

# Working Together

– A Study of Generational Perspectives in Canada's Labour Force



Fall 2020



**LABOUR  
MARKET  
INFORMATION**

POWERED BY FOOD PROCESSING SKILLS CANADA

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## ABOUT US

**Food Processing Skills Canada (FPSC)** is the food and beverage manufacturing industry's workforce development organization. As a non-profit, located in Ottawa with representatives across Canada, we support food and beverage manufacturing businesses from coast to coast in developing skilled and professional employees and workplace environments.

Our work directly and positively impacts industry talent attraction, workforce retention and employment culture. We care about assisting the industry in finding, training and retaining the very best people for the job. Through our partnerships with industry, associations, educators and all levels of governments in Canada, FPSC has developed exceptional resources for the sector including the **Food Skills Library™**, **Canadian Food Processors Institute™**, **FoodCert™** and **Labour Market Information** reports.

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“ Every generation imagines itself to be more intelligent than the one that went before it, and wiser than the one that comes after it. ”

— *George Orwell*

# Chapter 1: Introduction

## Purpose of the Research

This research was commissioned by **Food Processing Skills Canada (FPSC)** to examine generational perspectives in the workplace. While some of the survey questions focused on the food and beverage processing sector, the research results and the conclusions and recommendations that flow from them, are relevant to the economy as a whole. The study recommendations are presented in the last chapter of this report.

The research was inspired by certain trends and realities facing the food and beverage manufacturing sector. The following trends are also common to manufacturing generally, as well as to most other sectors of the economy.

The sector continues to grapple with acute labour shortages and faces particular challenges attracting and retaining younger workers.<sup>1</sup>

As Canadians live longer and healthier, some older workers are postponing retirement. In some food and beverage manufacturers (e.g., seafood processing), most workers are over 50 years of age.<sup>2</sup>

Workplaces are increasingly diverse with respect to gender, ethnicity, and age.

Organizations are placing much more importance on corporate reputation, in response to consumer demands, particularly from younger ones, as exemplified by the ubiquity of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives.

The purpose of this report is to raise consciousness by providing Canadian companies and other industry stakeholders with insights into how Canadians in general, and different generations in particular, think about work in 2020 (pre-pandemic).

## Focused Analysis based on Five Age Categories:



### GENERATION Z (16 – 23)

- Job security a priority
- Highly collaborative
- Workplace flexibility is very desirable



### YOUNG MILLENNIALS (24 – 30)

- Interested in leadership training
- Prefer texts & email over chat in person



### OLDER MILLENNIALS (31 – 39)

- Want to be judged for their results over hours
- Career development opportunities valued



### GEN X (40 – 55)

- Self-reliant
- Hardworking
- Prefer less supervision and greater autonomy



### BOOMERS+ (56+)

- Job security is appealing
  - Great source of industry knowledge
  - Hardworking

## Study Highlights

Beginning in the early part of the century, and still today, journalists and consultants have written in earnest about the intergenerational dynamics of the workplace. Exhortations usually revolved around the need for employers to recognize and adapt to the fact that four (and increasingly five) generations are working side-by-side. This passage is typical:

*Around the world and across industries, more generations than ever before are working together. Increasingly, it's younger employees who are leading older team members, turning the established order on its head. This new scenario can cause problems, but it also presents opportunities for sharing knowledge and experience.*<sup>3</sup>

More recently, several academics have challenged the notion that generations of workers differ that much. Writing in the Harvard Business Review in 2019, Eden King et al. point to a meta-analysis of 20 different studies of generational differences which concluded that the relationships between generational membership and work-related outcomes (i.e., job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and intent to turnover) are moderate to small.<sup>4</sup>

Are workplace intergenerational differences more myth than reality? And how much should employers concern themselves with this? The answer largely depends on the

questions being asked. The research was designed to be wide-ranging and went into depth on several issues. As a result, there are quite a few significant differences, particularly in the way members of Generation Z (16 to 23 years of age) look at the world of work. Notable findings from the survey are as follows:

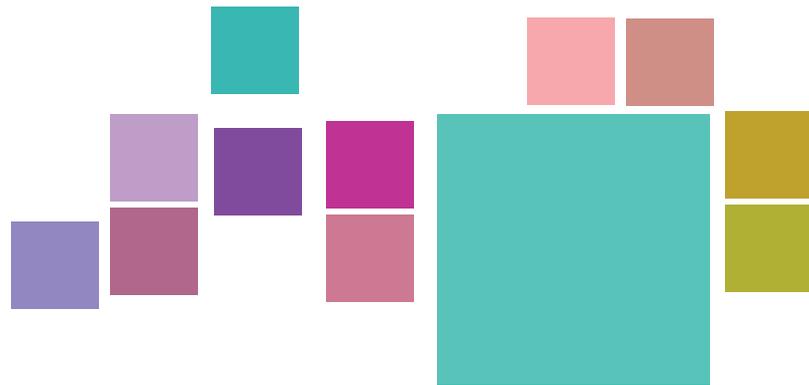
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While all generations view financial security and the achievement of work-life balance as preeminent goals, helping to solve social and environmental challenges, and doing work they are passionate about, are significantly more important to Generation Z. Young Millennials are more focused on career advancement (e.g., becoming an expert, a senior leader and learning new things).
- 

Younger people are also more open-minded about trade unions but continue to look askance at the trades (despite the best efforts of governments and other stakeholders).
- 

Making friends at work is much more important to Generation Z. Moreover, this segment is also the only one who selects “friendly” as a top 3 trait they wish to see in a supervisor.
- 

The received wisdom is that young people not only expect to change employers often, but also want to. This survey reveals that, in fact, most Canadians (67%) want to stay with the same employers as long as they can. More interestingly,



is that views on this question are uniform across the five age groups, including the youngest age cohorts.

The survey asked Canadians about the qualities they wished to see in their immediate supervisor, their organization's leader, as well as reflected in themselves. Generally, generations value a common set of traits, with one noteworthy difference: Younger people place less importance on honesty and greater emphasis on "friendliness". For Boomers, on the other hand, honest appears to be sacrosanct.

Face-to-face and by email are equally preferred from a list of 5 internal communications methods. though 17% Generation Z prefer communicating by text (compared to 1% of Boomers).

The two preferred methods of learning are: a classroom setting onsite, and self-directed online learning (from a list of 5 formal learning approaches). Paradoxically perhaps, Generation Z much prefers learning in a classroom setting onsite, whereas self-directed online learning is most popular among Boomers. These preferences probably reflect the fact that given their age, a classroom setting is what Generation Z are most familiar (and comfortable) with. Other survey results suggest that they might also like the socializing opportunities afforded by a classroom.

Providing employees with an optimal amount of information is challenging in this era of "information overload". Thus, a key question facing management and HR specialist is how much, if at all, should corporate "big picture" information be shared with employees? The survey found that all workers, regardless of age, want to know about their organization's plans and objectives. Indeed, only 4% do not.

Canadians are much more open to working in a "workshop" than in a "factory", with "plant" being somewhere in the middle. For Generation Z, it is the word "plant" that has the most negative connotations, followed by "factory".

The results of an experimental test based on three randomly assigned postings for a labourer position in food and beverage manufacturing suggest that the inclusion of either health/wellness options (e.g., availability of free healthy snacks and drinks) or work flexibility options (e.g., making one's own schedule) increases the position's appeal. The same experiment conducted with a food science position showed no difference. The survey also reveals that the younger one is, the more appeal health and wellness options have, particularly with respect to the youngest cohort.

An analysis of gender indicates that women are less open to working in manufacturing, and the word "plant" has a particularly negative connotation. Women in Canada worry more about work-life balance and are more likely to want their work to have a positive impact on society. Women are less likely to believe in generational stereotypes. They also find workplace health and wellness options much more appealing than men do. In short, women in general look a lot like Generation Z.

There are few regional differences in the data, with the exception of Quebec. Quebecers are notably different when it comes to career goals, aspirations, and concerns – they place greater importance on working for an organization that shares their values, on achieving work-life balance and on the social aspects of work. Quebecers are also less open to working in food and beverage manufacturing, as well as less open to working in all of the other eight industries examined in the survey.<sup>5</sup>

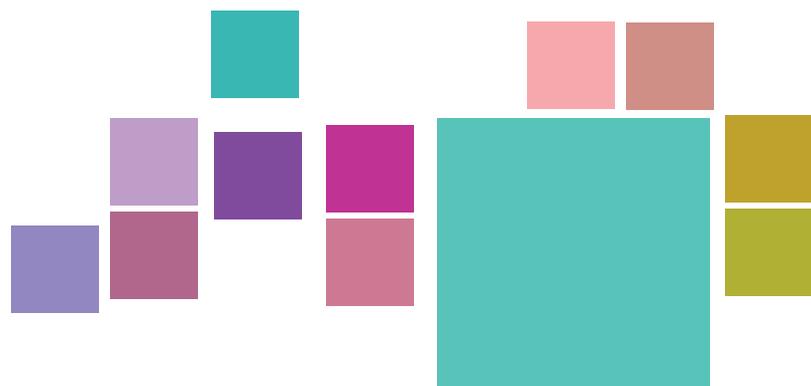
## Methodology

The research was based on a survey of n=1,500 current and future members of the Canadian labour force, 16 years of age and older.<sup>6</sup> The approximate age breakdown of the sample is as follows:

- **Generation Z:**  
16 to 23 years of age (n=170)
- **Young Millennials:**  
24 to 30 years of age (n=170)
- **Older Millennials:**  
31 to 39 years of age (n=230)
- **Gen X:**  
to 40 to 55 years of age (n=405)
- **Boomers+:**  
56 years of age and older (n=520)

The sample was randomly selected from Leger Opinion (LEO)'s panel of survey respondents. Quotas were used to ensure that the sample reflected the Canadian labour force according to age and region. The data was also weighted to reflect labour force composition by age and region.<sup>7</sup> An associated margin of error for a probability-based sample of n=1,500 is  $\pm 2.5\%$ , 19 times out of 20.

The survey was administered online between March 27<sup>th</sup> and April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020; the early stage of the COVID-19 pandemic. The World Health Organization (WHO) declared the existence of a global pandemic on March 11<sup>th</sup>, on March 24, Canada's Parliament discussed Bill C-13, the *COVID-19 Emergency Response Act*. The unemployment figures for the month of March were that the economy had shed 1,000,000 jobs, pushing the official jobless rate to 7.8 percent, and, on April 2, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said that he foresaw the expiry of the COVID-19 crisis to occur in July. This timeline suggests that at the time of data collection, the COVID-19 pandemic had begun to impact the labour market and society, but not to the extent that it would have had much of an effect in the way in which respondents were viewing the world of work and the labour market. Therefore, we consider this survey to be "pre-pandemic".





Appendices include the survey questionnaire and data tables (which present the results to all of the questions for the entire sample, as well as for the five age segments).

# Chapter 2: Detailed Findings

## Career Goals

The survey began with a question on career goals and aspirations. Looking at the overall sample, four career goals (from a list of 12) surface as the most important. As could be expected, achieving financial security is at the top of the list, rated important by almost everyone (92%). In addition, Canadians are looking to achieve work-life balance (89%), continuously learn new things (86%) and do work they are passionate about (83%).

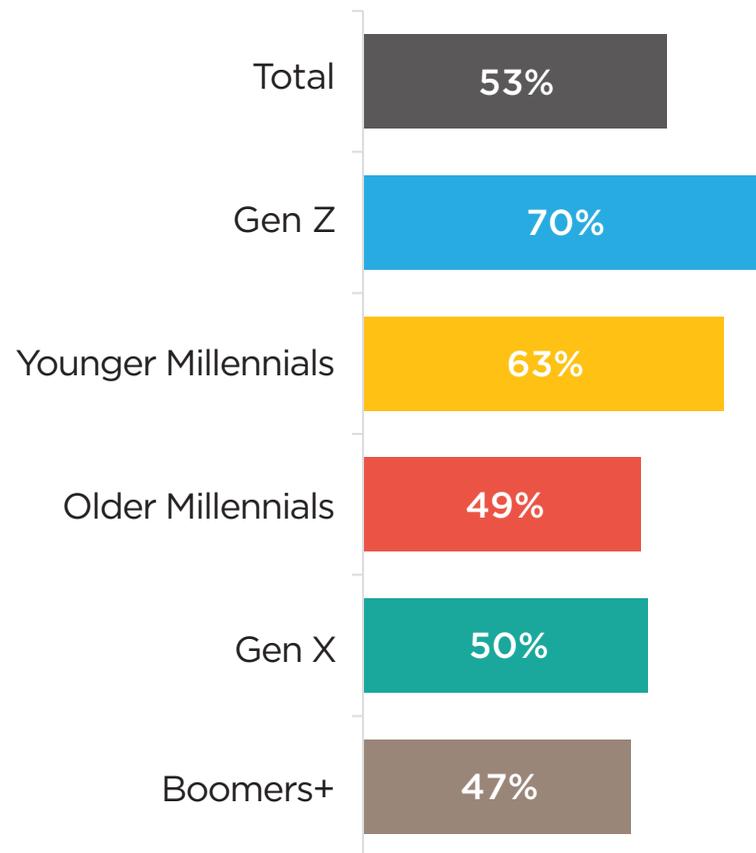
There are several generational differences in the importance placed on various career goals. Overall, the older one is, the more modest their expectations are. In terms of specifics, goals such as helping to solve social and/or environmental challenges and doing work they are passionate about are significantly more important to Generation Z.

