

HUMAN CAPITAL AS A MANAGER'S CHALLENGE. GENERATION Z ON THE LABOR MARKET

Bogdan PLISZKA

Silesian University of Technology; bogdan.pliszka@polsl.pl, ORCID: 0000-0002-3021-905X

Purpose: The reason for writing this article is the still existing gap in research on the attitudes of Generation Z. In particular, on attitudes related to work, including cooperation between managers, bosses and subordinates. In the context of contemporary socio-demographic changes in the labor market, the issue of generational diversity and the challenges it presents for employers, as well as for human resource management within organizations, has become increasingly important. Members of Generation Z are ambitious and independent.

Project/methodology/approach: The objectives of the article were achieved through the analysis of available texts. This method was used to research the described issue. The approach to the topic results from the specificity of the studied group, which is amorphous and, despite similar activities, does not have a developed strategy for its activity on the labor market. **Findings:** The research results showed that for representatives of Generation Z, professional satisfaction, although important, is less important than personal life, interests, and self-fulfillment. Very often, Generation Z representatives are ready to change jobs if they see their self-development as incompatible.

Practical implications: Generation Z clearly differs in its attitudes from previous generations. For employers, this means new challenges; they will have to learn the values of Generation Z employees and try to find a model of cooperation between managers and their subordinates that will allow for the development of organizations in which the youngest generations have found employment.

Social implications: The article may be a signal to management staff that Generation Z, increasingly represented on the labor market, poses new, previously unknown challenges to managers. It also shows that they can be applied in practice.

Originality/value: The article discusses a problem that has so far been poorly researched in Poland. Research conducted in other countries shows that it is important for management staff. In theory, this is the first article in a series analyzing the attitudes of Generation Z on the Polish and Central European labor markets. It also shows that automatic implementation of Western European or Far Eastern solutions will not always be a solution on the Polish labor market.

Keywords: management, human capital, generation Z.

1. Modern Human Resource Management

Human Resource Management (HRM) refers to the strategic approach to the effective management of people within an organization, aimed at maximizing employee performance in service of the employer's strategic objectives. HRM encompasses a range of functions, including recruiting, selecting, training, evaluating, and compensating employees. It also involves managing labor relations, employee welfare, and fostering a productive work environment. Modern HRM focuses on aligning human capital with organizational goals, creating a culture of continuous learning, and emphasizing employee engagement, diversity, and inclusion to drive overall business success (Brzezińska, Appelt, Ziółkowska, 2008).

Human Resource Management (HRM) is a critical function within organizations that focuses on the strategic and effective management of people. It plays a vital role in ensuring that an organization's workforce is capable, motivated, and aligned with the company's strategic goals. In today's competitive business environment, HRM goes beyond traditional administrative functions such as hiring, payroll, and employee relations. It encompasses a broader approach, aimed at fostering talent, enhancing employee engagement, and promoting a positive workplace culture (Wrzesień, 2005).

The core activities of HRM include recruiting and selecting the right candidates, training and developing employees, performance management, and compensation. These activities ensure that organizations attract, retain, and develop talent that is critical for their long-term success. The recruitment process involves identifying the right individuals whose skills, experiences, and values align with the company's needs and culture. Training and development focus on improving employee skills and preparing them for future challenges, while performance management ensures that employees' contributions are aligned with organizational objectives (Zawadzki, 2015).

Another key aspect of HRM is employee welfare and labor relations. Creating a safe, inclusive, and supportive work environment is essential for employee well-being and productivity. This also includes ensuring that the organization complies with labor laws and regulations, managing employee benefits, and addressing issues such as workplace conflicts and employee grievances (Permenter, 2007).

Modern HRM also emphasizes diversity and inclusion, recognizing the value of a diverse workforce and fostering an environment where all employees feel valued and respected. Employee engagement has become a major focus area as well, with organizations seeking to create conditions that motivate employees to give their best performance and remain committed to the organization (Oblój, 1999).

2. Methodology

In order to achieve the research objectives of this article, the study used techniques such as literature review to collect, analyze, and synthesize relevant information from a wide range of sources. Databases were searched using the following keywords: management, Generation Z, attitudes toward challenges. The literature review was conducted using Google Scholar and Scopus browsers. The aim was to conduct a theoretical review based on an extensive literature search and qualitative content analysis of relevant articles in order to develop and expand the knowledge on ethical management of human capital in Generation Z. The article attempts to answer the question about the main issues faced by managers working with Generation Z.

