and were subjected to revision in this study based on observations of the group of students implementing the PBL project.

List of attributes subjected to verification:

AT1: Dependence on social media - Gen Z relies heavily on social media for communication, information, and networking.

AT2: Pragmatism and realism - Gen Z is usually practical, seeking job stability and financial security while continuing to learn.

AT3: Environmental concern - members of Generation Z are environmentally aware and advocate for sustainable practises.

AT4: Global perspective - representatives of Generation Z have a sense of global connection and are interested in international affairs.

AT5: Progressive values - Generation Z students are more inclined to support progressive social and political issues.

AT6: Entrepreneurial thinking - many representatives of Generation Z have an entrepreneurial spirit and seek opportunities to create their own ventures.

These characteristics were decided to be verified during a PBL class on a small group of students (from Generation Z), who were given an open research topic on water conservation and recycling. The opportunity to observe a self-organised (partially autonomous) team at work allows one to check not only the declarative level but also the depth of understanding of the concept, readiness to integrate knowledge and practise, attitudes towards the studied aspects.

Design Thinking methodology was chosen as a system to organise and support the work, in order to ensure that participants not only gain substantive knowledge but also a broader view of a practical nature. The team designed for the student group three meetings with experts (employees of our university) who were to present professional perspectives on information about water and water conservation, media and their impact on people, and a specialist who was to present one of the objective research techniques of the effect of images on people, eye-tracking.

This paper is a qualitative account of two members of a three-person team (academics) leading a project carried out by six students over one semester.

A diagnostic survey method was selected for the initial verification of the assumptions and the tool was an intentionally designed anonymous survey questionnaire, conducted in an electronic format. The survey was divided into two main areas. The first concerned sociodemographic information and the second comprised intentionally designed questions on the issues under analysis. The respondents were 261 students from various faculties of the Silesian University of Technology, where 51.8% of the respondents were female. Details are presented in section 3.1.

#### Participants in the project group and the observation procedure

As part of the PBL projects conducted at the Silesian University of Technology (SUT), a team of academic teachers proposed the topic: "Saving and recycling water - a challenge for the civilisation of the 21st century - a scientific-research and educational approach to progressive advertising". The PBL projects in the SUT education model are voluntary and last one semester, and students apply independently to carry out tasks after the list of projects is announced at the university. Students working in a PBL group are exempted from some course classes, obtaining the necessary points (ECTS) during project work. A group of six people who studied two different fields - "Preschool and Early School Pedagogy" (4 women, sixth semester of 10-semester master's studies) and "Project Management" (a man and a woman, fourth semester of 7-semester bachelor's studies) - participated in the implementation. All students were born after 2000 and therefore are qualified as representatives of Generation Z.

The academic teachers leading the project are experienced educators with many years of experience in the development of multidisciplinary PBL projects. The leading team assumed the role of facilitators of the Design Thinking process and to a lesser extent served with their expert capabilities.

Observations took place during systematic, several-hour meetings in a training room at the university and during student activities on the project board (a web application available on all platforms). Students were not observed during breaks, on personal internet communication channels, or in other forms outside of conversations with the group or 1:1 conversations initiated by individual persons (especially during the preparation of the final report and presentation). The participants were informed that they were the subject of observation to develop a scientific article summarising the project.

### 3. The course of the PBL project

Participants, according to the rules of PBL classes, obligatorily participated in weekly (contact) meetings with the three-person project management team (academics from both study units) and could benefit from the knowledge of experts, also being university employees. The Trello system, a web-based and mobile application for managing kanban boards in conjunction with the university's Microsoft 365-based accounts (documents and graphic design files), was imposed for online group collaboration. Enforcing the use of the Trello tool stemmed

from the need to easily control the work of the student team, they were required to share all elements of their work through a structured board system.

The project aimed to build an effective advertising that would convince young people to save water and consider recycling it. To achieve this goal, the project team used the Design Thinking process, which helped to tailor the developed solutions to the target audience, and therefore the initial meetings were devoted to identifying problems related to water conservation and the Design Thinking methodology. At this stage, the students unanimously chose their peers as the target audience for their project, recognising in the discussion that it would be easiest to communicate and reach this cohort and that interacting with this group could yield significant results in changing beliefs and behaviours.

