

THE GREAT GENERATIONAL SHIFT

2020 EDITION

The Great Generational Shift

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Bruce Tulgan

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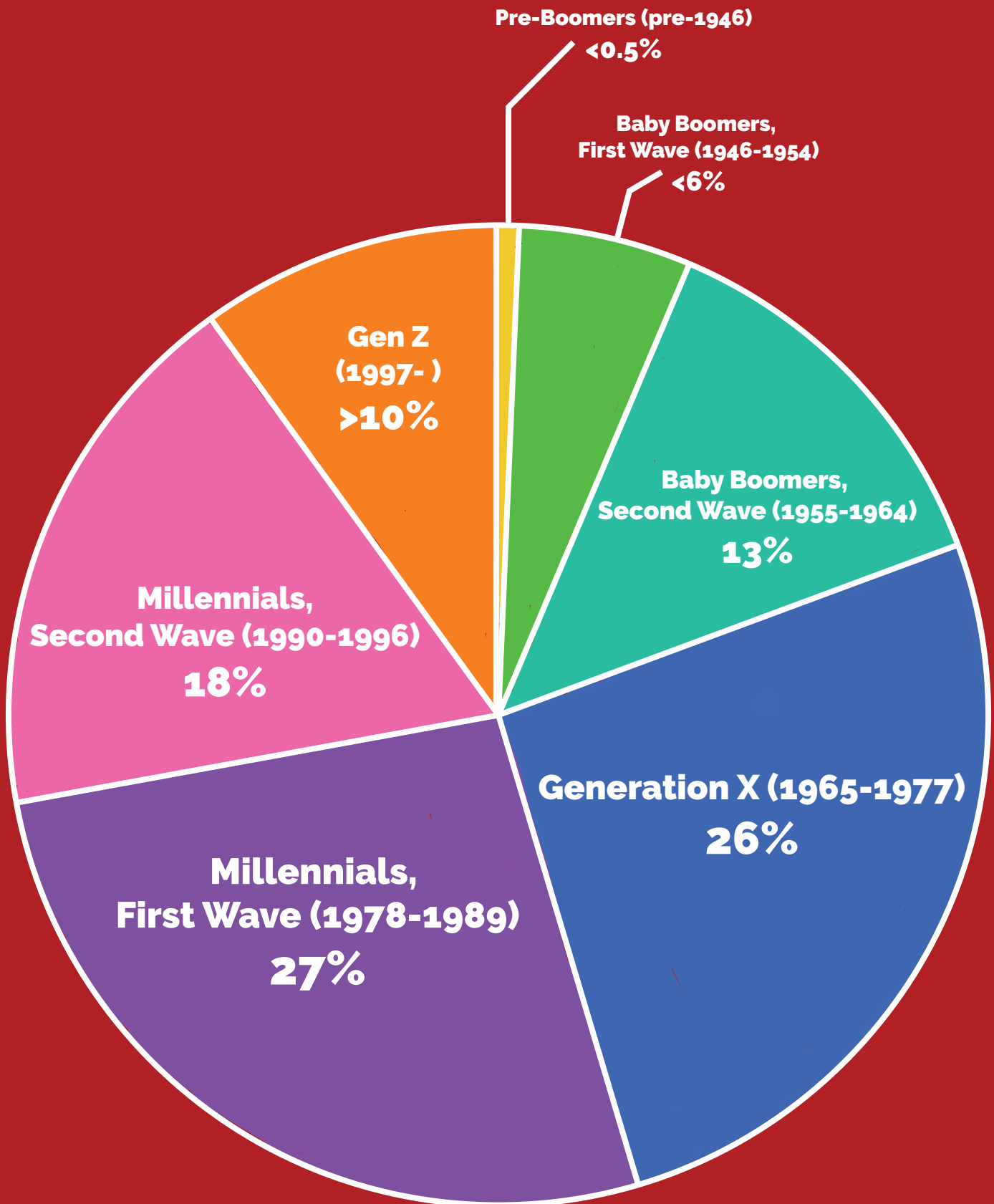
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Workforce 2020



The Numbers Problem

The Age and Youth Bubbles Begin to Shift

Every day in North America, ten thousand Baby Boomers turn 65. The oldest Boomers in the workplace are 74. Millennials alone now comprise 45% of the workforce, Generation Z is rapidly on the rise, and Generation X is far too often left out of the conversation.

This is the numbers problem facing everyone—employers, employees, leaders, and managers—in 2020.