2.1. Globalization, technology and HRM

In the context of globalization and technological advancements, HRM has evolved to include the use of digital tools and data analytics for managing human capital. HR professionals now utilize technology to streamline HR processes, track employee performance, and gather data to inform decision-making. As the workforce becomes more diverse and dynamic, HRM is critical in helping organizations adapt to these changes and maintain a competitive Edge (Masłyk-Musiał, 2011).

However, it soon became apparent that managing large plants by common sense, intuition and personal experience alone was insufficient. In particular, it does not lead to a corresponding increase in the productivity of direct production workers, according to the possibilities of technology (Pujer, 2016). It was precisely the low individual productivity that was considered by the organizational classics to be the main impediment to economic development. This is because, on the one hand, it prevented the raising of wages and thus the creation of a mass market for industrial consumer goods (demand barrier), while on the other hand, it impeded the growth of production (supply barrier), because, as a result of high unit costs, the payback time of capital invested in expensive equipment was too slow (Brigham, Houston, 2015). Taylor recognized this: "...the slow performance of labor is the most serious problem we have to deal with in the United States. It is also certainly the most serious problem that the English also have to deal with at the present time", he wrote in 1911.1 low current these words unfortunately sound in many countries in the last decade of the 20th century (Taylor, 1998).

On the basis of his research. F.W. Taylor identified the basic factors causing low productivity of workers. He included among them (Dumay, Garanina, 2014):

- a defective system of remuneration for workers, which made it in their interest to hide their true productive capacity,
- irrational work methods used in industry,

- the incompatibility between the characteristics of workers (physical strength, mental level, qualifications, etc.) and the demands of the work,
- workers' belief that increased production inevitably leads to increased unemployment.

Taylor focused his attention and research interests on the work of the individual worker and the work brigade in a production plant. He was prompted to do so by personal experience (Falencikowski, Lis, 2018).

F.W. Taylor began working at the age of twenty-two in the mechanical plants of the Midvale Steel Company, in one of the offices. Being a clerk did not suit him, so he moved on to work as a loader, shoveling. Then he finessed that he was put at the machine. He became a lathe helper. He did a great job, working ten hours a day, and in the evenings he rewrote the engineering course at Stevens Institute (Sułkowski, 2005). In 1883, he earned a degree in mechanical engineering. During his six years at the Midvale Steel Co. he was promoted successively from lathe helper to toolmaker, foreman, foreman, repair crew leader, chief designer, study office manager and finally chief engineer. Here he conducted his first research both in purely technical fields (metalworking, the operation of transmission belts, etc.) and in the scientific organization of labor (measuring work time, ways of remuneration, etc.) (Sudoł, 2012).

In 1890. Taylor became general manager of the large Manufacturing Investment Company (paper industry). After three years, however, he decided to return to research. He began working as an independent organizational consultant, reorganizing the Northern Electrical Manufacturing Co., the Johnson Company, the Lorain Steel Co. In 1898, one of the largest steel producers in the US. the Bethlehem Steel Company, engaged him as a permanent consultant (Griffin, 2017). He was awarded a gold medal at the Paris World Exposition in 1900 for the improvements he made in steel production here (he invented the so-called high-speed steel). At Bethlehem Steel Co. he applied almost the full set of undertakings that make up the system of scientific work organization. In 1901. after a change of ownership of the company he was unceremoniously fired from his job. From then on. he devoted himself wholeheartedly to promoting scientific management, devoting part of his fortune to this activity. He was first and foremost a “man of industry” who influenced management theory and practice around the world (Gołemski, 2019).

It is also significant that in Poland Taylor's works were published as early as the early 1920s (Sułkowski, 2011).

Scientific management according to Taylor, should be based on four basic principles (Gordon, 2020):

- the principle of scientific elaboration of every element of human work in place of common-sense methods of the “more or less” type,
- the principle of cooperation between management and workers to implement scientific management and workers to implement scientific management principles,

- the principle of almost equal division of labor and responsibility between managers and workers in place of the existing “total” burden on executive workers.
- the principle of scientific selection and gradual training and improvement of workers.