#### **3.1. Identification and survey study**

The first task of the team was to identify the problem of water saving and recycling. The independent work of the students highlighted how practically they perceive this issue and the fact that they formed their knowledge exclusively from online sources. In the next step, the project team developed a survey questionnaire and conducted it online using Google Forms.

One of the main goals of the survey was to find out what factors convince and, at the same time, determine a young person to make the decision to save water and consider recycling. Moreover, the students constructed the tool in such a way that the posted graphics prompted some reflexion on their actions in the face of the world's water shortage problem. The respondents were guided to reflect on ways to save water when completing the survey. Two members of the project group lived in the students' homes during the academic year and conducted a pilot study that yielded a final version of the questionnaire, which was approved for use by the project's teaching team.

Analysis of the results of the questionnaire revealed several key aspects regarding the attitude of the surveyed group towards the problems of water conservation and recycling.

Awareness of water conservation. The respondents clearly showed awareness of the need to conserve water. The majority spoke in the affirmative, pointing to specific practises, such as turning off the tap more often, choosing to shower instead of taking a bath, and reusing water, such as when cleaning.

Willingness to conserve water. When asked to justify their reluctance to save water, almost all respondents indicated that they save water and do not need to justify themselves.

Environmental awareness. Some respondents also emphasised awareness of the limitations of water resources and reluctance to be responsible for the deterioration of this state, also indicated the possibility of a vision of a dire future - "there will be no water, there will be no humanity".

**Education**. An important aspect of the survey was the issue of education on water conservation, which showed that most respondents consider education necessary and think that

people's awareness is very limited when it comes to water resources, the degree of demand, and the need to take care of the natural goods the Earth gives us.

**Giving up material goods**. Respondents were also asked about the potential abandonment of certain material goods for the environment. The respondents mainly indicated restrictions on various consumption practises (buying clothes with each new collection, washing the car more often, buying bottled water).

**Economic motivation**. The main motivation for saving water was economic savings; lower bills were indicated as the most important reason.

**Emotional feelings**. The analysis also took into account the emotional feelings of the respondents, most of whom indicated a lack of specific emotions related to lack of water or limited access to it.

**Respondents' data.** Those who completed the questionnaire declared that they were between 19 and 24 years of age and mainly came from large towns and cities (from 50,000 to 500,000), the least numerous group (30.6%) consisted of respondents living in rural areas and towns up to 50,000. Of the 110 questionnaires qualified for analysis, a slightly larger group of respondents were women. More than 53% of the participants declared that they are single, almost 42% live with a partner, and less than 5% have a family (wife/husband/children).

Students joining the project, according to the leadership team, were convinced of their (personal) fairly extensive knowledge of water conservation issues, and based on the analysis of the questionnaires, they felt that their generation was equally aware. The leadership team drew the students' attention to serious limitations of the diagnostic survey method, including the peculiarities of online surveys, pointed out some shortcomings of the constructed survey tool, and ambiguities of the obtained results. The team in the discussion also showed scepticism, but in the report, the students included this kind of wording summarising the survey: "Young society is aware of the water shortage problem. Knows ways to save and recycle water. Can classify the main problems of the 21st century. The young generation is aware of what products use the most water".

#### **3.2.** Meeting with an expert in media communication

The leadership team designed a meeting with a media specialist in the PBL project. The meeting aroused great interest among students, as it turned out that they had not previously encountered the knowledge underlying the construction of advertising and information messages and their impact on people. Very important here turned out to be the excellent preparation of the expert, who in a few hours discussed the most relevant areas useful to the group, from the meaning and use of colours, principles of composition, design of a coherent message, typographic principles, to issues of how people perceive and test visual messages. The meeting also analysed a practical example of advertising, presenting plans for brand-related activities, and communication strategy with the audience. The importance of heat maps obtained from eye-tracking studies, which show what elements attract the viewer's attention

first and how long they permeate, was discussed. The expert also stressed the importance of subtlety in visual communication, pointing out that effective advertising should be guided by aesthetics and contain a small number of elements to carry a deeper meaning, as well as the need to motivate the viewer to reflect and analyse.

It is worth noting that in the later stages of the project, the expert's guidance proved very valuable to the group, and any graphics and videos created were analysed by the team with the active use of this knowledge.

#### **3.3.** Meeting with the expert on water resources

The team, as part of gaining substantive knowledge, met with an expert who deals with water issues, water treatment from several perspectives, from local to European and global. The expert pointed out a number of contexts that are not usually covered in popular media coverage. Thus, by far the students were most impressed by fairly basic information about the quality of so-called tap water, the lack of need to filter it, explanations related to the concepts of water hardness, white sediment in the kettle (limescale), and the influence of meteorological conditions on water microbiology.