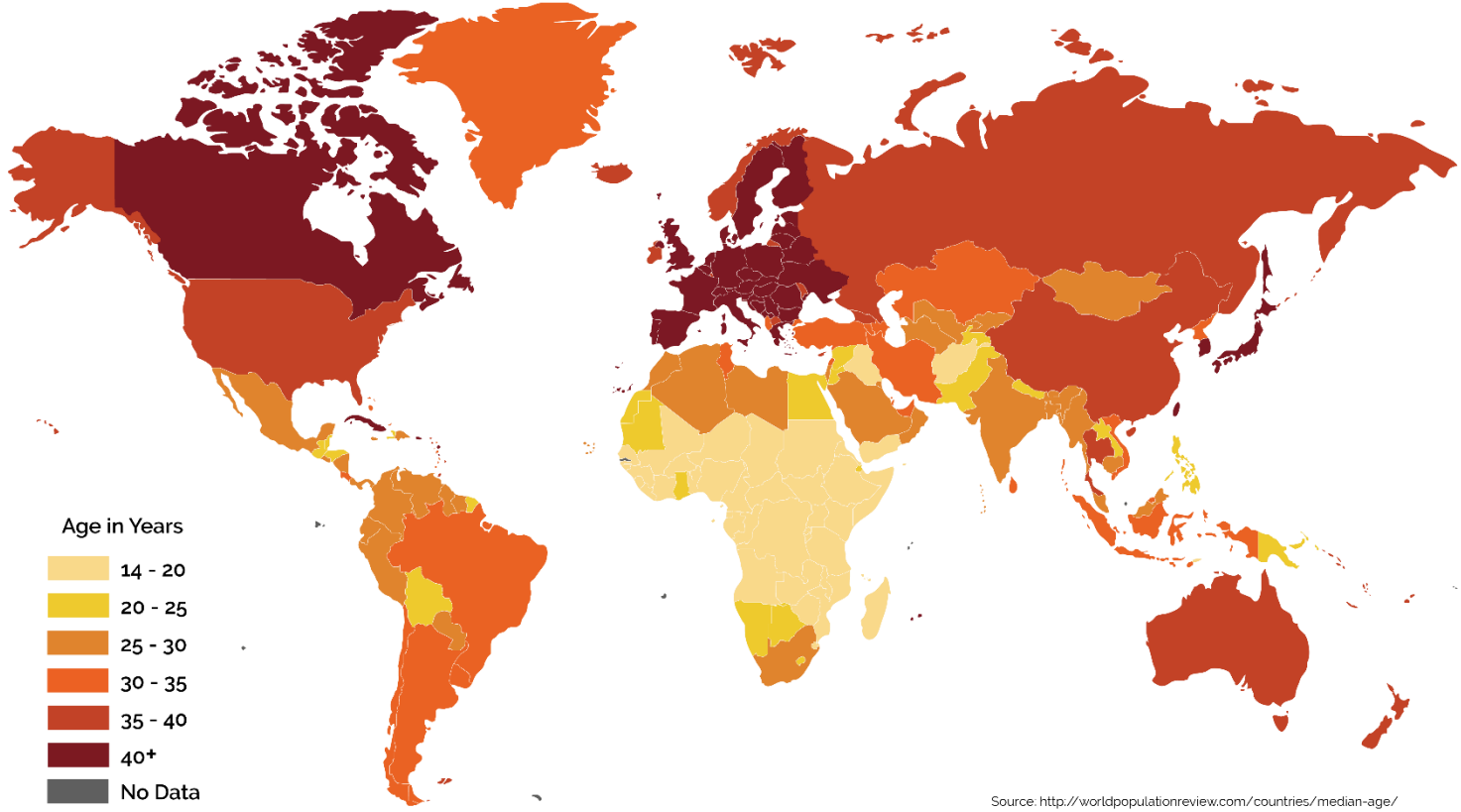
Based on our model, there continue to be six generations working side by side in 2020, though just barely.

2020	
Pre-Baby Boomers (pre-1946)	<0.5%
Baby Boomers, First Wave (1946-1954)	<6%
Baby Boomers, Second Wave (1955-1964)	13%
Generation X (1965-1977)	26%
Millennials, First Wave (1978-1989)	27%
Millennials, Second Wave (1990-1996)**	18%
Generation Z (1997 -)**	>10%

***Footnote: The definition of emerging generations is always somewhat in flux. We have adjusted our research to reflect the birth-year definitions for Second Wave Millennials and Generation Z according to those used by the Pew Research Center.*

The trends, percentage-wise, are very similar throughout Europe and Japan. The percentage of young workers is much, much larger in Africa, Latin America, and much of Asia. In those parts of the world, people born 1990 and later comprise more than 60% of the workforce in 2020. The workforce is increasingly global, across generations, but a much greater percentage of the new young global workforce will come from outside of North America, Europe, and Japan.

Global Median Age



Source: <http://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/median-age/>

The Age Bubble

Retirement, Late Retirement, and Reinventing Retirement

On the older end of the generational spectrum, the workforce is aging, just as the overall population is aging. The Boomers are filling up an age bubble in the workforce such that there are many more people at or near the ordinary age range for retirement.

The exodus of the First Wave Boomers from the workplace—postponed for several years by the economic crisis that began in 2008—is now swift and steady. And as the oldest Second Wave Boomers now begin entering traditional retirement age, the pressure is on organizations now more than ever to prepare for the impending loss of the institutional wisdom, knowledge, skills, and relationships those Boomers take with them.