### Importance of Career Goals and Aspirations (% Important)

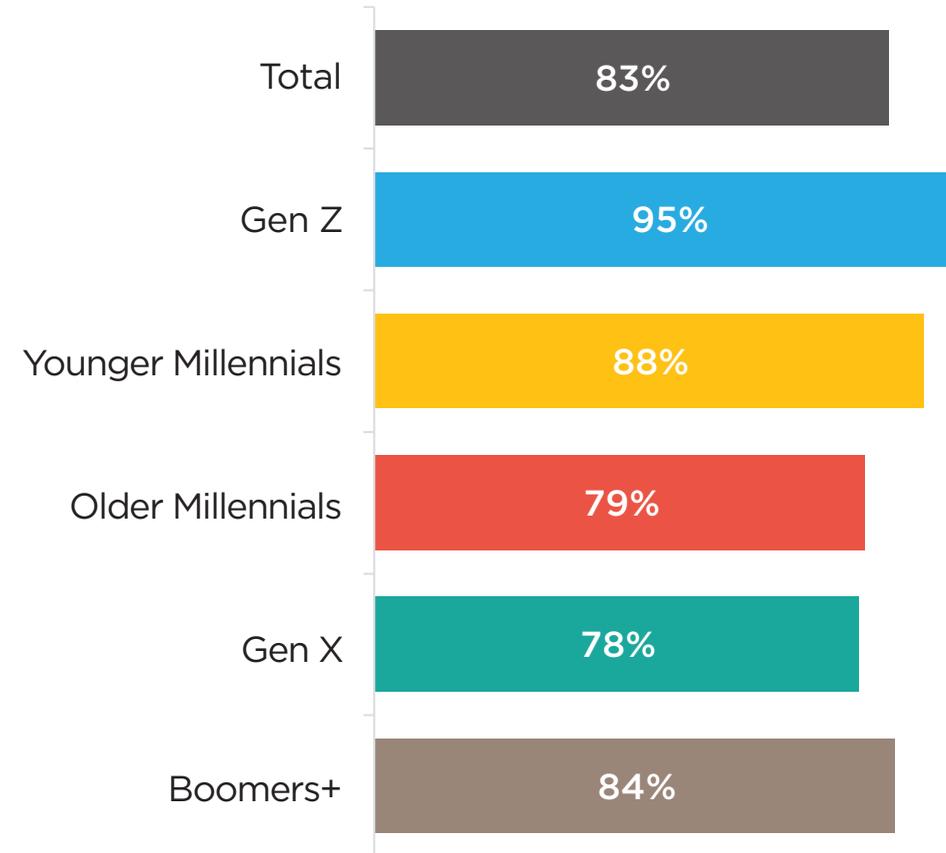


Q: First, for you personally, how important are each of the following career goals? Base: All Respondents, n=1,500

### Importance of Solving Social and/or Environmental Challenges (% Important)



### Importance of Doing Work They are Passionate About (% Important)



Q: First, for you personally, how important are each of the following career goals? Base: All Respondents, n=1,500

**As one moves up the age ladder to young millennial, they are most likely to place extreme importance (i.e., rated 5 out of 5) on career advancement.** That is, becoming: an expert in their field (47% compared to a workforce average of 32%), and a senior leader (52% compared to 42% overall). This segment is also keenest about continuously learning new things (63% compared to a workforce average of 50% who rate this goal 5 out of 5).

## Sources of Motivation

Employees need motivation to feel good about their jobs and perform optimally. Some employees tend to be intrinsically motivated, while others are extrinsically so. Intrinsic motivation involves doing something because it's personally rewarding. Extrinsic motivation involves doing something because in pursuit of a reward or to avoid punishment.

Several survey questions were aimed at helping employers understanding what motivates employees (and prospective employees).

First, most Canadians (58%), and Boomers in particular (70%), say that they “love” their job, while only 24% of the sample agree that work for them is only about a paycheck. **This tells us that it is realistic for employers to aim high in the quality of relationships they develop with their workforce.**

Several survey results show that Canadians hope to derive quite a lot from their job, beyond money and benefits. For example, 69% say it's important that the organization they work for shares their values. **This result highlights the need for employers to identify a coherent set of values and to demonstrate them to employees; workers must be able to discern an organization's values before they can determine how these may be aligned with their own.** Most respondents (74%) also want to feel proud of the organization they work for. There is consistency in views across all five of our age segments on both these measures.

**The social dimension of work is important to a significant proportion of Canadians.** Many (61%) believe that work should be “fun” most of the time, while half expect to make friends at work. The importance of work as a source of friends is significantly more important to Generation Z (64%).



### Importance of Becoming an Expert in My Field (% Extremely Important)



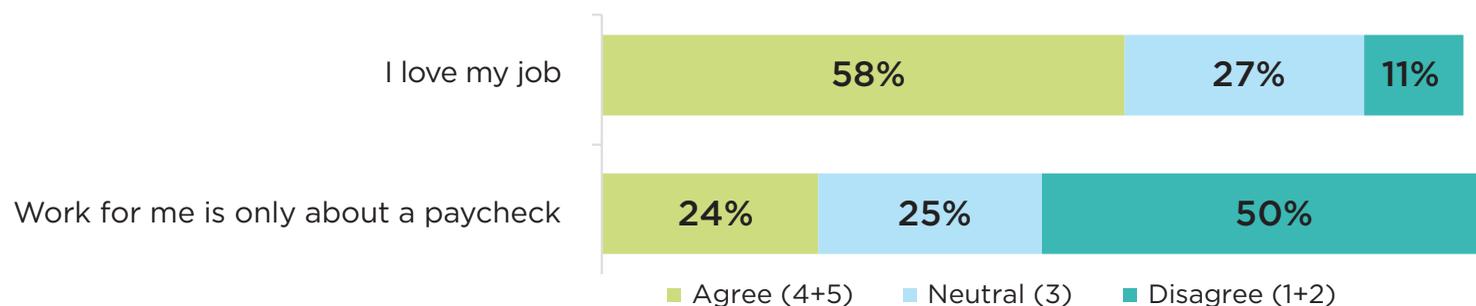
### Importance of Become a Senior Leader (% Important)



### Importance of Keep Learning New Things (% Extremely Important)



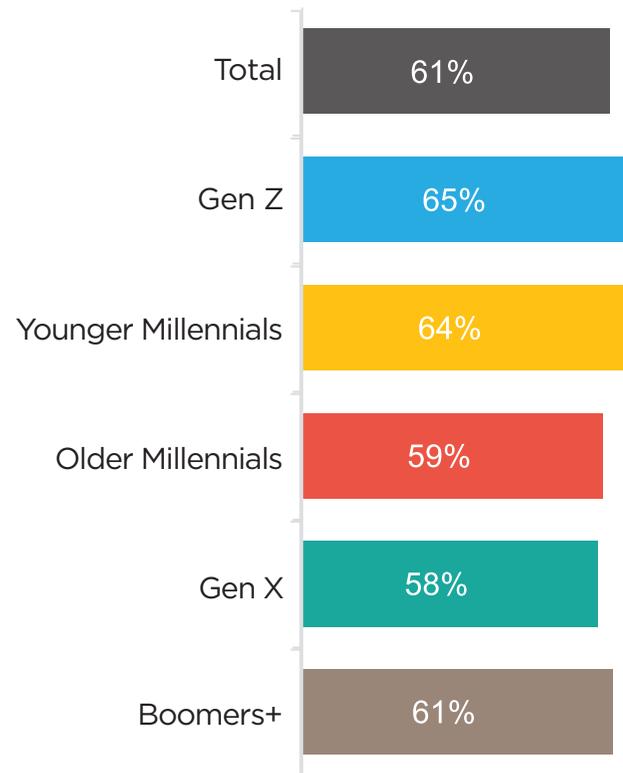
### Employment Expectations: Intrinsic Motivations



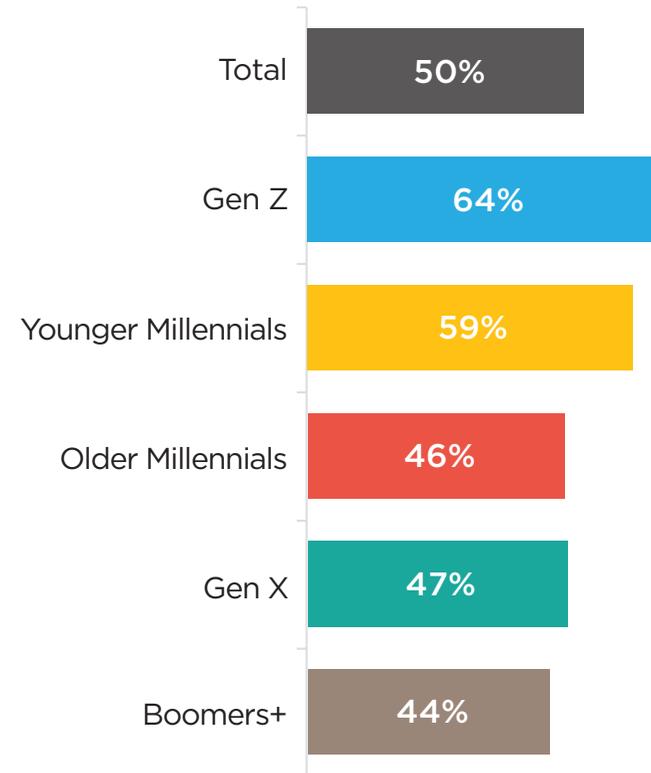
Q. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: Base: All Respondents, n=1,500

Q. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: Base: All Respondents, n=1,500

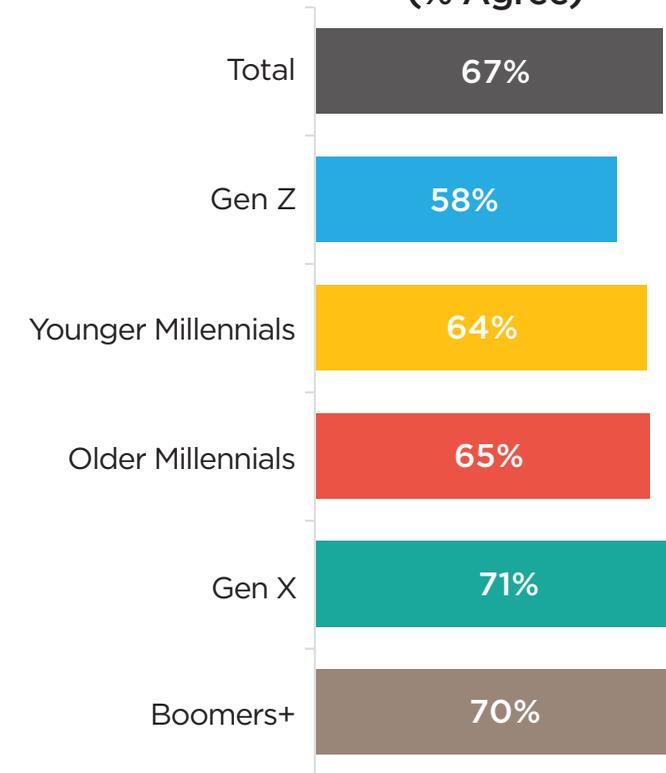
**Employment Expectations:  
"Work Should be Fun"  
(% Agree)**



**Employment Expectations:  
"I Expect to Make Friends  
at Work" (% Agree)**



**Wanting to stay with the same employer:  
"I would want to stay with the same  
organization for as long as I can"  
(% Agree)**



Q: First, for you personally, how important are each of the following career goals? Base: All Respondents, n=1,500

Q: Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: Base: All Respondents, n=1,500

It is a popular notion that Canadians entering the workforce today can expect to change employers many more times than their parents and grandparents did. Research conducted by Washington, D.C.-based Pew Research Center in 2016, however, casts some doubt on this perceived wisdom. It found

that the median job tenure for all U.S. workers was 4.6 years in 2014, up from 3.5 years in 1983.<sup>8</sup> This and other statistics beg a fundamental question for employers: Do workers, particularly younger ones, want to change employers relatively frequently, or would they prefer longer-term tenure?

**The study finds that most Canadians (67%) want to stay with the same employers as long as they can.** More interestingly, perhaps, is that views on this question are uniform across the five age groups.

## Career Challenges and Workplace Concerns

Consistent with the above results pertaining to career goals, the most common sources of worry, from a list of nine, revolve around finances (i.e., being able to enjoy retirement and making enough money) and work-life balance (i.e., balancing work and a healthy lifestyle).

