



Beyond Ping-Pong Tables

What Really
Drives Gen Z
Engagement?





Gen Z now makes up

27%

of the global workforce.

By 2030, they will account for **30%** making them **a key driver in shaping the future** of work.

However, many employers are struggling to motivate and sustain young talent: according to [a report by Intelligent](#) in September 2024,

60%

of employers have fired Gen Z employees within months of hiring them.

Five Strategies to Truly Engage Gen Z Employees

Understanding what drives this generation is essential for long-term business success.

This guide outlines five key strategies to help employers engage, support, and retain Gen Z employees effectively.

1. Embedding Purpose:

Give Employees Opportunities to Experience their Impact

The Deloitte Global 2024 Gen Z and Millennial Survey highlights a compelling trend: **younger generations increasingly seek purpose in their professional lives.**

86%

of the 23,000 Gen Z respondents stated that having a sense of purpose is essential to their workplace satisfaction.

Start with the organisation's purpose - this is the foundation you control. Ensure it is more than a slogan: employees are five times more likely to be engaged when they regularly reflect on their company's impact, so it's important to create opportunities for employees to discuss and contribute to that purpose.

A practical approach is to help employees experience their impact first-hand. Rather than relying on abstract messaging, **companies can bring purpose to life by connecting employees with the people they serve.**

For example, Microsoft immerses employees in key industries, allowing them to witness how their work supports businesses and communities.

Organisations can make purpose tangible by bringing in customers or beneficiaries to share firsthand stories, turning abstract goals into real, inspiring moments that connect employees to the positive impact of their work.



2. Mentorship Programmes:

Invest in Trackable Progress

Make mentorship a structured, long-term investment rather than an informal arrangement so that your company can build stronger leaders and improve retention.

A well-designed mentorship programme does more than just provide guidance: **it helps employees set meaningful career goals, develop self-reflection skills, and build confidence.**

To be truly effective, mentorship should be inclusive of all ranks, and not only available to those who opt in.

Clear time commitments and boundaries create consistency while preventing overcommitment fostering a sustainable relationship between mentors and mentees.

Regular check-ins and open conversations keep mentorship proactive rather than passive, making it a continuous source of growth rather than a one-off interaction.



An article by [Forbes](#) states that When mentors actively champion their mentees **- advocating for their ideas, creating leadership opportunities, and ensuring they are seen and heard** - mentorship becomes a powerful driver of engagement and development.

3. Unlocking Innovation:

Empowering Employees to Think Like Entrepreneurs

A survey by One Young World found that

31%

of young people worry AI might make their jobs redundant,

making it more important than ever for employees to build skills beyond their current roles.

Intrapreneurship, where employees take ownership of projects and drive innovation within an organisation, has been shown to increase engagement, motivation, and job satisfaction.

According to MIT, employees who **think like entrepreneurs contribute more meaningfully to their companies** while strengthening their own career security.



Companies can get creative by embedding intrapreneurship into their culture.

Providing dedicated time for side projects, setting up internal incubators, and offering mentorship from senior leaders can help employees develop new ideas within the company.

As research suggests, businesses fostering intrapreneurship not only drive innovation but also retain employees by making them feel valued and empowered to shape the company's future.

4. LinkedIn Bragging:

Harnessing Gen Z's Professional Pride

In the age of social media, career-driven energy is stronger than ever, especially among Gen Z, one of LinkedIn's fastest-growing user groups.

According to The Times, LinkedIn offers young professionals something they crave: **an online platform that's aspirational yet sincere**, where achievements are celebrated and careers are built in public.

Give Gen Z **meaningful milestones to showcase** in order to keep them engaged.

Offer opportunities to chair internal committees, represent your company at conferences, or take on speaking engagements.

When employees feel proud of their accomplishments and supported in their professional growth, **they're more likely to stay invested in an organisation that champions their development** beyond the day-to-day.



5. More Global Exposure:

Opportunities to Connect with Young Leaders Worldwide

Compared to previous generations, Gen Z values learning and international exposure over traditional career progression.

To attract and retain top talent, **offer training and leadership programmes that provide access to global networks, mentorship, and cross-cultural collaboration.**

These experiences broaden employees' perspectives, enhance problem-solving skills, and help them develop a global mindset that benefits both their careers and your organisation.

Programmes such as One Young World equip emerging talent with leadership skills while connecting them to a global network of 18,700 young leaders from 190+ countries.

Exposure to this level of international innovation empowers employees to bring fresh ideas, dynamic solutions, and a global outlook to their business.



Provide opportunities for employees to **engage with international peers, attend global summits, or participate in leadership exchanges** so that they can learn from diverse industries and markets.

How We Can Help

One Young World partners with over 250 organisations to attract, inspire, and retain Gen Z talent through purpose-driven employee experiences.

Your rising stars will attend the One Young World Summit, the landmark leadership of the year. They will join 2,000 of the brightest young leaders, from 190+ countries to share ideas and be mentored by the best leaders of the business, political and development world. Post Summit, they will have a lifelong membership to the global Community of 18,700 young leaders.

In fact,

86%

of those who attend a One Young World Summit progress into management roles or higher within their organisations.

99% of [One Young World Summit Attendees report](#) feeling more motivated to drive change within their companies, and over 32% have advanced into senior leadership.

By developing an authentic connection to purpose, we turn corporate goals into real-world impact. Whether that means direct engagement with high-level stakeholders or exclusive accelerator programmes, we enable employees to harness their potential and grow within their organisation.

Members of the One Young World Community are

42%

more likely to remain within their organisations for an average of seven years, exceeding the three-year average of non-participants.

We are not just shaping the leadership journey of your employees, we are ensuring that your workforce is strong, loyal and engaged.

What's Next?

Ready to empower your Gen Z talent and transform your workplace? Connect with One Young World to discover how we can unlock your organisation's potential.

Email: learnmore@oneyoungworld.com