Adding to the problem is this—employers can no longer count on employees to reliably retire at 65.

Organizations with significant age bubbles understand they must dedicate substantial resources to support knowledge transfer, wisdom transfer, succession planning, and leadership development. In the past, this process would take place over months, if not years, in anticipation of an older employee's guaranteed retirement date. However, the flexible nature of employment relationships today means employers don't know if their oldest employees will retire at 65, 75, or 55.

The path to retirement also no longer looks the same for everyone.

Boomers who do remain in the workforce past traditional retirement age will continue trending heavily toward reinventing retirement and late career pre-retirement. That could mean anything from working less than full-time, partially telecommuting, or working nonexclusively for more than one employer as a contracted employee.

Employers—and managers—are stuck in the middle of these competing agendas.

The Youth Bubble

Redefining What It Means to Be a Millennial

What are the first words that tend to come up in conversations about Millennials?

Lazy. Delicate. Disloyal. Naïve. Just to name a few.

Now consider this: the oldest Millennials turn 42 this year. And, yes, the youngest Millennials are still only 24. But they are no longer the employees fresh from college or high school, the ones with the least real-world job experience. Clinging to the notion that Millennials—most of whom are now mid-career professionals—are naïve or lazy (or eternally 21) isn't doing anyone any favors.

It's time to redefine what it means to be a Millennial at work. While Millennials remain the generation most disproportionately affected by student loan debt and the 2008 financial crisis, they are also the emerging leaders in the workforce. They are the generation that spearheaded the movement toward flexibility and work-life balance, but they are also entering the prime of their careers.

Anyone who continues to complain about the horrors “Millennials” are bringing to the workplace is resisting the reality—the free-agent mindset is the prevailing mindset in the workplace for all employees.

Most workers today assume that employment relationships will be relatively short and transactional. Workers of all ages are under more pressure as work becomes more demanding for everyone. And as the pressure increases, work-life balance becomes an increasingly powerful countertrend. People of all ages and at all levels are free agents today because they have no other choice.

The challenges for employers with large youth bubbles are, more than ever, about mitigating the costs of the Development Investment Paradox: the more an employer invests in developing an employee's skills, especially soft skills, the more negotiating power that employee has in today's labor market. Continuous development is the new norm for everyone, but the stakes are especially high for Millennials as they learn to remain relevant in the later stages of their careers.

Generation X

Revisiting the Latchkey Kids 25 Years Later

“Conditioned to practice self-reliance by our latchkey childhoods, Xers have always expected to depend on our natural entrepreneurship to attain some level of security in an uncertain world.”

I originally wrote those words in 1995, in my first book, *Managing Generation X*. At that time, the oldest in my generation were turning 30. In 2020, the oldest Gen Xers turn 55. Though our life stage is vastly different, the sentiment expressed 25 years ago remains the same: Gen Xers are often their own best advocates in today’s workplace.

Squeezed on either side by two of the largest generations in history, Gen X has assumed the role of the forgotten “middle child” in the generational discussion. Employers cannot continue to allow this to be the norm.

The “prime age” percentage of the workforce is shrinking. More than 50% of today’s workforce is younger than Generation X. As the Second Wave Boomers finally begin retiring, Gen Xers will be subject to increasing pressure as the gap in experienced leadership grows in organizations of every size, in all industries.

It is critical that Generation X is not left out of the considerations when it comes to human capital management and resource planning. The responsibilities of wisdom, knowledge, and relationship transfer will, in most cases, fall to Gen Xers. That is, they will become the senior leaders who step up and bridge the gap between retiring Boomers and rising Millennials. They will become the managers and supervisors everyone relies on to meet their needs at work and grow in their careers.

Employers would also be wise to avoid the mistake of prioritizing building employees’ technical skills over things such as management or leadership development—Generation Z is teaching us that the human element matters more than ever in today’s workplace. That knowledge must be applied to ensure success for emerging Gen X leaders and their generationally diverse teams.