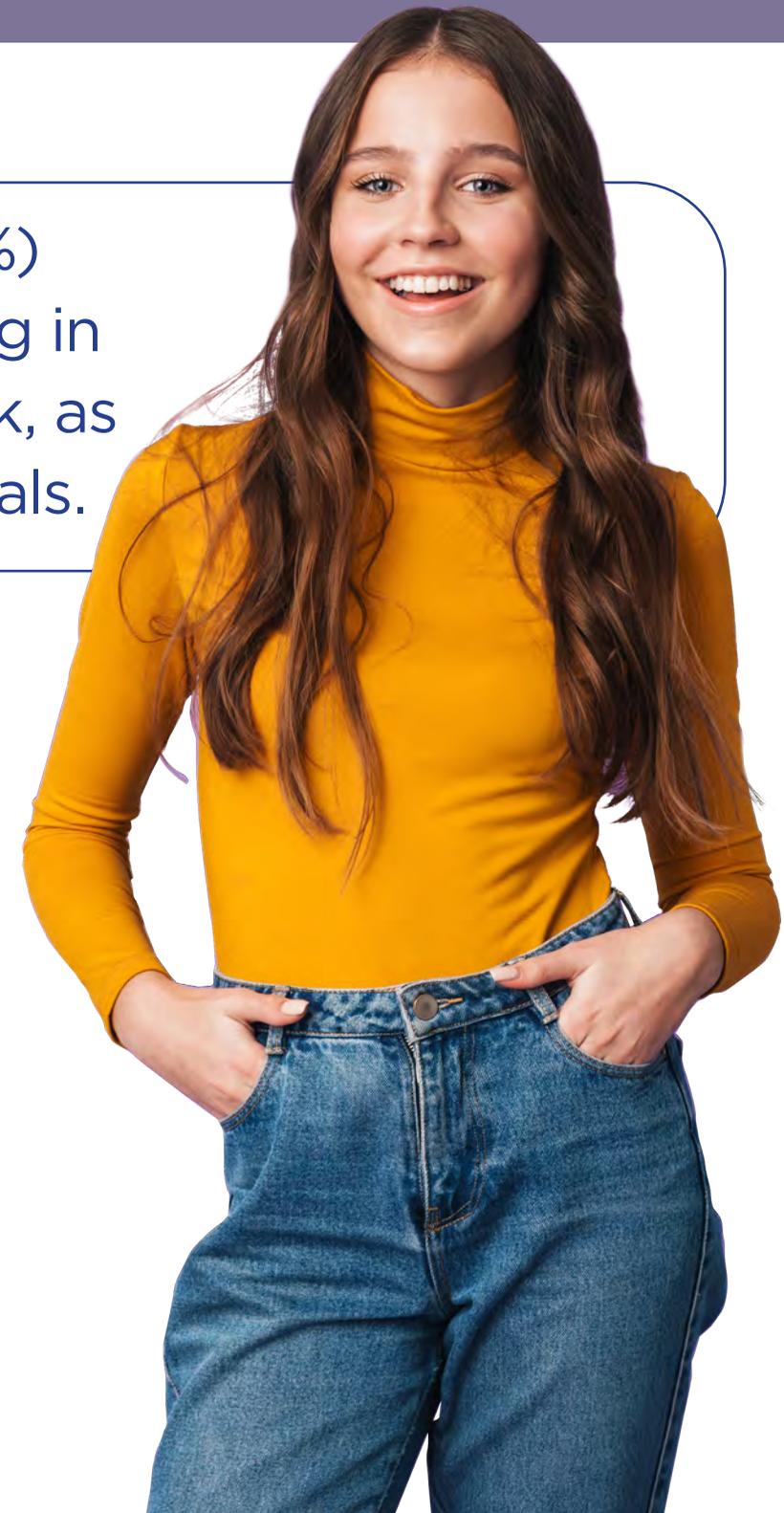
Workplace harassment is last on the list, but it is nevertheless noteworthy, and troubling, that it is a source of worry for fully one-third of the labour force (there are no gender differences in response to this question).

Among the five age segments, this study finds that Boomers are least worried about most issues examined in the survey, including making enough

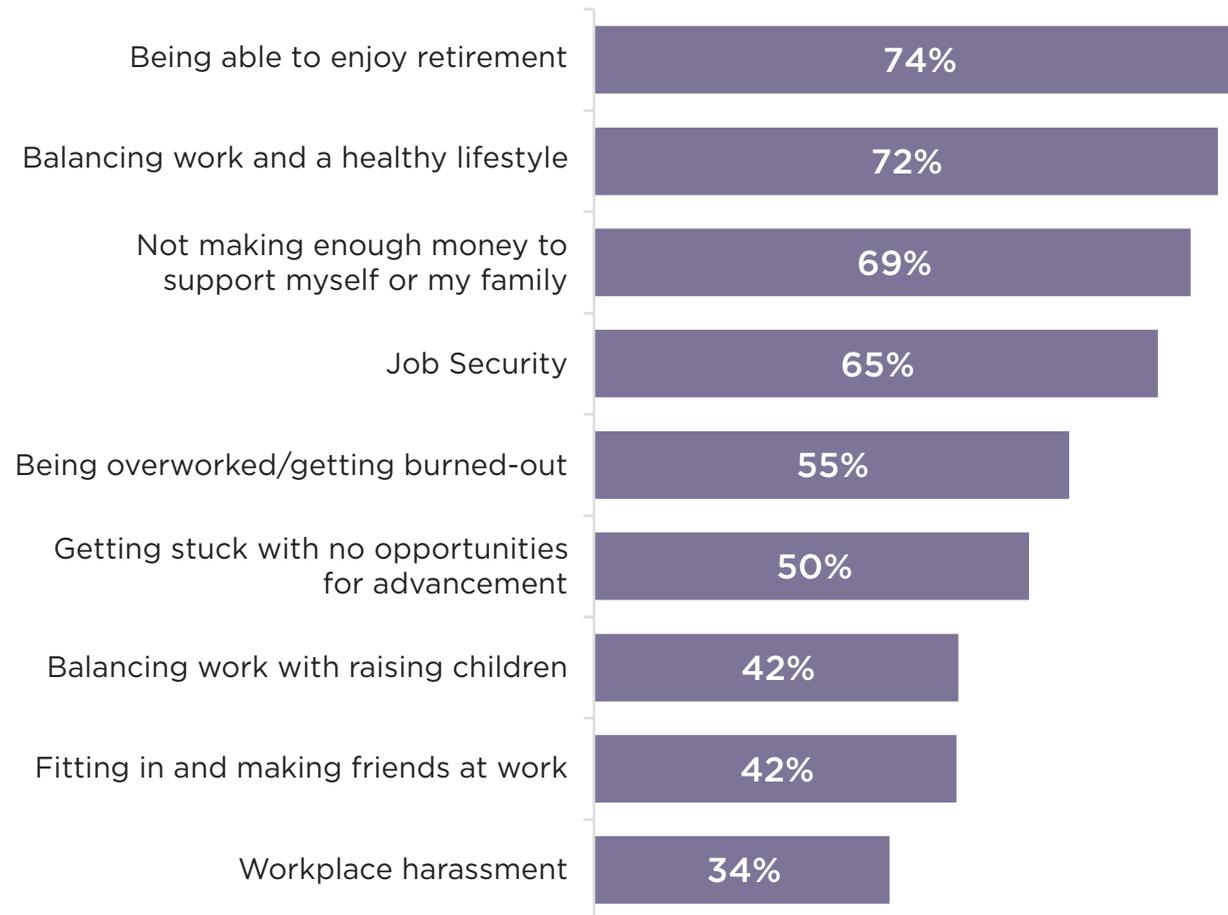
Most Generation Z (60%) express worry about fitting in and making friends at work, as do 54% of Young Millennials.

money, career advancement, achieving work-life balance, making friends and fitting in, being overworked, and raising children while working. That Boomers tend to be much less worried than everyone else may not be surprising given that many find themselves towards the end of their working lives.

Once again, the relative importance of workplace social dynamics and social life to the younger segments of the labour market. Most Generation Z (60%) express worry about fitting in and making friends at work, as do 54% of Young Millennials.

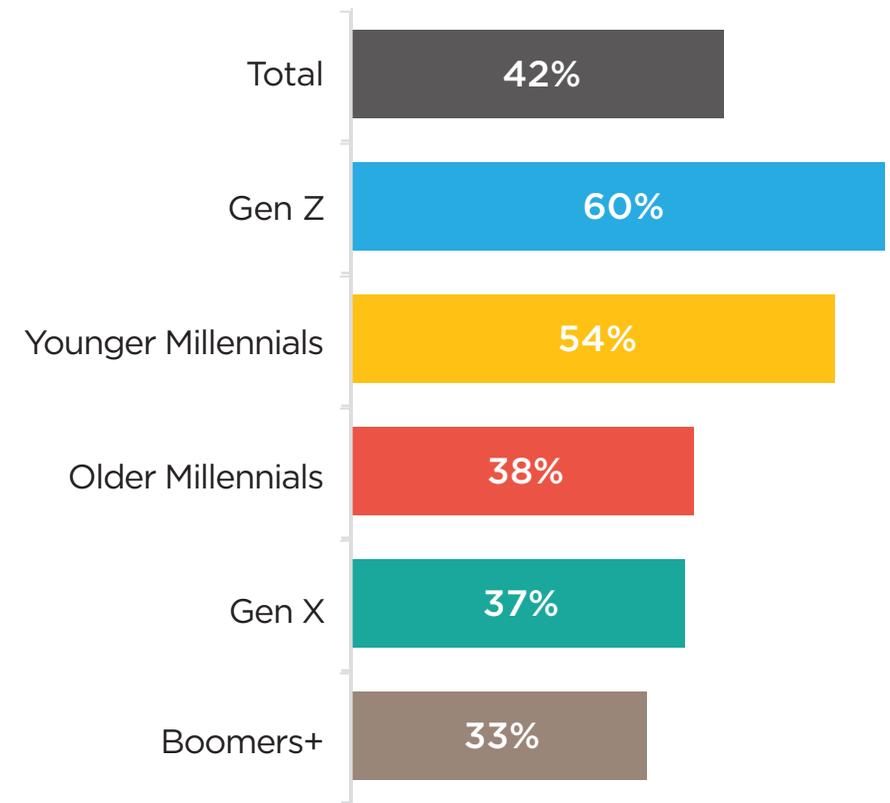


### Career Related Challenges (% Worry)



Q: How much, if at all, do you worry about each of the following career-related challenges?  
 Base: All Respondents, n=1,500

### Career Related Challenges "Making Friends and Fitting in" (% Worry)



Q: How much, if at all, do you worry about each of the following career-related challenges? Base: All Respondents, n=1,500

# The Qualities Canadians Most Wish to See in a Supervisor, an Organizational Leader and in Themselves

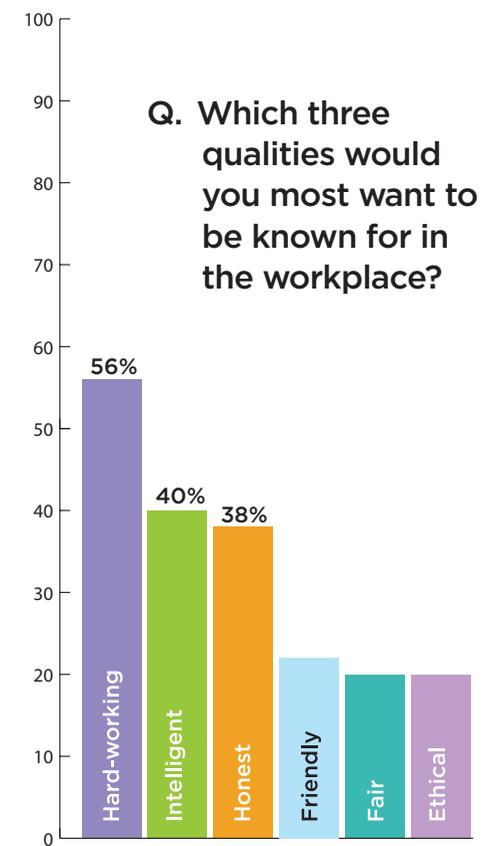
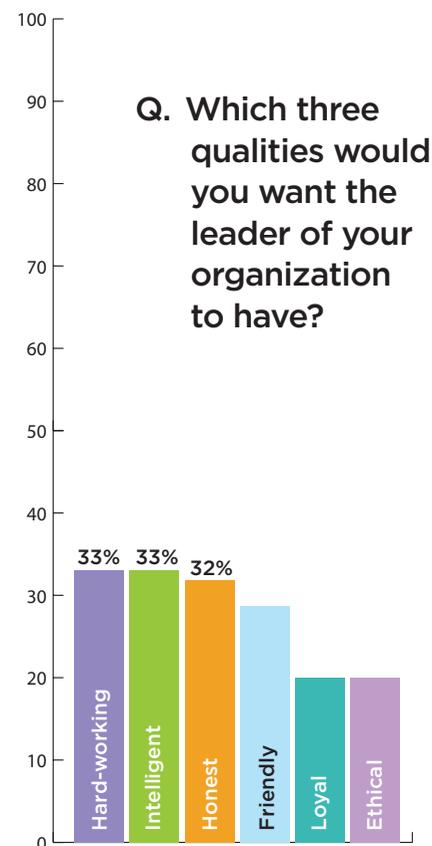
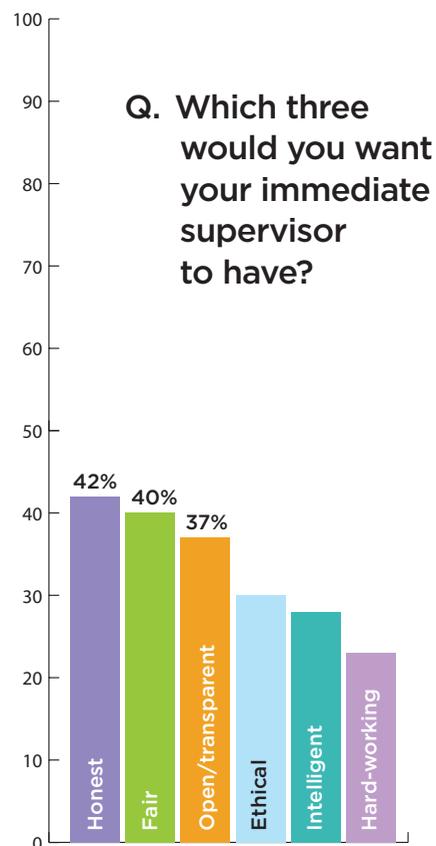
Top Qualities that are desired by Canadians in Today's Workplace

Base: All Respondents, n=1,500

The survey asked Canadians about the qualities they wished to see in their immediate supervisor, their organization's leader, as well as reflected in themselves. **Generally, generations value a common set of traits, with one noteworthy difference: Younger people place less importance on honesty.**

With respect to one's immediate supervisor, Canadians place the greatest value on qualities of honesty, fairness, and openness/ transparency. The

generational differences are interesting. While fairness and openness/ transparency are also among the top three most frequently selected qualities by Generation Z, this segment includes "friendliness" on their list. In contrast, honesty is relatively less important to them (in sharp contrast to Boomers). Generation Z is also much more likely than others, particularly Boomers, to want a supervisor who is hardworking.