It should be noted that most of the information presented by the expert was completely new to the group and often came as a complete surprise. For example, the independent work of the students when they conducted a reconnaissance of the topic created in them a deep conviction after the need to filter water for drinking, with various techniques that are associated with incurring significant costs for families or end users (osmotic filtration, jugs/bottles with carbon filters). The expert knowledge imparted had a decisive influence on the subsequent choice of form and the target advertising campaign itself, which was created as part of the project.

#### 3.4. Selection of advertising form and implementation

At the stage of choosing the form of advertising, the students focused on their abilities, personal preferences in making their decision, they did not enquire which forms of messages are most effective according to, for example, specialised portals. Their choice fell on the social network Instagram, where they created a profile, initially made available only to team members, and then made public. The group developed an information campaign based on graphics with informative text promoting a responsible attitude toward the many aspects of life in which water (and water conservation) are essential. The students also shot several short film forms (footage of less than 30 seconds), which they believe should make a big difference in the perception of the issue by the target group, their peers.

Using the knowledge gained during the project activities, the group created, in their opinion, a visually coherent message divided into nine educational cycles. It also conducted survey research (on small groups of peers) on the name of the entire project, preferred colour sets, and the appearance of the graphic design of the posts (A|B tests). These activities are called prototyping and testing in the design thinking methodology.

At this stage of the project, we no longer observed any specific changes in students' knowledge or modification of attitudes towards the issue of water and water conservation. Only specific dynamics of involvement in the work of group members were noticed. Students who were accustomed in the course of their studies to group project work experienced the hardships of individual tasks more easily and their motivation fluctuated little.

#### 3.5. Meeting with an expert perception testing

The last invited expert presented eye-tracking technologies that more objectively observe people's perception of media materials; in particular, he focused on eye-tracking systems. This research in the project was to be used by students to unbiasedly examine designed image variants, modify graphic designs, and ultimately reliably select the most optimal versions of messages. The team, using a hardware eye-tracker (Eye Tribe) connected to a laptop, was able to determine on which element of the graphics on the screen the test person focused his or her gaze, in which places, and for how long. Thanks to the expert-prepared software, the students conducted the test on 27 people to confirm the testing of A|B test opinions for 4 different graphics variants. This stage actually involved two members of the group who had the opportunity to observe and talk to the test students.

The above description is only an abbreviation of the project activities intended to illustrate the versatility of the activities that the students carried out and the dynamics of their attitudes. It should be emphasised that the examples presented are only a selection of the many activities in which the students participated.

#### 3.6. Verification of the characteristics of Generation Z

The project team had the opportunity to observe not only the attitudes, behaviours of students and their beliefs related to the use of water, but also the dynamics of these processes. Following the work and reactions of the students, the leadership team had the opportunity to distinguish certain regularities that support the typical characteristics attributed to Generation Z to varying degrees.

AT1: Dependence on social media - Gen Z relies heavily on social media for communication, information, and networking.

This feature can indeed be confirmed as common. However, the facilitators team noticed a poor willingness to learn how to use a new, slightly more complex application (compared to the most popular apps) like Trello. Despite the ease of getting support to understand the concept of communication and collaboration through the tool, the four students were unwilling to devote time and energy to learning the new tool for many weeks of the project. These limitations are related to people's personal stories rather than problems with the availability of information on how to use the specialized tool. Also noted was a reluctance to use software that ran on computers in favour of being able to work with smartphones. However, people who became more deeply involved in the project naturally started using their laptops, due to the limitations of the software and mobile hardware.

AT2: Pragmatism and realism - Gen Z is usually practical, seeking job stability and financial security while continuing to learn.

This characteristic was indeed confirmed in our observations. However, it is important to keep in mind that assessing what action is pragmatic or realistic may be different for people of different generations, which can lead to many misunderstandings. What, from the point of view of the project management team, was a matter-of-fact action, in the eyes of the students often appeared as redundant, too confusing and time-consuming.

AT3: Environmental concern - members of Generation Z are environmentally aware and advocate for sustainable practises.