Every person belongs to a specific generation. They are part of a particular age cohort. A set of characteristics shared by several age groups leads to cohorts being defined as a generation. Typically, dominant trends in social life at a given place and time are perceived as characteristic by the members of that generation. A generation is a collective entity with the traits of a peer group (Szymczak, 2017).

In the cultural context represented by the West, adulthood is the longest stage of life, spanning from the ages of 20 to 85, and it is divided into three periods: early adulthood, middle adulthood, and late adulthood. Adulthood is regarded as a life stage where intense human development occurs across biological, psychological, spiritual, social, and cultural dimensions. This developmental perspective allows us to view adulthood as a structure that changes and continuously updates itself (Bławat, 2014). The concept of adulthood and the tasks associated with this life period pertain to both generations: Generation Y is currently experiencing early adulthood, while Generation X is in middle adulthood. It is natural to discuss generations in chronological order, from oldest to youngest (first Generation X, then Generation Y), and to address human development stages from youngest to oldest (first early adulthood, then middle adulthood) (Ambroziak, 2013).

The word "generation" appears in everyday conversations. The term has a wide range of meanings. Besides its use in colloquial language, it serves to describe social changes, literary classifications, philosophical concepts, and the analysis of political shifts. The concept of a generation functions as a way of organizing chronological, substantive, and ideological categorization of groups of people who are of similar age. Dobrochna Hildebrand-Wypych, referencing Charles Berg, who stated that "pedagogy for some is the science of generational relations", situates the concept of generation in the field of education as a constitutive term (Hildebrand-Wypych, 2009).

The term "generation" operates in the realm of social sciences, humanities, colloquial language, literature, worldview discussions, and advertising. The category of "generation" requires an interdisciplinary approach due to its ambiguity and complexity. Jose Ortega y Gasset argues that "generation is a fundamental concept for history" because the world "changes with every generation; each has somehow influenced it, leaving the world more or less different from the one it encountered" (Ortega y Gasset, 2005).

2.2. Generation X

"Generally speaking, one could say that 'Xers' are the children of the so-called baby boomers, the generation that sparked the revolution of the 1960s, only to later abandon its ideals for lucrative positions and a comfortable, consumer-oriented lifestyle". Generation X refers to

people who came of age toward the end of the 20th century, a period marked by significant societal changes and the weakening of traditional institutions (Brzozowska, 2005).

Generation X, which followed the baby boom generation in Western countries (USA, Canada, the UK), grew up during a time of crisis for traditional institutions, shifts in social structures, and an increasing focus on consumption and media in everyday life. In Poland, the shared generational experience for Xers is the memory of the Polish People's Republic (PRL) and the transition period that accompanied the major political and economic transformation. Living through the PRL era and the socio-political transition meant learning life skills and developing pragmatic creativity, particularly in dealing with everyday challenges. Generation X in Poland witnessed a shift from a world of scarcity to one of abundance in terms of consumer goods. The labor market, after the 1989 transformations, presented them with new opportunities (Couplan, 2005).

Education in Polish schools and universities during this time focused on developing a broad perspective on issues, identifying core problems, and nurturing analytical thinking. The verification of knowledge and skills was not done through tests but rather through essays that required justification of opinions, beliefs, and reflections. Xers did not have their after-school time pre-planned by their parents. Their choices in this regard were based on their own interests. Children and adolescents often organized their own free time and were not surrounded by excessive parental supervision (Zawadzki, 2017). The term "latchkey kids" became synonymous with children of working parents (with women entering the workforce on a larger scale than in the past), parents who were trying to quickly improve their financial situation or survive in the emerging free-market world. During this period, the media, particularly television, began to play a more significant role in people's lives. Generation X forms a diverse and broader collective that lacks a defined elite responsible for creating or imposing a generational myth on others (Consumerlab, 2017).

In this context, the experience of Generation X is deeply shaped by their upbringing in an era of political and economic transformation, the rise of media influence, and a growing sense of individual responsibility in an increasingly consumer-driven world (Dubas, 2009).

2.3. Characterization of Generation Y

At the end of the 20th century, the process of generational change gained momentum. The last cohorts of Generation X no longer identified with their generational "label," signaling the emergence of a new generational group—Generation Y. In Western countries, three primary characteristics of Generation Y can be distinguished (two of which also apply to Generation Y in Poland) (Cewinska, Stryker, 2009):

- Racial and ethnic diversity.
- Independence resulting from the unique nature of primary socialization and the technological changes that have occurred.
- A strong sense of security and optimism stemming from their relationships with their parents.