## Q. Which three qualities would you want your Immediate Supervisor to have?

Quality	Total	Gen Z	Younger Millennials	Older Millennials	Gen X	Boomers+
Honest	42%	27%	<b>37%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>50%</b>
Fair	40%	<b>35%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>46%</b>
Open/transparent	37%	<b>36%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>40%</b>	33%
Ethical	30%	28%	27%	32%	27%	<b>37%</b>
Intelligent	28%	19%	28%	29%	27%	33%
Hard-working	23%	32%	26%	26%	22%	13%
Friendly	22%	<b>37%</b>	22%	25%	20%	16%

Base: All Respondents, n=1,500

Honesty and openness/transparency are among the top three qualities Canadians want to see in their organization’s leader, along with “ethical”, followed closely by “fair and visionary”. The only difference in how generations view this question is the higher importance that Boomers place on honesty.

**In the workplace, Canadians want to be seen as: hard-working (selected by 56%), intelligence (40%) and honesty (38%).** Once again, the clash between older and younger generations on the salience of honesty, with Gen X (46%) and Boomers (49%) placing much more emphasis on this quality than Young Millennials (24%) and Generation Z (22%) do.

## Q. Which three qualities would you want the leader of your organization to have?

Quality	Total					
		Gen Z	Younger Millennials	Older Millennials	Gen X	Boomers+
Open/transparent	33%	34%	31%	30%	35%	33%
Honest	33%	26%	27%	29%	35%	<b>42%</b>
Ethical	32%	38%	29%	27%	33%	35%
Fair	29%	25%	29%	29%	32%	27%
Visionary	29%	24%	26%	31%	27%	32%
Intelligent	27%	25%	24%	27%	27%	31%
Strategic	24%	21%	28%	28%	22%	21%

Base: All Respondents, n=1,500

## Q. Which three qualities would you most want to be known for in the workplace?

Quality	Total	 Gen Z	 Younger Millennials	 Older Millennials	 Gen X	 Boomers+
Hard-working	56%	64%	59%	59%	54%	52%
Intelligent	40%	43%	44%	46%	35%	36%
Honest	38%	<b>22%</b>	<b>24%</b>	34%	<b>46%</b>	<b>49%</b>
Friendly	22%	24%	26%	19%	23%	18%
Loyal	20%	17%	18%	17%	23%	22%
Ethical	20%	14%	19%	19%	19%	25%
Caring	18%	<b>15%</b>	15%	17%	20%	19%

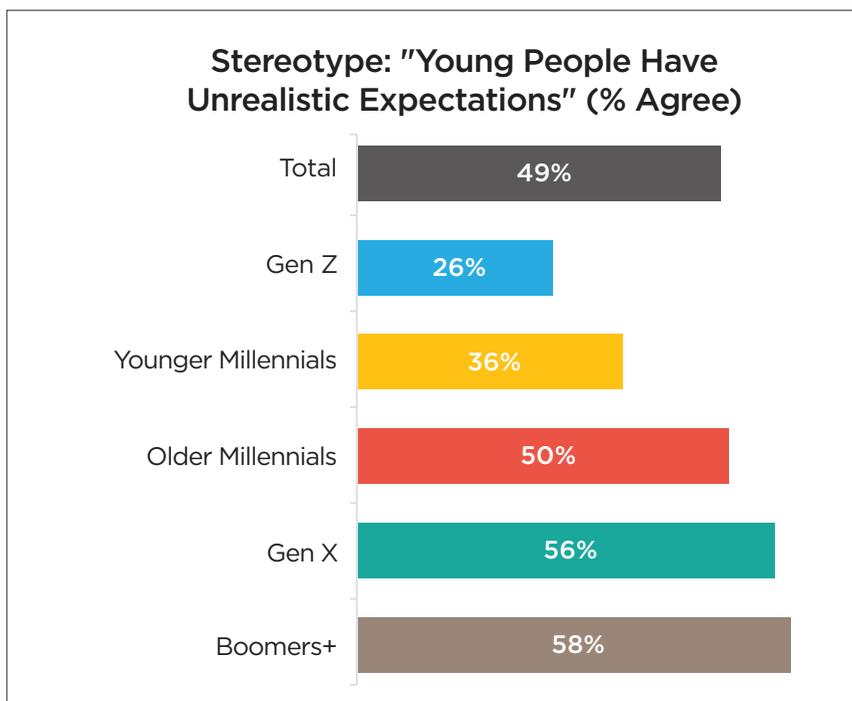
Base: All Respondents, n=1,500

# Generational Tensions and Stereotypes

To this point, several differences in views amongst generations has been discussed, particularly between Boomers and Generation Z (and to a lesser extent Young Millennials). Several questions were specifically designed to assess perceptual cleavages in how generations view each other, based on common workplace stereotypes.

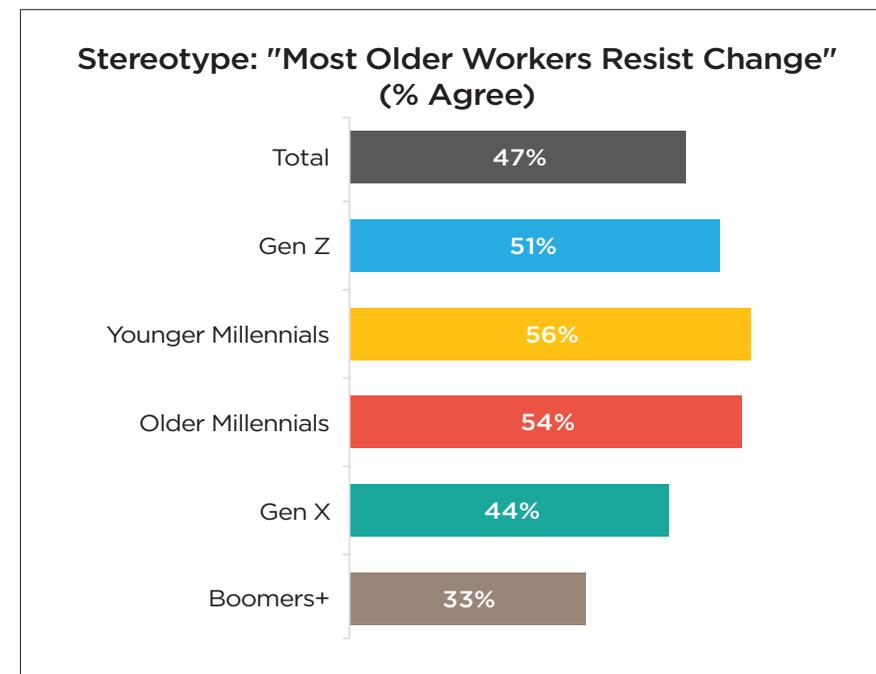
**Overall, Canadians are more likely to agree than disagree that “most young workers have unrealistic expectations” about advancement (49% to 16%).** The older one is, the more likely they are to agree, while Gen X members are evenly split.

*Q: Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: Base: All Respondents, n=1,500*



When it comes to older workers, a strong plurality of those surveyed (47%) agrees that “older workers resist change” (only 18% disagree). The Boomer segment is the only cohort within which there is not majority agreement with this view (33% compared to 36% who disagree).

*Q: Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: Base: All Respondents, n=1,500*

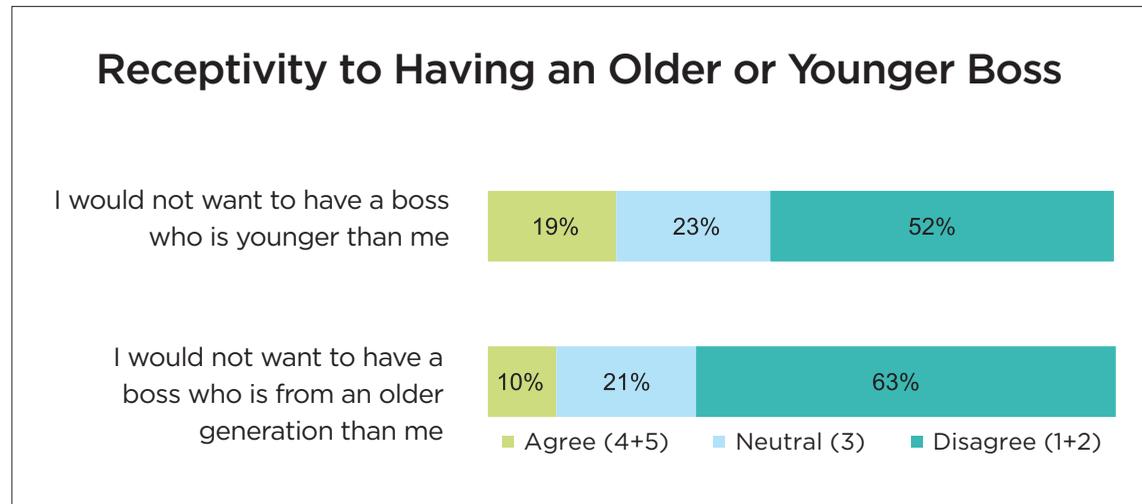


The etiquette surrounding the use of the phone has long been a source of generational tension. Today, many workers communicate with colleagues and clients primarily on their phones, while in some workplaces personal phones are not allowed. This survey asked whether employees should be able to “check their phone whenever they want”? This is a communications issue, as well as an indicator of generational differences.

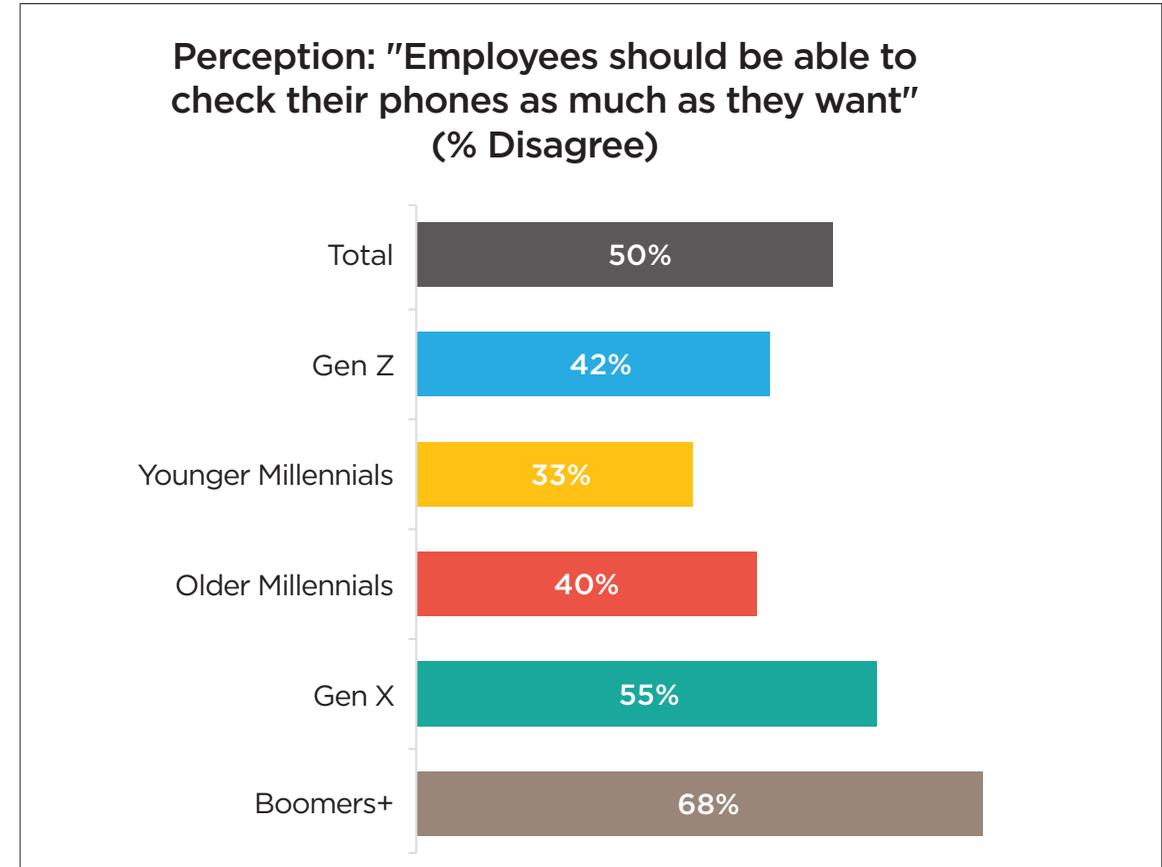
Overall, there is no consensus in response to the question, with 50% saying no and 21% agreeing that employees should be able to look at their phones anytime. The least opposed to allowing workers to look at their phones anytime are Young Millennials (33% disagree), while the most opposed are Boomers (68% disagree).