A characteristic definitely evident in the observed group. The team was able to observe how the level of knowledge regarding water and water conservation varied poorly, despite the time the students had to recognise the topic. It was observed that there was a lack of inclination to search deeper for information in favour of collecting information, in short, easily digestible, visually, and content-attractive forms. The team got the impression that the collected set of facts (and, in fact, Internet artefacts) did not combine into a coherent whole, which is the result of the global nature of the problem under study, both from a natural and social perspective.

AT4: Global perspective - representatives of Generation Z have a sense of global connection and are interested in international affairs.

A quality also definitely evident in the observed group, but in the dimension of connections between people with whom we form, for example, relationships at the level of news broadcasts (I feel a connection with people whose posts I see, read about, etc. regardless of, for example, geographical location). A more general, generalised, or interest in specific nations in the style characteristic of earlier generations has not been observed.

AT5: Progressive values - Generation Z students are more inclined to support progressive social and political issues.

This trait can be fully confirmed by the project team, however, in the declarative layer, as over the course of the project no changes could be observed that could be interpreted as actively supporting social or political change. The mere fact of working on an outreach campaign conducted through Instagram, in the team's opinion, is not enough to recognise activity, as other forms of activism that are typical of those interested in supporting progressive social and political causes were not observed. However, it should be noted that a significant number of students filmed short video forms, of which they were the protagonists, despite the fact that they had not previously made such attempts to publicise their image.

AT6: Entrepreneurial thinking - many representatives of Generation Z have an entrepreneurial spirit and seek opportunities to create their own ventures.

One of the students in the project was heavily involved in the work of preparing the graphic layer and creating a campaign on Instagram, viewing these activities as a great training and gaining competencies necessary for her future career. Another person saw the project as an opportunity to start her academic work, hence she was heavily involved in the research process with an eye-tracker. During the project, no tendency to transform or use the activity in a business direction was noticed, neither during the interviews with the participants nor even during the idea generation blocks. Had this trait been prevalent in the generation surveyed, the leadership team could have observed at least the seeds of business-like ideas that could have emerged with such a broadly framed project topic.

### 4. Summary

The main objective of this document was to verify the beliefs about water conservation and recycling of Generation Z, which was designed to answer three research questions.

The first task of the project group (acquiring factual knowledge, developing and conducting a survey, presenting and discussing the results) led the project team to the conclusion that students have a high belief in their knowledge of water issues, environmental behaviour, and are of the opinion that many people of their generation are capable of incurring certain costs of discomfort in order to conserve or rationally use water resources. The meeting with the expert showed them new insights that came as a serious surprise to them, although they were, in fact, a set of commonly available information (including on the Internet) that had not penetrated their consciousness during the exploration stage.

Based on the final result (the artefacts presented, including the final report and the campaign launched on Instagram), we can unequivocally confirm that the team of Generation Z students is capable of developing a model and product that are a progressive information and advertising message. The project team was not concerned with assessing the quality or effectiveness of the message produced.

Summarising the overview of the characteristics studied from Generation Z (the last research question), the team notes that, in fact, most of the attributes attributed to this age cohort are indeed confirmed, but it should be kept in mind that the definitions of attitudes and activities can be significantly different between generations. Therefore, it is very important to carefully determine whether people belonging to different age cohorts have clarified their intentions and activities. Moreover, representatives of Generation Z, very often report in good faith, for example, that they are well prepared in terms of content and readiness to take action. Often, they are convinced that since they found some information on the Web and decided that a particular task is not complicated, they will manage it on their own. Unfortunately, the results of their actions are often inadequate or inconsistent with the requirements set by older

generations. Ignorance of these facts can lead to misunderstandings in teams and collaborative professional work. In online communities, we can find quite widespread opinions about very difficult cooperation with generation Z. But in parallel, where management teams (usually representatives of older generations) orientated in their functioning to communication, have taken the trouble to recognise the strengths and weaknesses of this cohort, cooperation and mutual satisfaction have become an everyday reality. Interestingly, we can now see that the older generations are clearly indicating what they can (and should) learn from Generation Z. Of course, this requires a specific mindset of management teams that have abandoned a merely directive management style.

It is still worth highlighting the role of the Design Thinking process in working with Generation Z. The Design Thinking methodology reflects the values attributed to this cohort by deeply empathising with the user, prototyping, and continuously testing solutions that are in line with the real needs and aspirations of their generation. This approach promotes increased communication and collaboration, including between generations, which is essential in modern business environments.

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