About Generation Y: “They were born into a world completely different from the one their parents knew in their youth, a world their parents could not even imagine, and when it finally arrived, they greeted it with a mix of bewilderment and disbelief. It is a world full of exciting job opportunities, seemingly unlimited choices, and countless attractions and pleasures worth tasting, each appearing more tempting than the previous ones, hastily sent to early retirement and destined for ultimate oblivion”. Millennials have definitively broken with tradition, rejecting hierarchies, institutions, and authorities, and replacing the need for organizational structures with a belief in partnerships and the omnipotence of networks” (Bartczak, Marszał, Stachowska, 2018).

Generation Y members are more alike than any previous generation. As Generation Y forms, the geographical context is becoming less significant, while technological factors are gaining increasing importance. Millennials are the first generation that did not require an authority figure to access information (Lewandowski, 2018).

Generation Y was born during the "child decade", when new trends in child-rearing emerged—support and care for the child took center stage. The parents of Generation Y, in addition to spending time with their children at home, offered them various extracurricular activities to ensure their start in life was as advanced as possible. The result of this shift in child-rearing, ensuring their needs were met, is a generation whose members have high self-esteem and confidence, are aware of their rights, and know what they deserve (Duda, 2009).

Some of the characteristics of Generation Y, as presented by Neil Howe and William Strauss, include (Walkowiak, Mietlewski, 2017):

- Uniqueness—stemming from the significant attention given to children.
- Protection—never before have so many regulations concerning health and safety been implemented.
- Confidence.
- Team orientation.
- Conventionality.
- Ambition.
- Living under pressure.

The conditions in which Generation Y grew up were different from those of previous generations. They were raised in smaller, nuclear families. Their parents actively engaged in their children’s lives, focusing much of their attention on shaping their children's careers (Masłyk-Musiał, 2011).

Witold Wrzesień highlights the commercial aspect of Generation Y's existence: the social identity of this generation is largely defined by patterns of consumer culture (consumerism is also a defining trait of Generation X). Moreover, the sense of generational belonging—internally speaking—is often the result of acquiring products that appear in the generational marketplace. Generation Y was "born to consume". The symbol of this consumption-oriented generation is the triad: fast food, fast sex, fast cars (symbolized by the phrase "leather jacket, car, and cell phone") (Walkowiak, Mietlewski, 2017).

2.4. Characteristics of Generation Z

In the context of contemporary socio-demographic changes in the labor market, the issue of generational diversity and the challenges it presents for employers, as well as for human resource management within organizations, has become increasingly important. From this perspective, a particularly significant group is the Generation Z cohort, who are at the beginning of their professional careers and exhibit attitudes, expectations, and preferences towards work that differ significantly from those of their predecessors (Zawadzki, 2017).

Different generations are characterized by varying attitudes towards work, value systems, and expectations or preferences related to employment and career paths. These differences become particularly evident when comparing younger generations (Y and Z) with older cohorts. Among the primary factors that distinguish younger people from older age groups are greater individualism, flexibility, and a strong proficiency with new technologies. Generation Z also exhibits a markedly different approach to work compared to Generation X. For young people, work is not one of the top priorities in life, and they are not inclined to sacrifice their personal lives for work or to commit to long-term relationships with an organization. However, they can be highly engaged in work that meets their expectations and fulfills their needs. They seek employment in companies that offer a positive atmosphere and opportunities for self-fulfillment. The more focused a company is on these aspects, the more likely it is to earn their loyalty (Masłyk-Musiał, 2011).

Members of Generation Z are ambitious and independent. However, personal life satisfaction is more important to them than career success. They place a strong emphasis on maintaining a balance between work and personal life. What distinguishes them from previous generations is their heightened focus on themselves, their needs, and their benefits. They hold high expectations not only for themselves but also for their leadership and employers. They expect excellent leadership and value interpersonal relationships with their supervisors. From their employers, they anticipate investment in their personal development and satisfactory compensation. They are eager to invest in themselves, pursue their passions, and continuously learn. They prefer engaging work over hard work (Zawadzki, 2017).