The quality of employee-supervisor relationships is key to productivity, organizational morale, and employee retention. As indicated in the introduction to this report, some observers have argued that the presence of a large age gap between workers and supervisors creates several challenges. **The results of this study suggest that the age of an immediate supervisor is not a concern for the vast majority of the labour force.**

Overall, 19% say that they would not want to work for a younger boss, with Boomers being least sensitive (11%). When it comes to having a boss “from an older generation”, only 10% overall would not like it. Again, the least sensitive are Boomers (only 5% say they would not want a boss from an older generation).



Q. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: Base: All Respondents, n=1,500



Boomers are the least sensitive to not wanting to work for a boss from an older generation, at only 5%.

# Internal Communications: Preferred Information Sharing Methods

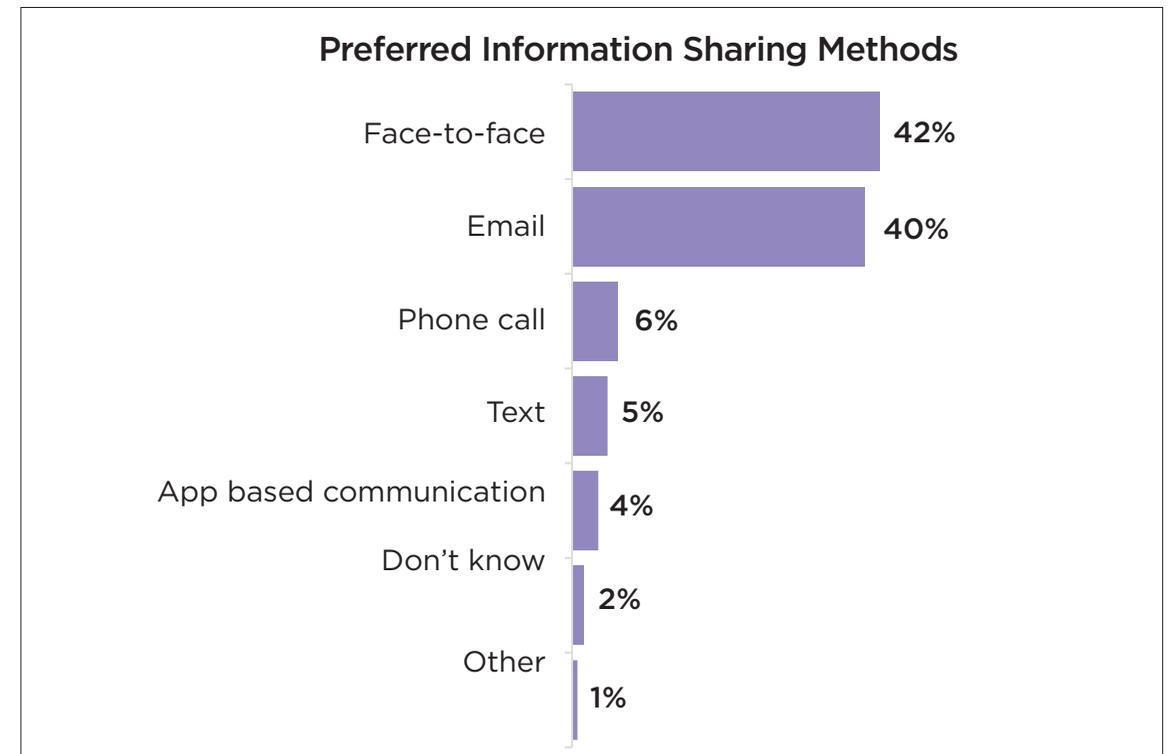
“ Poor internal communication can have some seriously negative impacts on a company — poor morale, high employee turnover and lower employee productivity, to name a few. Worse yet, these can lead to a lasting effect on a company’s bottom line. ”

✎ Sara Jensen, Workforce.com (May 2019)

Several survey questions were designed to help employers improve their internal communications. Below, worker preferences with respect to channels, content, and frequency of feedback are examined.

Preferred modes of information sharing vary according to age, but perhaps not as much as one might have expected.

Overall, communicating face-to-face (selected as preferred by 42%) and by email (40%) are the preferred methods for sharing information. Sharing information by text is the top choice of only 5% overall, but it is preferred by a sizable proportion of Generation Z (17% compared to 1% of Boomers).

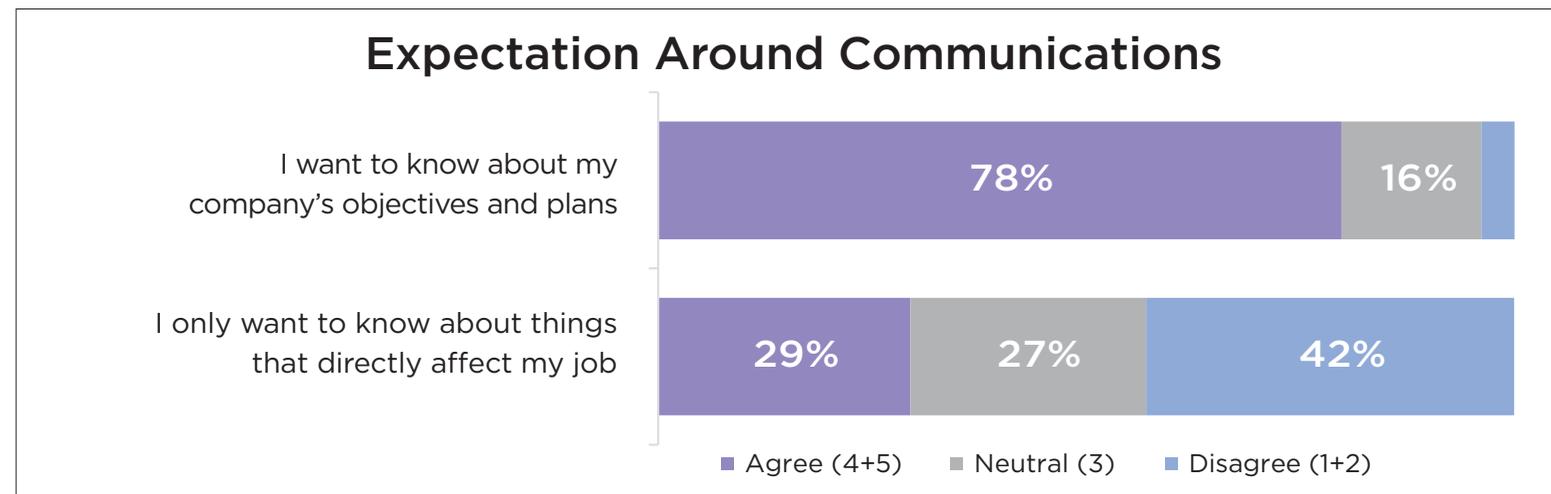


Q: When it comes to sharing information in the workplace, what is your preferred method? Base: All Respondents, n=1,500

# Internal Communications: Content and Employee Engagement & Empowerment

Providing employees with an optimal amount of information is difficult. Most organizations recognize the importance of transparency and of sharing some aspects of the “big picture” with all employees (e.g., business plans, strategic direction, corporate performance). The challenge lies in not overwhelming employees with corporate information.

**In examining this issue, this study finds that workers, regardless of age, want to know about their organization’s plans and objectives. Indeed, only 4% do not.** Similarly, but less pronounced, just 1 in 3 members of the labour force only want to know about things that directly affect their job. Here too, there is consistency across generations.



*Q. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: Base: All Respondents, n=1,500*

Opinion is divided, however, about whether every employee should have a say in company planning and decision-making: 37% believe that they should, 26% disagree, and the rest are not sure. Boomers are much more likely than others to disagree.

# Learning Preferences

In the earlier discussion of career goals and aspirations, the study revealed the importance workers place on having a job that allows them to “continuously learn new things”. This desire is especially prevalent among Young Millennials. The survey gathered feedback on a range of learning approaches, from classroom instruction to on-the-job training with a mentor.

**Among formal learning options, 1) no approach is widely preferred, and 2) the two most popular ones are quite different from each other.** A small plurality (34%) prefer to learn in a classroom setting onsite. The second most popular approach is online learning with no instructor (26%).

It is reasonable to hypothesize that younger workers would prefer self-guided online learning, while older ones would opt for a classroom setting. In fact, the opposite is true. Generation Z is much more likely than any other segment to prefer learning onsite in a classroom (i.e., 50% select this approach compared to only 17% who would rather learn on their own, online). Boomers, in contrast, are more likely to prefer self-guided online learning to an onsite classroom setting (30% and 26% respectively).

It may be that since Generation Z are either full-time or part-time students or recent graduates, learning in a class with an instructor/teacher is what they are most familiar, and thus more comfortable, with.

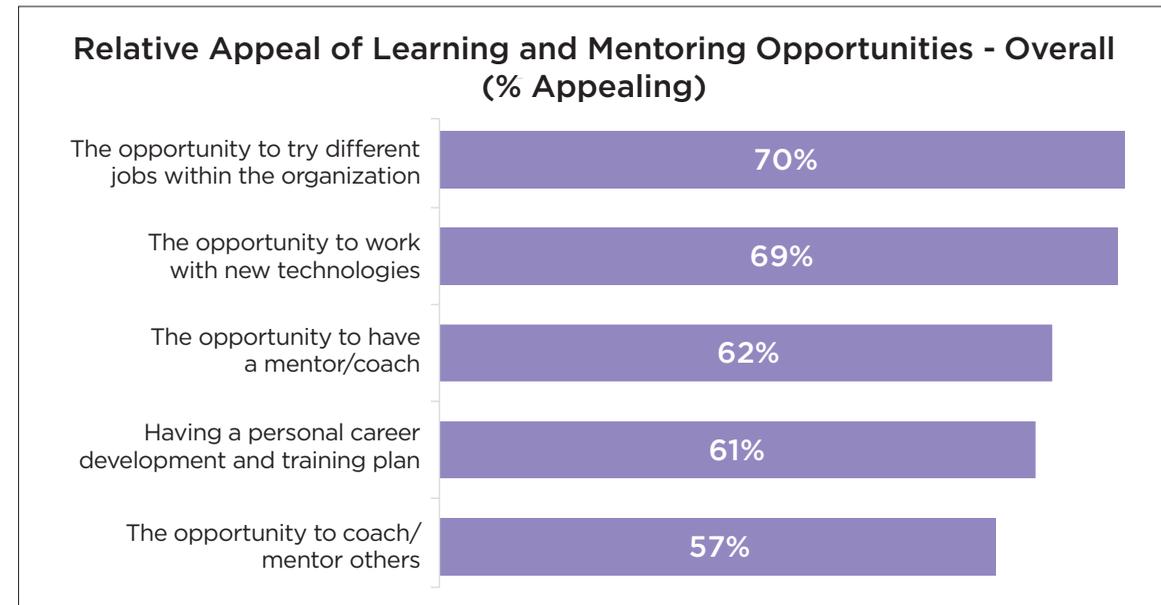
The study also examined learning and career development from a different angle, by asking respondents to rate the appeal of mentoring, cross-training, having a career development plan and learning new technology. The results show that all of these have significant appeal across generations.

**The two most appealing, however, are the opportunity to learn different jobs within the organization (appealing to 70%) and the opportunity to work with new technology (69%).** It is interesting to note that the latter holds as much appeal to older workers as it does to younger ones. The opportunity to learn different jobs, however,

is significantly more appealing to Generation Z (82%). The opportunity to mentor/coach others is appealing to 57% of the labour market, with no variation by age.