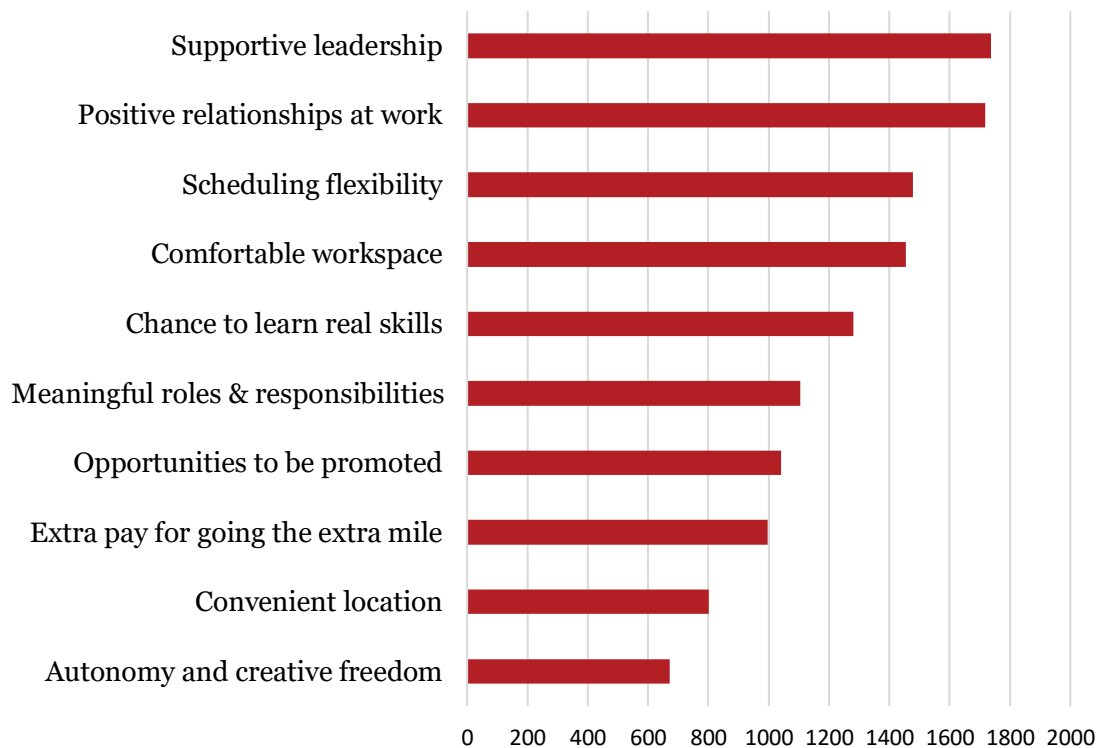
Generation Z

Digital Natives and the Human Element

Gen Z is considered by many to be the first generation of true digital natives. Indeed, they were the first generation to not just grow up with the Internet, but to never know a world without it. Entire professions that didn't exist just ten years ago—such as YouTuber or professional gamer—are now many young people's dream (or actual!) careers.

In our survey of more than 4,000 Gen Zers, Supportive Leadership and Positive Relationships at Work were ranked as the top two most important factors to consider in a job.

Job Factors Ranked in Order of Importance



Generation Z does not require a radical change in management strategy in order to attract or retain them. If anything, Gen Z demands that employers commit even more to the fundamentals: meeting regularly one-on-one, coaching performance every step of the way, and supporting ongoing career development.

The Great Generational Shift in 2020

What This Means for Everyone at Work

So, what does this all mean for you?

The Great Generational Shift has affected, and will continue to affect, everyone. This is the final stage of an historic period of profound global change, and there is a corresponding transformation in the fundamentals of the employer-employee relationship.

2020 presents a whole new set of challenges for employers, HR leaders, and managers at all levels. The rest of this white paper will lay out the proven solutions to these challenges from organizations in the real world.

What follows:

- **The Future Is Now**
The Changed Dynamics of the Workplace
- **Workforce of the Past vs. Workforce of the Future**
- **Nobody Quits a Dream Job**
Human Capital Management Solutions for 2020
- **As Many Paths as You Have People**
Defining Careers in Today's Workplace
- **Everyone Needs a Leader**
The Importance of Strong, Highly-Engaged Leadership
- **The Fundamentals of Highly-Engaged Management**
- **The Real Punchline**
There Is No Generational Cheat Sheet

The Future Is Now

The Changed Dynamics of the Workplace

With any new generational shift, there is always the hope that the new young upstarts will eventually wise up, settle down and, basically, conform. Anxieties arise as new generations come along with new attitudes and expectations. The current generational shift, however, is about more than the new butting up against the old.

Let me put it this way: we are **all** Millennials now.

The generational shift we have seen unfold over the past decade has been one of historic significance, defined by the macro forces driving change at an extraordinary magnitude and pace.

These six macro forces have defined the transformations evident in every aspect of life and work:

Globalization. We are now capable of connecting across borders in every direction, at lightning speed. Relationships that would have been impossible a few decades ago are now taken for granted. Interdependency and competition are now measured by everyone on a global scale.

Technology. The pace of technological advances is unprecedented, and it's not just iPhones. Computing, communication, transportation, commerce, entertainment, food, medicine, war—in every aspect of life, anything can become obsolete at any time. Possibilities appear and disappear just as swiftly.

Institutional insecurity. Ours is a world threatened by conflict and environmental cataclysm. Economies fluctuate wildly from boom to bust. Governments shut down or run out of money. Great companies conquer or fail or merge or continually downsize, restructure, and reengineer. Established institutions—no matter what they are—are no longer trusted as anchors of success and security.