Young people from Generation Z are often described as skilled multitaskers who easily adapt to change. They can quickly access information, build communities, and enjoy frequent communication, primarily through digital platforms. They favor informal interpersonal

relationships, including casual dress codes. Many of these traits are considered strengths in a professional context. However, some weaknesses are also notable, such as lower work ethics, impatience, a lack of self-discipline, weaker decision-making skills, a sense of entitlement, and challenges with face-to-face interactions (Stosik, Leśniewska, 2015).

Generation Z, also known as Generation C (referring to "connected", "communicating", and "computerized"), represents the next generation after Millennials. This cohort, raised amidst the advancements of modern technology, is often referred to as "the children of the Internet". There is a general belief that Generation Z shares many traits with Generation Y, while demonstrating even greater proficiency in certain areas (Stosik, Leśniewska, 2015).

As a generation deeply intertwined with technology, Generation Z has been shaped by the rapid evolution of digital tools, which has influenced their communication styles, learning habits, and work expectations. Their ability to navigate digital environments and adapt to technological shifts has made them highly competitive in the modern workforce. However, these strengths are counterbalanced by challenges in traditional work structures, including a tendency toward impatience and a need for instant gratification, which can sometimes hinder their long-term commitment to organizations or projects. Despite these challenges, their innovative mindset and ability to quickly acquire new skills make them valuable contributors in an ever-evolving work environment.

2.5. The Profession of a Manager

The role of a manager is pivotal in any organization, serving as the bridge between the strategic objectives of the company and the day-to-day operations that drive its success. Managers are responsible for planning, organizing, leading, and controlling resources to achieve specific goals efficiently and effectively. Their responsibilities span across various functions, including human resources, finance, marketing, operations, and more, depending on the organizational structure and industry (Masłyk-Musiał, 2011).

Key Responsibilities

1. **Planning and Strategy Development:** Managers are tasked with setting short-term and long-term goals aligned with the organization's vision. This involves strategic planning, forecasting, and the allocation of resources to ensure that objectives are met. Effective planning requires an understanding of market trends, competitive landscape, and internal capabilities.
2. **Organizing Resources:** Organizing involves structuring the workforce, delegating tasks, and ensuring that the necessary resources—such as finances, equipment, and information—are available to achieve the desired outcomes. Managers must design efficient workflows and establish clear roles and responsibilities within their teams.

3. **Leadership and Motivation:** Leadership is a critical component of management. Managers must inspire and motivate their teams, fostering a positive work environment that encourages productivity and innovation. This involves effective communication, conflict resolution, and the ability to recognize and reward employee achievements.
4. **Decision-Making and Problem-Solving:** Managers are often faced with complex decisions that require analytical thinking and sound judgment. They must assess situations, weigh alternatives, and implement solutions that benefit the organization while mitigating risks.
5. **Performance Management:** Monitoring and evaluating employee performance is essential to ensure that goals are being met. Managers conduct performance reviews, provide constructive feedback, and identify opportunities for professional development. Effective performance management helps in maintaining high standards and achieving continuous improvement.
6. **Financial Oversight:** Budgeting, financial planning, and cost control are integral parts of a manager's role. They must ensure that their departments operate within financial constraints while maximizing efficiency and profitability.

Essential Skills and Competencies (Melnik, Bititci, Platts, Tobias, Anderson, 2013):

1. **Communication Skills:** Clear and effective communication is fundamental for managers to convey expectations, provide feedback, and collaborate with various stakeholders. This includes both verbal and written communication, as well as active listening.
2. **Leadership and Interpersonal Skills:** Strong leadership involves the ability to inspire and guide teams, build trust, and manage diverse personalities. Interpersonal skills are crucial for fostering teamwork and resolving conflicts.
3. **Analytical and Critical Thinking:** Managers must analyze data, interpret trends, and make informed decisions. Critical thinking enables them to evaluate situations objectively and develop strategic solutions.
4. **Time Management and Organization:** Effective managers prioritize tasks, manage their time efficiently, and maintain organized workflows to ensure that projects are completed on schedule.
5. **Adaptability and Flexibility:** The business environment is constantly changing, and managers must be able to adapt to new challenges, technologies, and market conditions. Flexibility allows them to pivot strategies when necessary.
6. **Emotional Intelligence:** Understanding and managing one's own emotions, as well as empathizing with others, is essential for building strong relationships and maintaining a positive workplace culture.