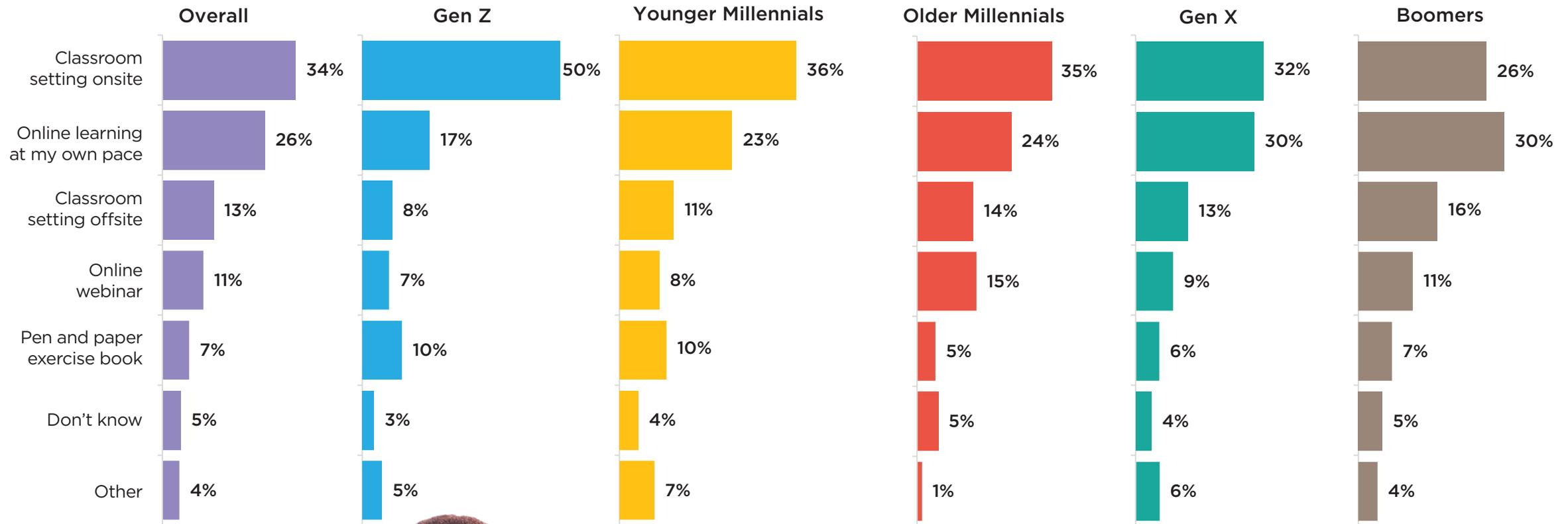
HR expert, L.R. Krishnan writes that sound employee performance management, coupled with a solid reward and recognition structure, “leads to higher employee productivity, engagement, and, consequentially, higher levels of employee retention.”<sup>9</sup>

One of the most basic questions surrounding employee performance management pertains to the frequency of feedback. Our survey results reveal that, collectively, workers have wide-ranging preferences. **About one-third (34%) of the workforce would like to have feedback on a weekly basis. An identical proportion prefers to have feedback only once or twice a year, while another substantial percentage would like feedback “on-demand”.** In terms of preferences across age segments, the analysis suggests younger employees prefer to receive feedback more frequently.

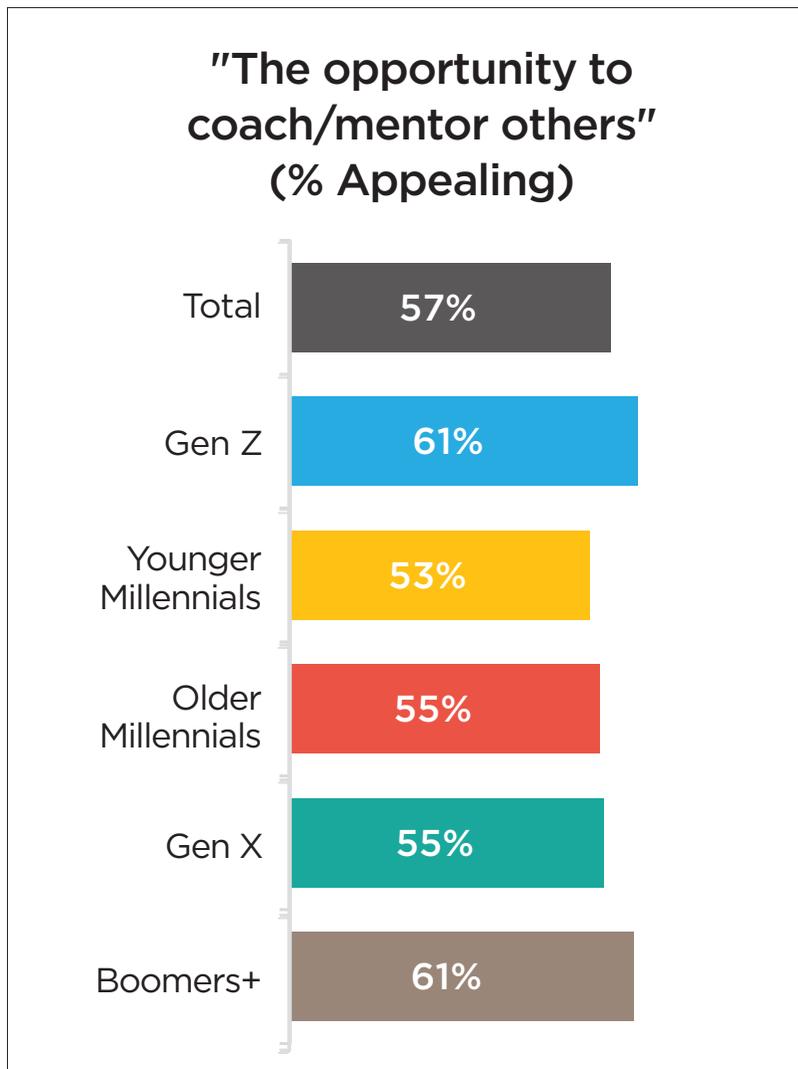


Q. If you were looking for a job, how appealing would you find each of the following?  
 Base: All Respondents, n=1,500

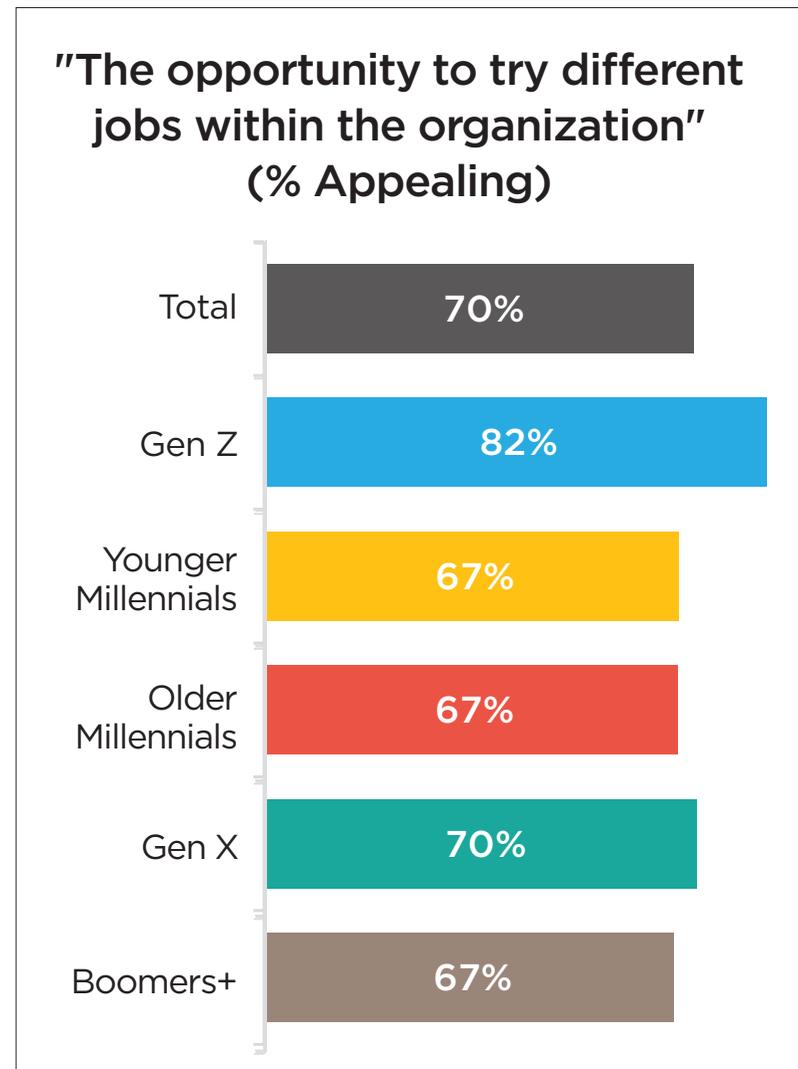
## Preferred Learning Approaches



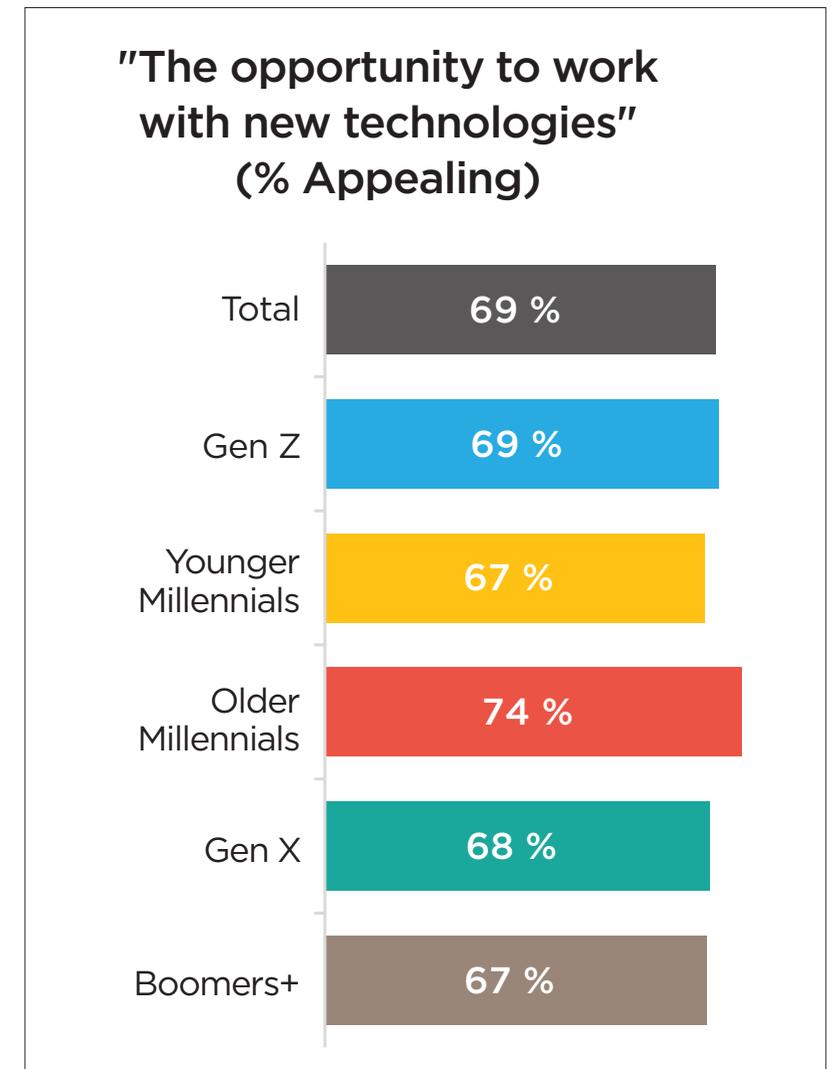
The opportunity to learn different jobs, however, is significantly more appealing to Generation Z (82%).



Q: First, for you personally, how important are each of the following career goals? Base: All Respondents, n=1,500

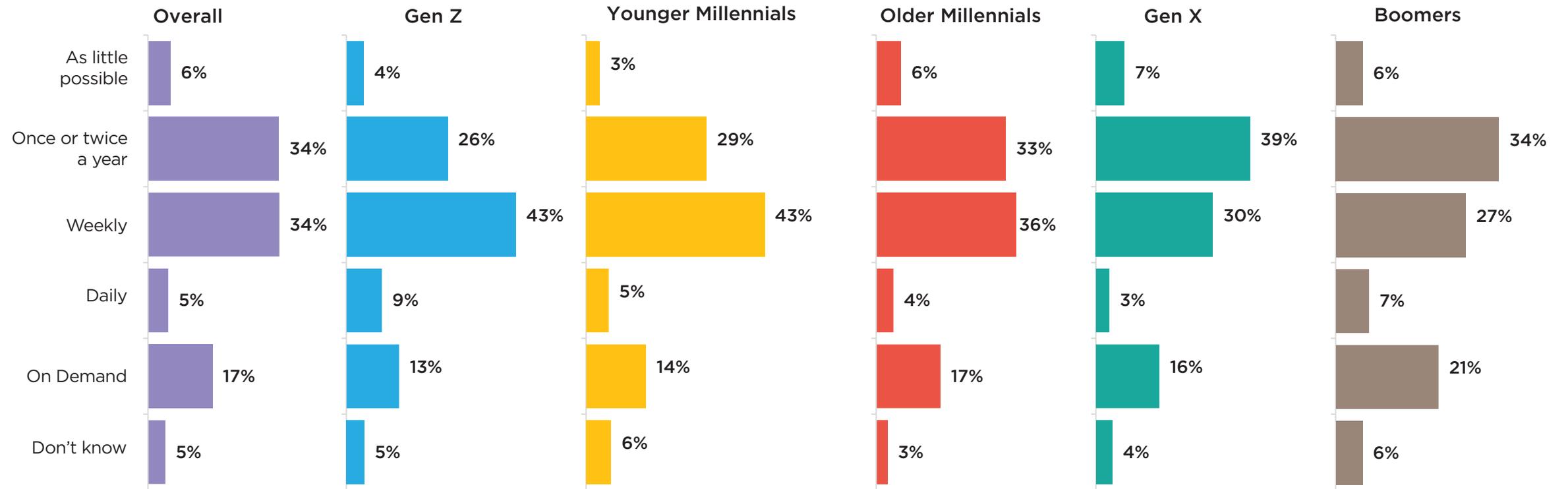


Q: First, for you personally, how important are each of the following career goals? Base: All Respondents, n=1,500



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### Frequency of Receiving Feedback



About one-third (34%) of the workforce would like to have feedback on a weekly basis.