The information environment. We are now working, thinking, learning, and communicating in a never-ending ocean of information. And not all of that information is good. Wireless internet ubiquity, wholesale technology integration, and immediacy define our access to information, ideas, and perspectives.

Human diversity. In every dimension, the world is becoming more multifaceted and more integrated. Each generation is more diverse than the last. That's true in terms of geographical point of origin, ethnic heritage, ability & disability, age, language, sexual orientation, color, gender identity, and every other way of categorizing people. Every single individual, with their own combination of background, traits, and characteristics, is their own unique diversity story.

Online identity. Through social media we are now plugged into an endless stream of content and in continuous dialogue—forever mixing and matching and manipulating from an infinite array of sources to create and project into the world our own personal montage of meaning and selfhood.

In 2020, the dynamics of the workplace are change and uncertainty. This has not only been driven by the macro forces described previously, but also by an environment of unpredictable and often wild market fluctuations. That scramble has been picking up steam every year since 1993, when we began tracking the current generational shift.

Those changes are coming to fruition, maturing everywhere we look. The worldwide business environment of perpetually high risk, constrained resources, and fierce competition puts constant pressure on employers to remain lean, flexible, and high-performing. Compounding these pressures, employers are struggling to attract, motivate, and retain the best young talent—particularly in the STEM fields—as they watch their oldest and most experienced employees ride off into the sunset. Leaders everywhere are wondering how they can possibly square their business needs with expectations and demands for greater flexibility.

The workplace of the past was based on one-size-fits-all, long-term, hierarchical employment relationships. Today, the workplace revolves around short-term, transactional employment relationships. And there is no going back. The traditional employer-employee relationship of the past has finally faded away.

Workforce of the Past		Workforce of the Future— And the Future Is Now!
Globalization	Means threat	Means opportunity
Technology	Eliminates jobs	Creates jobs
Institutions	Anchors of security	Hubs of resources
Information	To be gathered and analyzed	To be filtered, vetted, harnessed, and leveraged
Change	Reluctant, cautious	Expected, embraced
Relationships	Hierarchical	Situational
Learning/Training Preferences	Directed and facilitated, defined curriculum, specific goal orientation	Self-directed, collaborative, ongoing, open-ended, and multiple-source
Communication Style	Formal, through the proper channels	Constant, ongoing, high-tech and high-touch
Problem Solving	Relying on expertise and standard operating procedures	Forced to improvise due to so many “first ever” problems and “first ever” resources
Innovation	Research and development, trial and error	Iteration, testing, reiteration
Decision Making	Team informed	Team consulted, involved, and persuaded
Legitimate Authority	Position, rules, chain of command	Talent, respect, influence, quid pro quo
Life and Career	Build a life around my career	Build a career around the kind of life I want to live
Relating to Employers	Where do I fit in your organization?	Where do YOU fit in my life story?
Work Habits and Conditions	One size fits all	Customization of everything
What People Want from a Manager	Please just let me do my job—I’ll let you know if there’s a problem	Please help me do my job—give me guidance, direction, support, and feedback
Performance Evaluation	Annual or semiannual review	Regular and frequent, daily feedback
Rewards People Want (Other than Money)	Job security	Flexibility
Leadership Style	Authoritarian, directive	Coaching, teaching, dialogue, transactional

Nobody Quits a Dream Job

Human Capital Management Solutions for 2020

What does a successful human capital management strategy look like today?

This is what we have seen. The most effective employers today build and maintain small, powerful core groups of key talent alongside fluid talent pools. Flexible work conditions, learning and knowledge management, pay-for-performance, and coaching-style leadership are the keys to being an employer of choice for in-demand talent. The ability to get people on-board, up-to-speed, and delivering results quickly is the key to most staffing challenges. Strict accountability is directly tied to providing rewards for employees: opportunities to earn more money and flexibility go to employees who are willing and able to go above and beyond for employers.

In most workplaces, traditional organization charts have become flatter. Layers of management have been removed. More employees are being managed by short-term project leaders instead of organization chart managers. Employers are less likely to award status, authority, flexibility, and rewards based on seniority, and more likely to reward them based on short-term measurable goals. Employers are also reducing long-term, fixed pay as a percentage of overall employee compensation, while increasing the percentage of variable, performance-based pay. Part of this new compensation strategy involves a reduction in the percentage of employee benefits, which are paid for by the company for full-time, exclusive employees. And there has been an increase in the percentage of employee services, which are paid for by the employee on a pre-tax basis, such as health insurance.

The question leaders and managers should be asking is this: “What kind of workplace do we need to create to bring out the very best work in the very best people on a consistent and sustainable basis?”

