

From Gen Z To Boomers: Mastering Multigenerational Team Dynamics In 8 Steps

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ABSTRACT (ENGLISH)

An 8-step approach to managing diverse, multigenerational teams, bridging gaps between Gen Z and Baby Boomers, fostering human connectedness, and cultivating a harmonious workplace.

FULL TEXT

It sounds obvious, but the first thing I tell CEOs, HR (human resources) executives, and managers is that they need to put people first. Every business wants to make a profit, but the pathway to long-term success is building teams with the right chemistry with people who feel valued and appreciated.

Of course, technology is an incredible tool for helping people work together, and data is essential for good decision-making, but also understanding how to work with and through people is the key to succeeding in life, no matter your interest or pursuit. A golden rule for every business to follow is, "There is no substitute for the power of human connectedness."

Concurrently, the global workplace is undergoing a seismic shift in employee expectations of employers, which have significantly changed from Baby Boomers to Gen Z. Moreover, across multigenerational teams, people have different needs at different stages of life. Understanding both is essential for fostering a harmonious and productive work environment that also drives a culture of human connectedness.

Unlike older generations, Millennials and Gen Z seek purpose-driven organizations that have a positive impact on society. Millennials and Gen Z employees desire to be invested in their companies. They want opportunities for learning, growth, and professional development. They also seek regular feedback and recognition for their contributions.

Gen Z employees also tend to be more collaborative and prefer working in teams rather than in a competitive environment. Millennials and Gen Z employees are highly tech-savvy and appreciate organizations that foster innovation and creative thinking. They are attracted to companies that encourage out-of-the-box ideas and offer opportunities for experimentation.

To create a more human-connected work culture, consider this eight-point plan to get started:

- 1. Open Communication:** Encourage open and honest communication among team members to understand individual needs and expectations. Create a safe space for employees to share concerns and preferences. One-on-ones with direct reports, ideally at the same time each week, in which managers both ask for and give direct feedback, are key to open communication.
- 2. Transparent Goals:** Millennials and Gen Z expect companies to be open and honest in their communication and decision-making processes. They appreciate being kept informed about organizational goals, strategies, and changes. As a leader, it is important to translate the "big picture" of the organization's strategy for team members and make it relevant to their daily work.
- 3. Shared Purpose:** Define a shared purpose for the team and ensure that values align with each other and with the organization. Encourage one-on-one conversations where team members can discuss what excites them most and how their roles contribute to achieving the shared purpose. This helps team members feel more connected to the team's goals and motivates them to collaborate effectively.

4. Mentoring and Knowledge-Sharing: Facilitate knowledge transfer between generations by implementing mentorship programs. Encourage older employees to share their wisdom and experiences with younger colleagues, promoting a culture of learning and collaboration.

5. Diversity and Inclusion Training: Promote awareness and understanding of generational differences through diversity and inclusion training. This can help team members appreciate each other's perspectives and work more cohesively.

6. Career Development Opportunities: Create pathways for career development and advancement for all age groups. Show that there are opportunities for growth and learning regardless of one's career stage. At the same time, it's important to value and acknowledge team members who are solid contributors but are not interested in advancement.

7. Customized Benefits Packages: In addition to the culture-building above, companies should also tailor benefits packages to meet the specific needs of different age groups. For example, younger employees may prioritize student loan assistance or parental leave, while older workers might value retirement planning benefits.

8. Flexible Work Arrangements: Offer flexible work options such as remote work, part-time schedules, or compressed work weeks. This accommodates the diverse needs of a wide range of employees, from those who are raising families to those nearing retirement. Gen Z employees, in particular, value flexibility in their work schedules and the ability to have a healthy work-life harmony.

Providing meaningful work, investing in employee development, offering flexibility, fostering innovation and collaboration, and promoting transparency create a solid bedrock for attracting and maintaining multigenerational talent. When people are happy, healthy, and well compensated, they're also motivated. A psychologically safe work environment where people are empowered to innovate increases the chances of success. Without that "connected balance," the business will forever and constantly be spending lots of energy on recruitment. When employees leave, they take their institutional knowledge with them, and that's difficult to recapture.

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