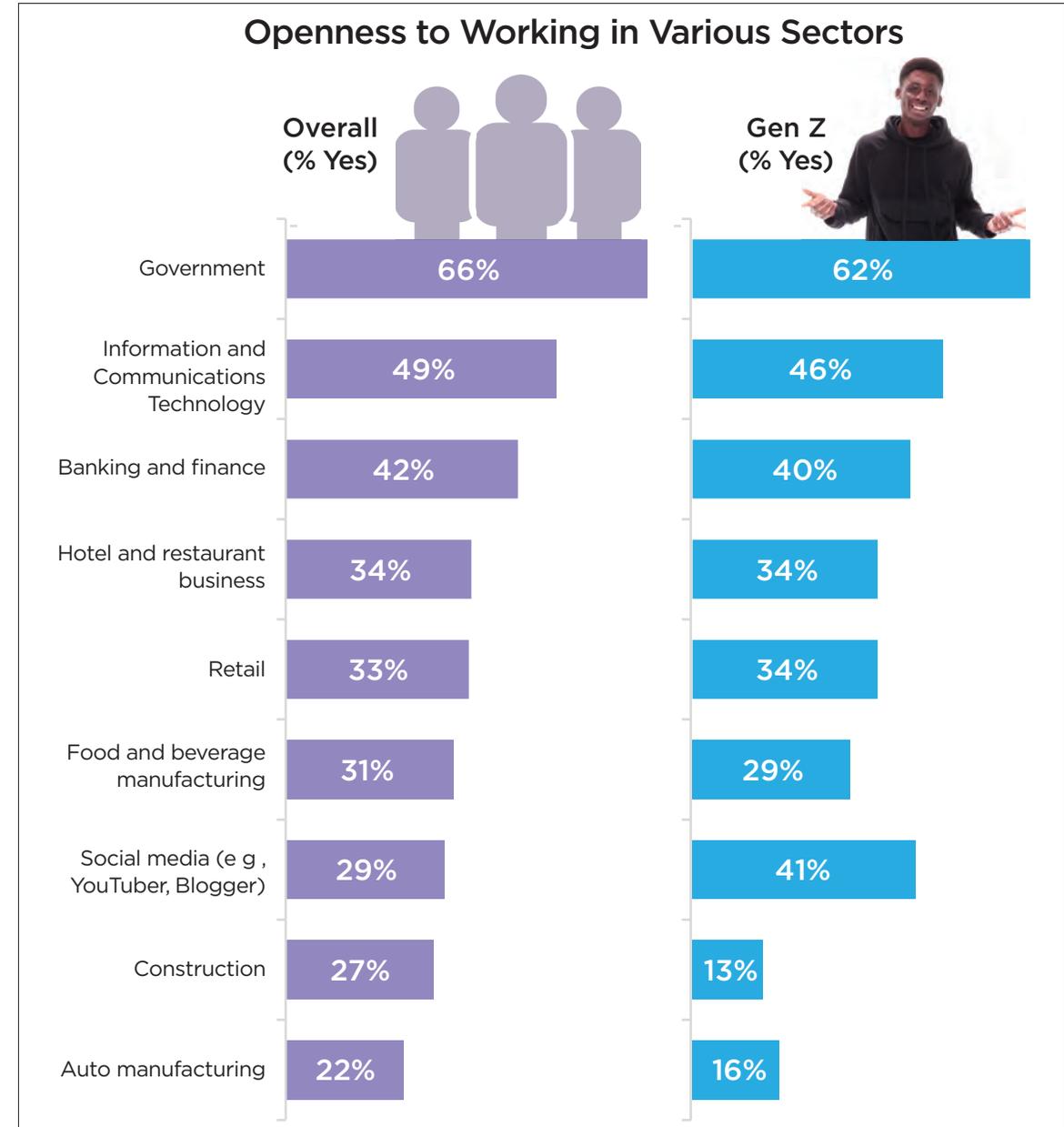
# Interest in Working in Manufacturing, Including Food and Beverage

As noted in the introduction, the objective of the study is to provide employers with practical information and guidance to help them more easily attract and retain employees. Below perceptions of manufacturing jobs is discussed, including in the food and beverage processing sector.

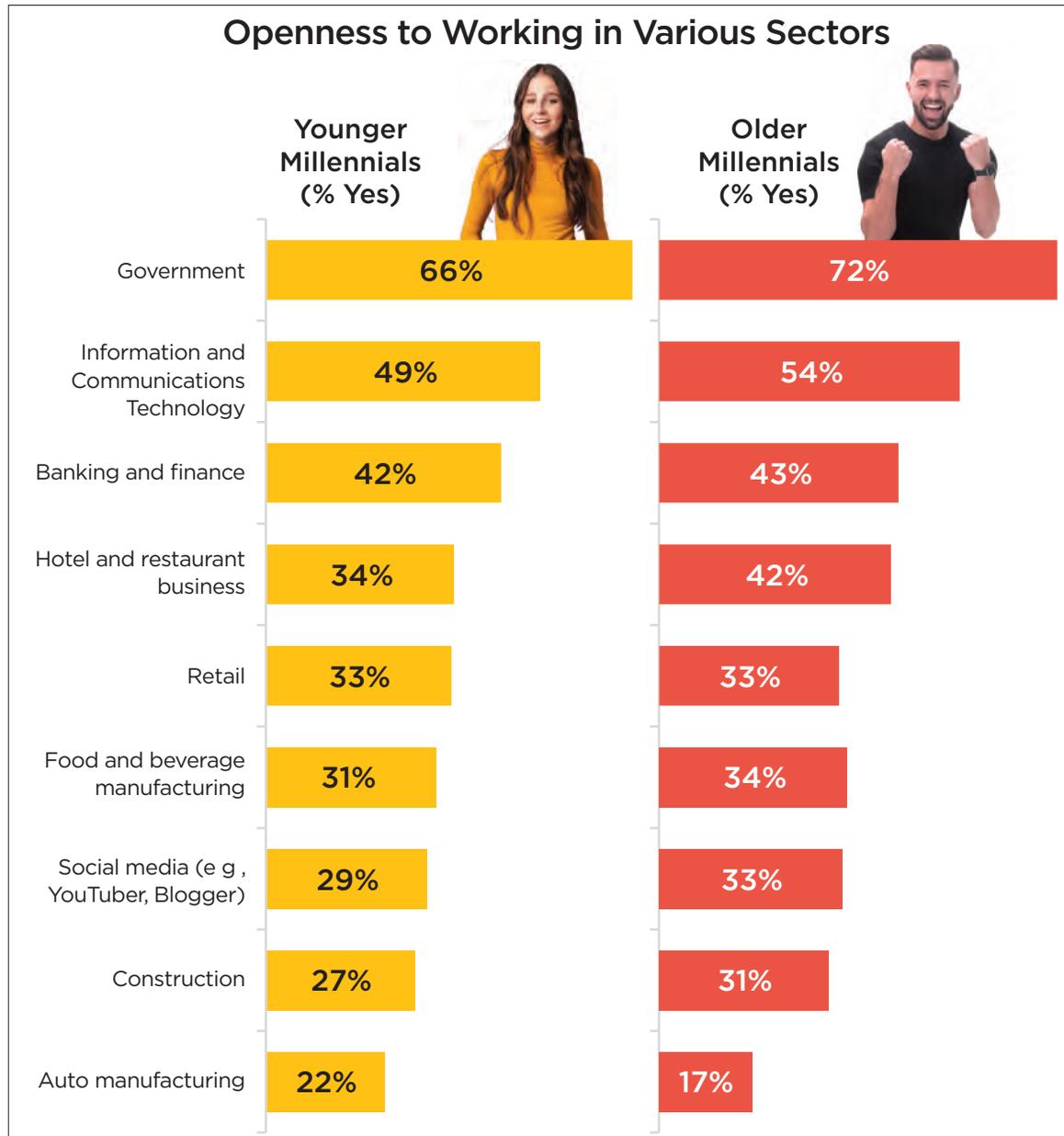
Consistent with past research, working in food and beverage manufacturing has moderate appeal – much less than working in government, banking/finance and information technology, somewhat more than auto manufacturing, and on par with the hotel/restaurant industry, retail, social media, construction.

The auto industry’s relative lack of appeal may be surprising given that wages in this sector have tended to be higher compared to other types of manufacturing, including food and beverage processing.<sup>10</sup>

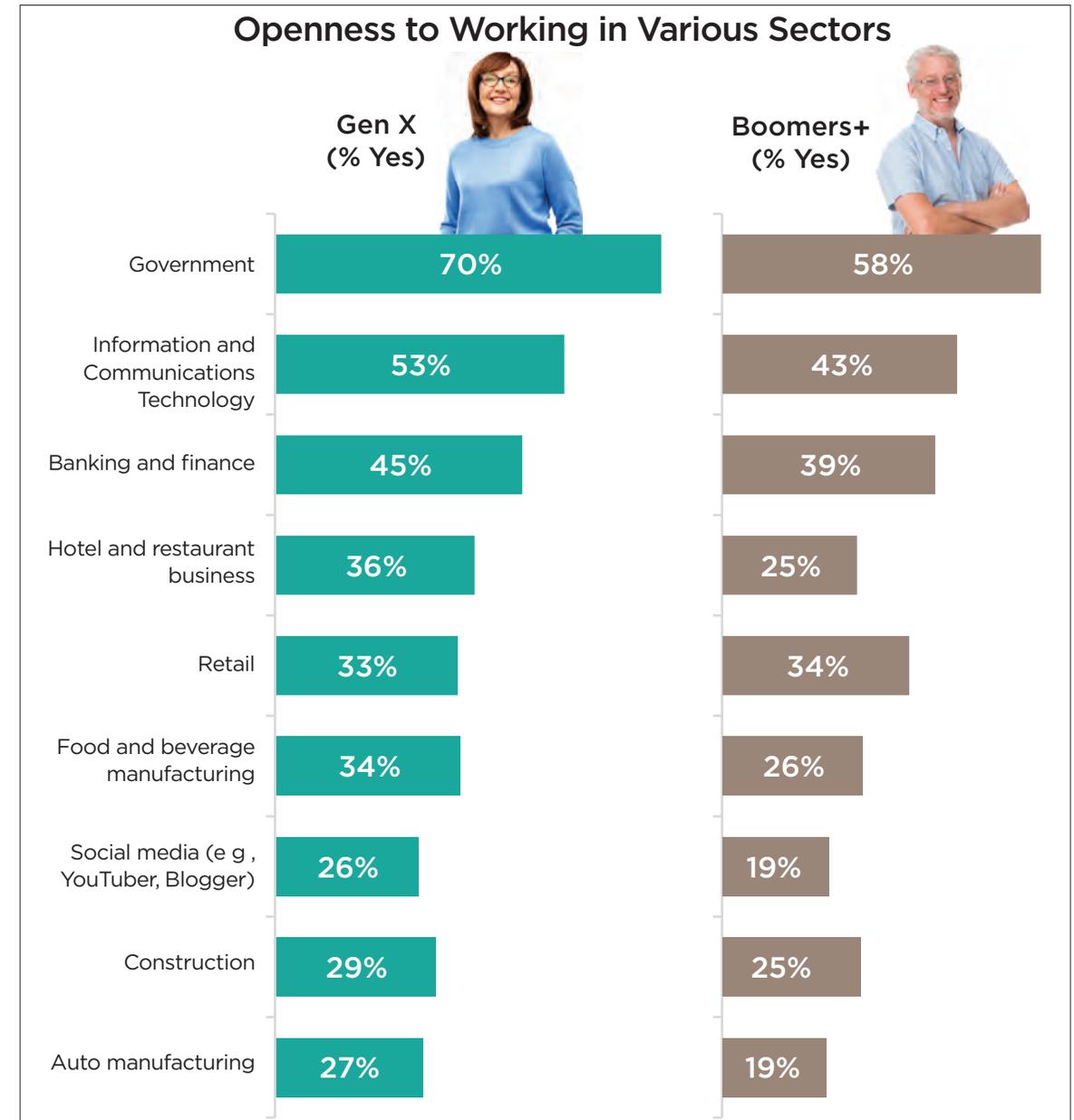
A few noteworthy generational differences in the data. First, and as could be expected, working in social media holds significantly more appeal to Generation Z (41%), and least among Boomers (19%). **More interesting is how relatively unappealing construction appears to Generation Z (i.e., only 13% would consider working in it). This result is instructive, given that this sector is a main source of competition for workers in the food and beverage manufacturing sector.**



Q. Would you consider working in any of the following sectors?  
 Base: All Respondents, n=1,500



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 Base: All Respondents, n=1,500