Educational and Professional Requirements

Typically, a manager holds at least a bachelor's degree in a relevant field such as business administration, management, or a specific industry-related discipline. Many organizations prefer candidates with advanced degrees, such as an MBA, especially for higher-level management positions. Additionally, practical experience in leadership roles and a proven track record of achieving results are highly valued (Szaban, 2003).

Challenges Faced by Managers

1. **Balancing Multiple Responsibilities:** Managers often juggle various tasks simultaneously, from strategic planning to handling daily operational issues, which can be demanding and stressful.
2. **Managing Change:** Implementing and managing change initiatives, whether technological, structural, or cultural, requires careful planning and the ability to guide teams through transitions.
3. **Employee Retention and Engagement:** Keeping employees motivated and reducing turnover rates are ongoing challenges. Managers must continuously find ways to engage their teams and address their needs and concerns.
4. **Navigating Organizational Politics:** Understanding and effectively navigating the political landscape within an organization is essential for gaining support for initiatives and fostering collaboration across departments.

Importance in Organizations

Managers play a crucial role in translating the strategic vision of the organization into actionable plans. They ensure that resources are utilized efficiently, foster a productive and positive work environment, and drive their teams towards achieving both individual and organizational goals. Effective management leads to increased productivity, higher employee satisfaction, and ultimately, the sustained success and growth of the organization (Kowalewski, 2014).

In conclusion, the profession of a manager is multifaceted, requiring a blend of technical knowledge, interpersonal skills, and strategic thinking. As organizations continue to evolve in response to global trends and technological advancements, the role of managers remains indispensable in steering their teams and businesses towards success (Koontz, 1980).

2.6. Generation Z in the Workforce

Generation Z, often referred to as "Gen Z," encompasses individuals born between 1997 and the early 2010s. This generation is the first to grow up with digital technology from a very young age, making them highly tech-savvy and adaptable to rapid technological changes. As they begin to enter the workforce, Gen Z is redefining workplace norms and expectations with their distinct attitudes, values, and approaches to work (Masłyk-Musiał, 2011).

Key Characteristics of Generation Z in the Workforce (Bartczak, Marszał, Stachowska, 2018):

1. **Tech-Savvy and Digitally Native:** Gen Z has grown up in a world where the internet, smartphones, and social media are ubiquitous. They are comfortable using digital tools and expect technology to play a significant role in their work environment. This generation is proficient in multitasking across various digital platforms and can quickly adapt to new software or tools introduced in the workplace.
2. **Desire for Work-Life Balance:** Unlike previous generations that often prioritized career advancement over personal life, Gen Z places a high value on work-life balance. They seek flexibility in their work schedules and are more inclined towards remote or hybrid work models. For Gen Z, the ability to maintain a healthy balance between professional and personal life is essential for job satisfaction.
3. **Focus on Purpose and Meaning:** Gen Z employees are driven by a strong sense of purpose. They prefer working for organizations that align with their values, especially in terms of social responsibility, environmental sustainability, and diversity and inclusion. For this generation, a job is not just about earning a paycheck, but also about contributing to a greater cause.
4. **Entrepreneurial Mindset:** Many members of Gen Z are entrepreneurial and value independence. This is reflected in their preference for freelance or gig work, as it allows them greater control over their schedules and projects. Additionally, Gen Z is not afraid to pursue unconventional career paths, and many of them are interested in starting their own businesses.
5. **Continuous Learning and Development:** Gen Z values personal and professional development. They seek opportunities for continuous learning and are eager to acquire new skills that will help them advance in their careers. Organizations that offer career growth opportunities, mentorship, and training programs are likely to attract and retain Gen Z talent.
6. **Diversity and Inclusion:** Diversity and inclusion are non-negotiable for Gen Z. They expect workplaces to be inclusive, diverse, and equitable, and they are more likely to be loyal to employers who actively promote and practice these values. Gen Z is also more likely to speak out against discrimination and advocate for fairness and equality in the workplace.
7. **Preference for Collaboration and Teamwork:** Gen Z values collaboration and teamwork but in a different way from previous generations. While they are comfortable working in teams, they also appreciate autonomy and the ability to work independently when needed. They thrive in environments where they can contribute to projects in meaningful ways and receive constructive feedback.