There are eight factors that people across generations are looking for in a job today, what we call “dream job factors.” Of course, employers would be wise to provide these things for their superstars and highest performers. But the reality is

that they must provide at least some of these dream job factors for *anyone* they want to retain for a significant period of time:

- 1. Performance-based compensation.** Baseline pay and benefits that are comparable to your competition, but also having clearly defined opportunities to earn more based on extra mile effort and extra mile results.
- 2. Supportive leadership.** An immediate manager or supervisor who provides regular support, guidance, and direction. A manager who practices the fundamentals of highly-engaged management on an ongoing basis.
- 3. Role and responsibilities.** The actual work—but included in this part of the deal must be opportunities for an employee to prove their worth. Paths to grow and advance one's career must be available.
- 4. Location and workspace.** More than just the ability to work near where one lives, this could also include an overall comfortable workspace, or the ability to have control over that space.
- 5. Scheduling flexibility.** The ability to set one's own schedule. Most often in the form of occasional scheduling accommodations to help employees respond to real-life scheduling needs.
- 6. Training and development.** Formal and informal opportunities to build new, relevant knowledge and skills.
- 7. Relationships at work.** The chance to build productive and mutually supportive working relationships with colleagues, leaders, managers, clients, customers, and vendors. Providing access to decision makers is also a priority, especially for rising leaders.
- 8. Autonomy and creative freedom.** Clear requirements and defined parameters for each project that establish boundaries, within which employees can navigate with independence and creativity.

The phrase to keep in mind is, “Nobody quits a dream job.” So, find every possible way to turn your jobs into dream jobs.

The New Staffing Strategy

- Build and maintain a powerful core group
- Build a large, fluid talent pool
- Figure out more ways to get the work done
- Treat staffing like supply chain management
- Commit to constant high-potential identification, leadership development, and succession planning
- Reinvent retention: “We’ll call you the next time we need you.”

The New Learning Organization

- Get people on-board and up-to-speed quickly
- Keep people learning, growing, and improving
- Turn training into heavily supported employee self-building
- Commit to constant needs assessment, individual learning plans, and teaching/coaching/mentoring
- Reinvent knowledge work: “Everything is knowledge work if you are actively trying to get better at what you are doing.”

The New Pay-for-Performance

- Create a real link between pay and performance
- Get people excited about earning more of what they need and want
- Figure out how many ways you can reward people for performance and leverage more resources to use as rewards
- Transform pay-for-performance into a new kind of “piecework”—reducing long-term fixed rewards and increasing short-term contingent rewards
- Commit to constant goal and incentive-setting, scorekeeping, and cashing out in micro rewards
- Reinvent compensation: “If you want to earn more today, this week, this month, then here’s what you need to do today, this week, this month.”

The New Retention Strategy

- Leverage at least some dream job factors for anybody you hope to employ
- Transform long-term employment into an on-and-off, non-exclusive arrangement with regular career planning tied into your staffing strategy
- Reinvent the “organization employee”: “Nobody quits a dream job.”

As Many Paths as You Have People

Defining Careers in Today's Workplace

Flexible schedules. Remote positions. Temp and contract work.

Careers today, especially in the case of Millennials, are a patchwork of short-term and transactional employment situations. Resumes are less likely to feature one or two long tenures at established organizations and far more likely to feature an array of positions, often concurrent with one another, of every shape and size and in every kind of organization. Even significant gaps in employment, once considered the largest hiring red flag of all, are becoming not just accepted but nearly expected.

Of course, this poses major challenges for employers. Identifying the right investments to make when it comes to employee retention, succession planning, training, and development is now much more difficult. The trick is to balance investments in developing a core group of the most promising, exclusive employees, with investments in your flexible and fluid talent pool of non-exclusive employees.

But here's the trap to avoid: there is no cookie-cutter solution for identifying which investments to make in which employees. That's true whether you're considering someone's employment situation or their generation. You *must* tap into the unique wants, needs, anxieties, and career hopes of every individual.

Don't just offer remote work for entry-level jobs aimed at young employees. You may find that the employees nearing retirement in your organization are more interested in working from home than the new young employees eager to prove their worth and make their mark. Don't just offer training opportunities to your most promising, exclusively employed people. Consider offering training to your temps and contractors—because they will remember, and seek you out for work in the future (maybe even as a permanent, long-term arrangement.)

Resisting the transactional nature of employment won't make things any better. So, go with the flow. Work with employees and find ways to make their unique career ambitions possible in your organization.

Everyone Needs a Leader

The Importance of Strong, Highly-Engaged Leadership

Over the years, our Generational Shift study has repeatedly taken us back to the undermanagement epidemic. That's because undermanagement is almost always there, hiding in plain sight. Our ongoing research shows that undermanagement is a perennial issue: the remarkably consistent data shows that nine out of ten managers fail to maintain an ongoing one-on-one dialogue sufficient to deliver on "the fundamentals."

Now many leaders are asking—is there still a role for managers and supervisors in today's workplace?

In the effort to become increasingly lean and flexible, employers in some cases have done away with management altogether in the form of "self-managed teams". The goal, of course, is to increase productivity and cut costs. Fewer managers means fewer "unnecessary" hoops for employees to jump through and less money for employers to spend.

In the work I do every day, in organizations of all shapes and sizes, in every industry, around the world, this is what I've seen—managers and supervisors are more critical to success than ever before.

Allow me to explain.

It's always been hard to manage people. It is much harder today than ever before and it's getting harder every day. Why? The causes of the undermanagement epidemic dovetail with the trend lines of the Great Generational Shift. Take globalization and technology. The pace of change is accelerating for everyone all the time—from the macro level all the way down to the micro. In today's knowledge driven, machine powered, highly interconnected, fiercely competitive global marketplace, everything is complex and always in flux. Work that used to take weeks takes moments. Relationships that would have been nearly impossible due to geography are now taken for granted. Communication and travel are nearly instantaneous.

Yet we are also vulnerable in entirely new ways. One technical glitch today can slow down your operation for days or weeks at a time—not just in your own physical location, but in locations with contractors and vendors with whom you might be connected, all over the world. An earthquake on the other side of the world today—actual or metaphorical—could affect you today in ways you probably cannot even imagine, including ways that didn't exist yesterday. Not to mention the effects these factors could have on your customers, vendors, contractors, partners, colleagues, and counterparts in other departments and workgroups.

Everybody is under more pressure to run ever leaner and more flexible. Squeeze more and more productivity and quality out of tightly controlled resources. Chase innovation and technology to keep from falling behind. Manage talent as a capital (depreciating) asset, in the wake of a profound transformation in the fundamental employer-employee relationship. After decades of constant downsizing, restructuring, and reengineering, employees no longer expect to pay their dues and climb the corporate ladder.

Job security has been dead for some time now. Career paths are built on a growing portfolio of short-term transactional employment relationships of varying scope and duration.

Employers must never forget that most employees work because they must. They work to support themselves and their families. Most are pursuing intermediate and longer-term security, but today that plan is rarely contingent upon a long-term relationship with one particular employer. Very few employees look at one employer as the primary source of their long-term career security, much less their long-term economic security.

The promise (implied or even explicit) of long-term vesting rewards from employers is no longer enough to get employees to perform today. Employees are less willing to follow orders, work harder, and contribute their best today in exchange for vague promises about what they might get in five or ten years. Who knows where they'll be in five or ten years? There is simply too much uncertainty.

Managers today are always in danger of losing good people. People come and go. People move around internally. These factors militate against continuity in

working relationships. Sometimes those who are least likely to leave are the hardest to manage. Everybody is a special case.

Those old-fashioned, long-term promises used to do most of the managing for leaders, or at least ensured that the best and most dedicated employees would stick around and do their jobs. The short-term, transactional nature of employment today means that managing people has become an ongoing, sometimes daily, negotiation. That is high maintenance!

At the same time, most managers, like most everybody else, are being asked to do more with less. They have more of their own non-management tasks and responsibilities, increased administrative burdens, and growing managerial spans of control. Often, they are managing employees working on different schedules or in different locations. And managers depend more and more on people in other workgroups and departments to get things done. With so much resource and process streamlining there is growing interdependency in almost everybody's work. Everything we do now involves a lot of moving parts—we depend on so many other people—all the time.

Meanwhile, everybody involved is human. People have feelings. That's a significant complication for everybody involved.

Personnel discontinuity. People come and go. That's always been true. But employment relationships today are far more short-term and fluid than before, so organizations are effectively always losing good people. They are always trying to get new people on-board and up-to-speed. On top of that, one great employee is worth far more than three or four mediocre employees. Sometimes employers must go to great lengths to effectively reward, retain, and develop the very best employees.

Constant change from every direction. Whether it's technology, the markets, the weather, world politics, internal politics, customer requirements, vendor requirements, or employee requirements—there is always something causing change and change regularly forces rework.

Interdependency. More and more of our work involves lots of moving parts and, therefore, lots of counterparts here, there, and everywhere. Most people rely

on many others within and without their immediate work group in order to do their own work.

Resource constraints. Everybody is expected nowadays to do more with less. Increasingly, people report that they are making do with tighter and tighter resources, longer and more complex supply lines, with shorter and shorter lead times. Often people find themselves trying to do their jobs with what they feel are insufficient resources.

Employees are human. Human beings have weaknesses as well as strengths. Humans are not always great at self-management. They have habits, and not always good ones. Not only that, but everybody has bad days. Some people have bad weeks, months, and years. Productivity and quality at work are highly variable, sometimes due to employee performance. On top of all that, humans have attitudes, and not always good ones.

There are so many factors to consider and account for. Does it really make sense to place those responsibilities—not to mention the actual work itself—entirely on a self-managed team?

In the research we conduct before, during, and after our management seminars, we study what makes the difference on teams that consistently deliver the highest productivity and quality, have the highest retention of high performers and highest turnover among low performers, with the best business outcomes and team spirit. What do the best teams all have in common? A strong leader, manager, or supervisor.

An abiding commitment to the fundamentals—relentless high-quality communication—is the common denominator among those strong leaders.