Expectations and Preferences of Gen Z in the Workplace

1. **Flexible Work Arrangements:** Gen Z employees expect flexible work environments that allow them to manage their time effectively. Remote work options, flexible hours, and work-from-home policies are attractive to this generation. They prioritize the ability to choose how, when, and where they work.
2. **Innovative and Dynamic Work Culture:** Gen Z is drawn to workplaces that foster creativity and innovation. They prefer dynamic work cultures that encourage experimentation, fresh ideas, and out-of-the-box thinking. Organizations that are open to new approaches and embrace change will be more appealing to this generation.
3. **Regular Feedback and Communication:** Regular feedback is critical for Gen Z employees. They prefer frequent check-ins with managers and constructive feedback that helps them improve and grow. Open communication is key, as Gen Z values transparency and appreciates managers who provide clear guidance and mentorship.
4. **Career Advancement Opportunities:** Gen Z is ambitious and eager to progress in their careers. They seek clear paths for advancement and are likely to leave organizations that do not offer opportunities for growth. Employers who invest in their professional development through training, mentorship, and promotion opportunities will have an easier time retaining Gen Z talent.
5. **Focus on Mental Health and Well-Being:** Gen Z places a strong emphasis on mental health and well-being. They expect employers to provide resources that support their mental and emotional health, such as wellness programs, counseling services, and flexible work arrangements to prevent burnout.

Challenges and Opportunities for Employers (Hildebrandt-Wypych, 2006)

1. **Retention and Loyalty:** Retaining Gen Z employees can be a challenge for employers, as this generation tends to be more willing to switch jobs in pursuit of better opportunities or work environments that align with their values. Employers must focus on creating a supportive and inclusive work culture, offering growth opportunities, and maintaining open lines of communication to retain Gen Z talent.
2. **Integration of Technology:** Employers need to keep up with technological advancements to meet the expectations of Gen Z workers. This generation is used to working with cutting-edge technologies and may become frustrated with outdated systems or processes. Organizations must invest in modern technologies and tools to attract and retain tech-savvy Gen Z employees.
3. **Adapting Management Styles:** Traditional hierarchical management styles may not resonate with Gen Z, who prefer a more collaborative and inclusive approach. Managers need to adapt their leadership styles to be more supportive, approachable, and flexible. Providing regular feedback and creating a culture of mentorship will help foster positive relationships with Gen Z employees.

4. **Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives:** To attract Gen Z talent, organizations must prioritize diversity and inclusion. Employers should actively promote initiatives that create equitable opportunities for all employees, regardless of their background. This can include mentorship programs, diversity training, and inclusive hiring practices.

3. Conclusions

Generation Z, born between 1997 and the early 2010s, represents a unique cohort entering the workforce with distinct characteristics shaped by digital technology. As the first true digital natives, they are highly proficient with technology, expecting it to play a central role in their work. Gen Z values work-life balance, flexibility, and the opportunity to work remotely, differing from previous generations that prioritized career over personal life (Fatyga, 2005).

They seek purpose and meaning in their work, favoring organizations that align with their values, particularly in social responsibility and diversity. Many also possess an entrepreneurial mindset, preferring freelance work and non-traditional career paths. Continuous learning and personal development are important to them, as they seek career growth opportunities (Bartczak, Marszał, Stachowska, 2018).

Diversity and inclusion are essential values for Gen Z, and they expect workplaces to reflect these principles. While they appreciate collaboration, they also value independence and thrive in environments that encourage innovation and creativity (Dyczkowska, 2015).

Employers face challenges in retaining Gen Z employees, who are willing to leave organizations that don't meet their expectations. To attract and retain this generation, companies must offer flexible work arrangements, embrace modern technology, and foster inclusive, dynamic work cultures with clear opportunities for growth and mental health support (Drucker, 2005).

Managers need to adapt their styles to be more collaborative, providing regular feedback and mentorship to resonate with Gen Z's values. Successful organizations will prioritize diversity and inclusion, innovative work environments, and continuous development to meet the needs of this new generation in the workforce (Bartczak, Marszał, Stachowska, 2018).

The problem of generation Z remains open, in the processes of managing human capital, as well as in various other areas of life. The key to solving the problem here is the vision of future intergenerational relations. It seems that the ideal solution to this relationship would be a model integrating the fresh perspectives of generation Z with the experience of mature managers. In light of the interdisciplinary nature of research on the existing situation, analysis and solving the challenges brought by the emergence of a new type of employee becomes one of its most important elements.

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