The solution to undermanagement is **not** to put teams in charge of managing themselves. The solution is what we call highly-engaged management: consistent engagement in ongoing, high-structure, content-rich one-on-one dialogues about the work between managers and direct reports. When managers maintain high-quality one-on-ones with their direct reports, they almost always increase employee performance and morale, increase retention of high performers and turnover among low performers, and achieve significant measurable improvements in business outcomes.

The Fundamentals of Highly-Engaged Management

The Basics

1. Get in the habit of managing every day
 2. Take it one person at a time
 3. Talk like a performance coach
-

How It's Done

4. Make accountability a real process
 5. Tell people what to do and how to do it
 6. Track performance at every step
-

The Payoff

7. Solve small problems, before they become big ones
8. Do more for some and less for others, based on what they deserve

The Real Punchline

There Is No Generational Cheat Sheet

Most people think of generational change in the workplace as a diversity issue. Some experts will give employers a checklist or cheat sheet for each generation, outlining how to attract, hire, retain, and manage people based on birthdate.

I think that's misguided.

Imagine using any other diversity lens that way. Simply, it would be offensive. Using a checklist or cheat sheet approach glosses over the fact that there are as many stories within each generation as there are people.

So, why do we continue studying the six generations working side by side today?

Because our research has taught us this: the real punchline of the Great Generational Shift is that employers must rethink human capital management. Gimmicks aren't enough to engage and retain great employees of any age. Back-to-fundamentals leadership is what works.

Because of the incredible pace of change today, younger generations are not "growing up" and "settling down." Rather than younger generations adopting the wisdom of those who came before, older generations are adopting the wisdom and experience of their younger peers. This is because the macro and micro forces driving the pace of change and business environment of the 21st century affect everyone equally.

The real diversity lessons of the Great Generational Shift are these:

- One-size-fits-all doesn't work anymore
- There are powerful trends impacting everyone of all ages—generations are more "alike" than you may think
- The key to engaging and retaining the best talent today is to take it one person at a time, one day at a time—situational leadership based on who, why, what, where, and how an individual should be managed in order to do their best work

Conclusion

This 2020 edition of our Generational Shift study is the culmination of our efforts to track and report on the epic turning point that has occurred in our workforce and workplace. The shift is not only a function of population trends or demographics, but also in the norms and values of the workforce, and a corresponding transformation in the very fundamentals of the employer-employee relationship.

The Great Generational Shift has presented a whole new set of challenges for employers in every industry, employees of all ages, and for managers at every level. As we enter a new decade, we at RainmakerThinking remain committed to helping organizations and their leaders adapt to whatever changes lie ahead. Let us know if you ever need our help.

— Bruce Tulgan, Founder & CEO, RainmakerThinking, Inc.

Contact

Bruce Tulgan and RainmakerThinking can help you navigate the effects of the Great Generational Shift in your organization.

Please contact us if you would like to learn more about how:

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About RainmakerThinking and Our Research

RainmakerThinking, Inc. is a management research, training, and consulting firm and the leading authority on generational issues in the workplace. RainmakerThinking was founded in 1993 by best-selling author Bruce Tulgan.

RainmakerThinking continues to lead three longitudinal workplace studies:

- The Generational Shift in the Workforce (since 1993)
- Leadership, Management, and Supervision (since 1995), and
- Human Capital Management (since 1997)

This white paper details RainmakerThinking's most up-to-date findings from their ongoing Generational Shift study, including data collected from more than 200,000 managers and tens of thousands of non-managers, as well as internal data and management practices reviews from more than 400 different organizations reflecting input from millions of employees since 1993.

RainmakerThinking's data on Generation Z was gathered from June – July 2018 by the Summer Intern Research Team, themselves members of Generation Z. The survey was administered in-person and online, gathering answers from a total of 4,093 respondents aged 16 – 23. In addition to rating and ranking job factors, survey respondents provided written long-form responses about what matters to them in a job.

About Bruce Tulgan

Bruce Tulgan is internationally recognized as the leading expert on young people in the workplace and one of the leading experts on leadership and management. Bruce is a best-selling author, an advisor to business leaders all over the world, and a sought-after keynote speaker and management trainer.

Bruce is the author of numerous books including the best-seller *It's Okay to Be the Boss* (HarperCollins, Revised & Updated, 2014), *The 27 Challenges Managers Face* (Wiley, 2014), *Not Everyone Gets a Trophy* (Wiley, Revised & Updated, 2016), and *Bridging the Soft Skills Gap* (Wiley, 2015). His newest book, *The Art of Being Indispensable at Work*, is due for release in the summer of 2020 from Harvard Business Review Press.

Bruce lives in New Haven, CT with his wife Debby Applegate, Ph.D., who won the 2007 Pulitzer Prize in Biography for her book, *The Most Famous Man in America: The Biography of Henry Ward Beecher* (Doubleday, 2006).