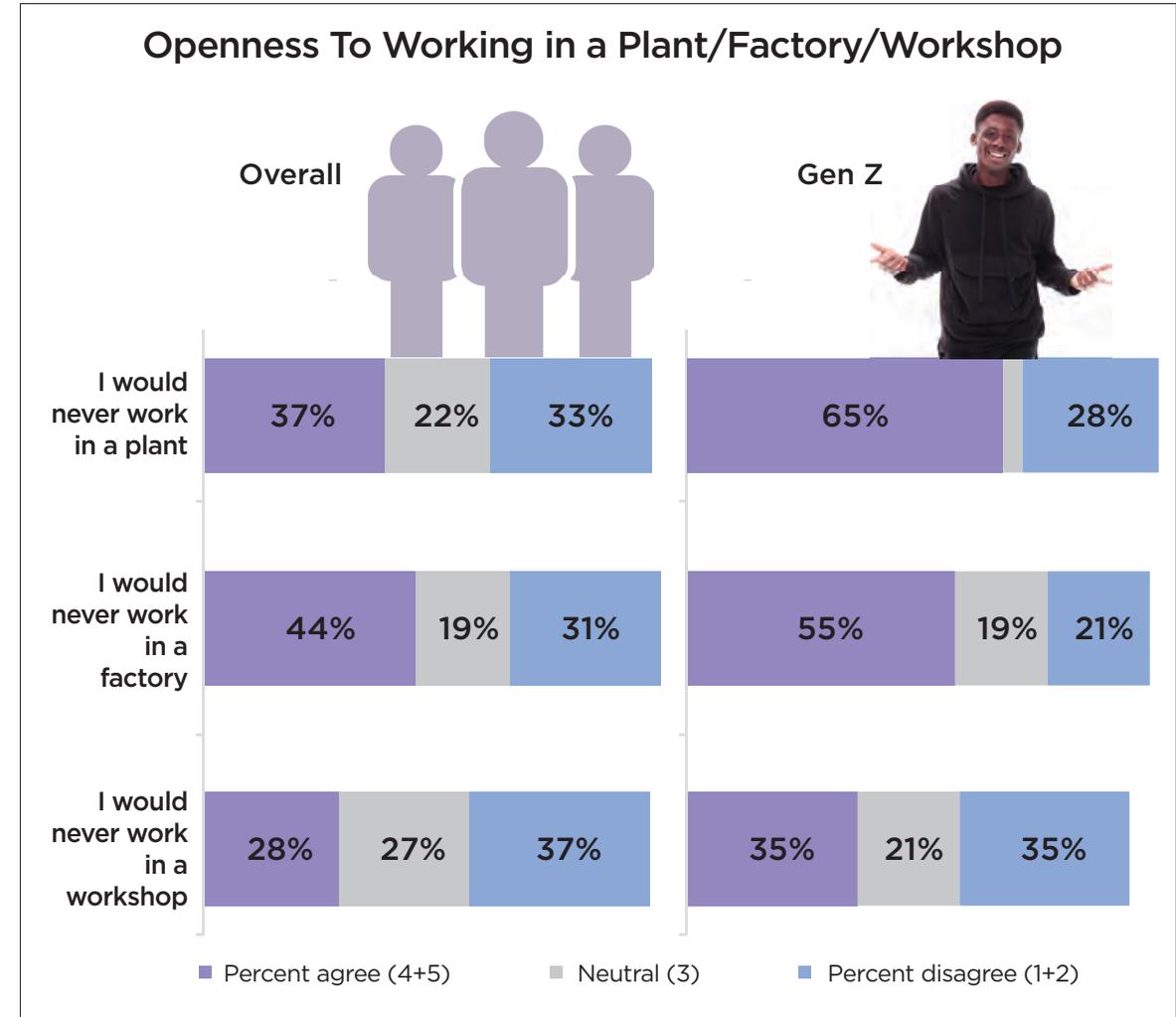
Q. Would you consider working in any of the following sectors?  
 Base: All Respondents, n=1,500

# The Impact of Terminology on Interest in Working in Manufacturing

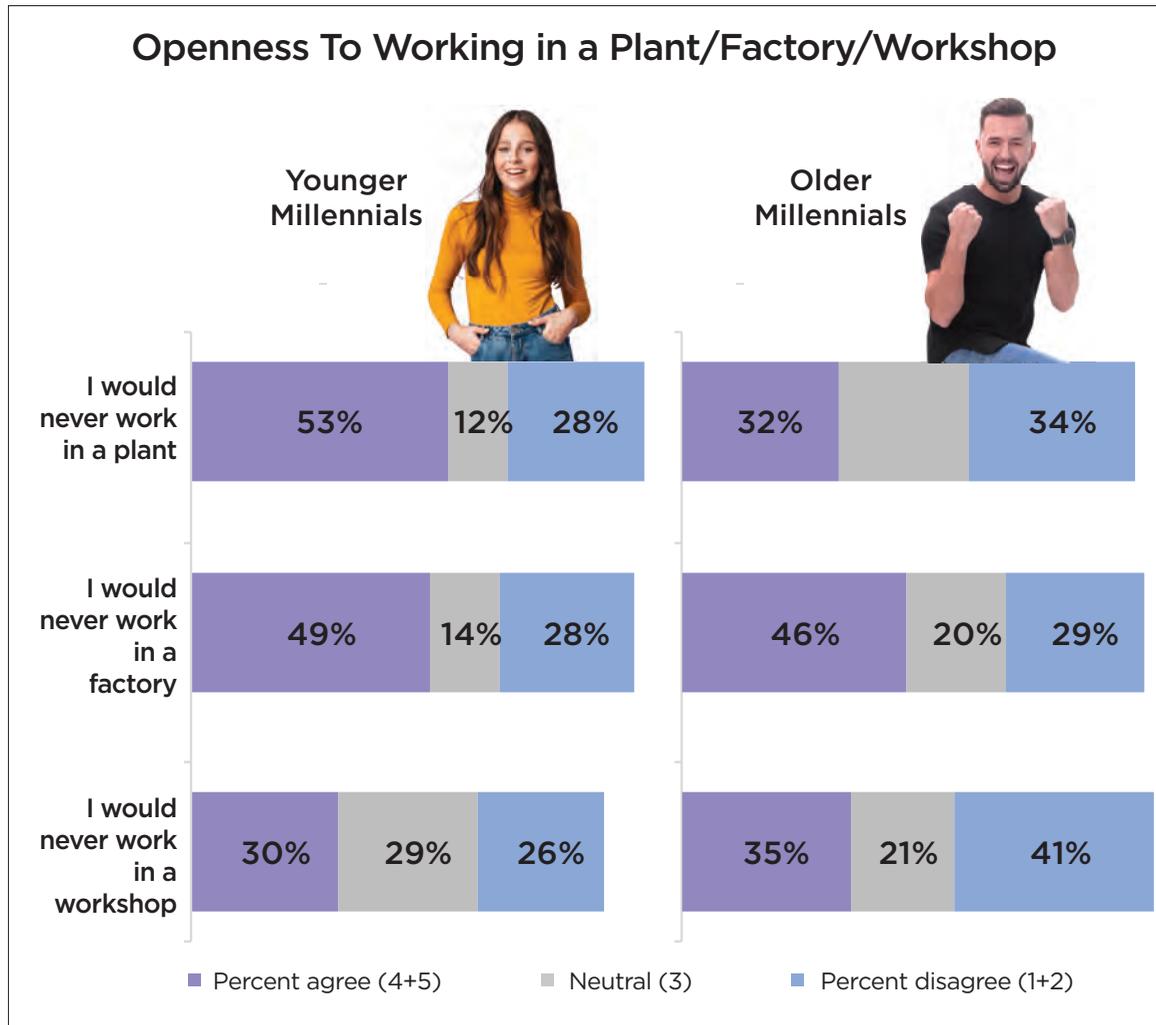
The survey included two experiments whereby the sample was split into three to randomly test the relative impact of 1) job advertisement content (discussed later), and 2) use of the words: “factory”, “plant” and “workshop”. Both experiments were aimed at helping employers more effectively engage with potential employees.

Overall, the least appealing word is “factory”, followed by “plant”, with the differences being significant. **Close to half (44%) agree with the statement: “I would never work in a factory.” The proportion agreeing falls to 37% when the statement contains the word “plant”, and then to 28% when “workshop” is substituted.**

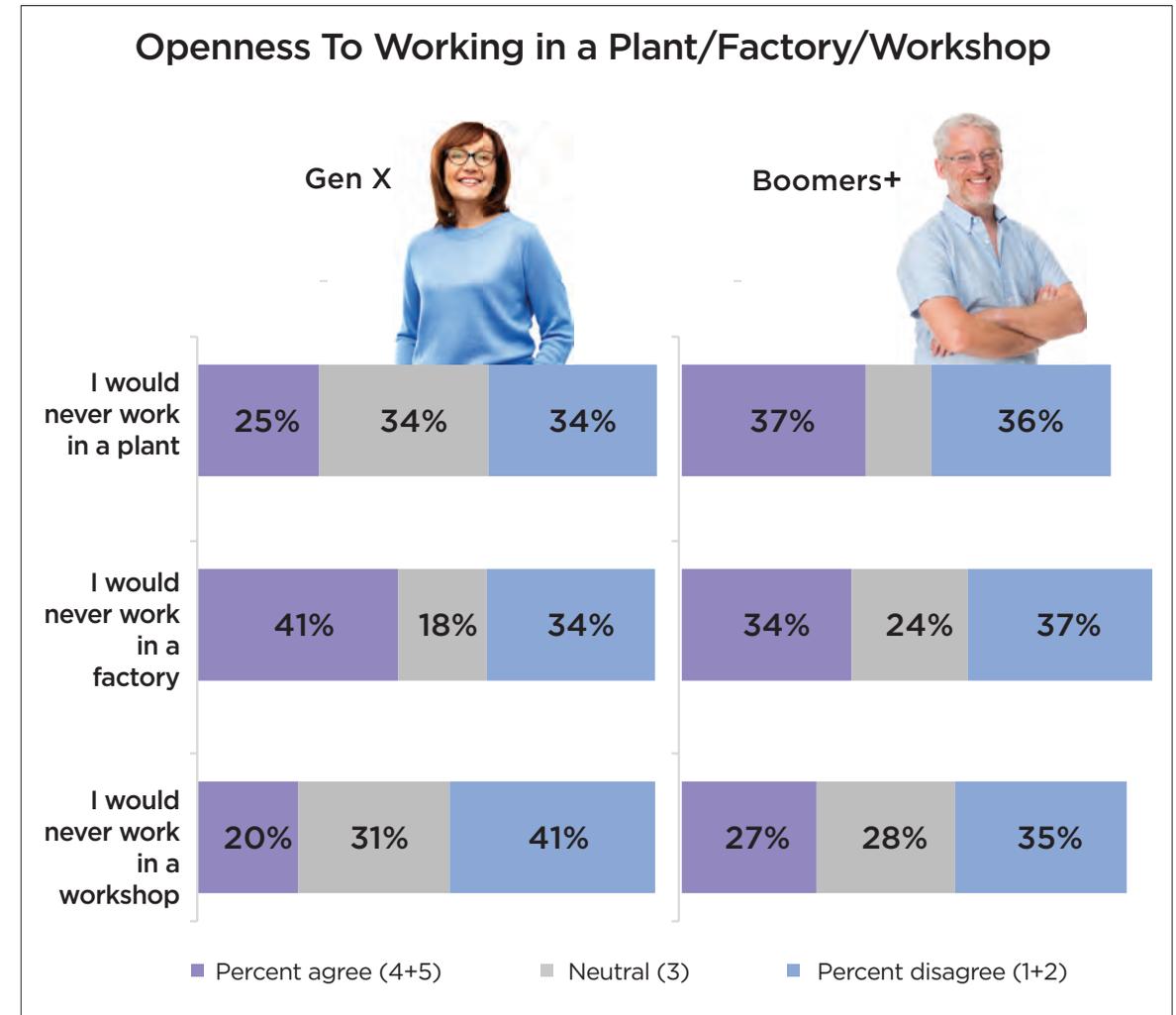
Generation Z results are very interesting. For this group, the word “plant” has, by far, the most negative connotation (65% say they would never work in one). This compares to 55% who say they would never work in a “factory” and only 35% who would never work in a “workshop”. It’s also worth noting that Young Millennials also seem to have a relative aversion to the word “plant”, but it is less pronounced.



Q. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: Base: All Respondents, n=1,500



Q. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: Base: All Respondents, n=1,500



Q. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: Base: All Respondents, n=1,500

# Interest in Working in “Smart Manufacturing”

In its 2019 Trends Manufacturing Report Microsoft Dynamics 365 heralded “smart manufacturing” as “Fourth Industrial Revolution, describing it as:

“... a new generation of sophisticated technologies ... transforming manufacturing into a highly connected, intelligent, and ultimately, more productive industry. The man-powered shop floor of the past is being replaced by smart manufacturing facilities where tech-savvy workers, aided by intelligent robots, are creating the products of the future.”

The study explored whether members of the labour force would consider working in “smart manufacturing” as a production worker? The following description accompanied the question:

“Smart manufacturing’ employs computer-integrated manufacturing, high levels of adaptability and rapid design changes, digital information technology, and more flexible technical workforce training.”

Close to two-thirds say either yes or maybe to working in smart manufacturing. Only 29% say no, while 11% don’t know. Views are generally consistent across generation, with the minor exception that Gen X (23%) are least likely to say no.



Q: Would you consider working in “smart manufacturing”? Base: All Respondents, n=1,500

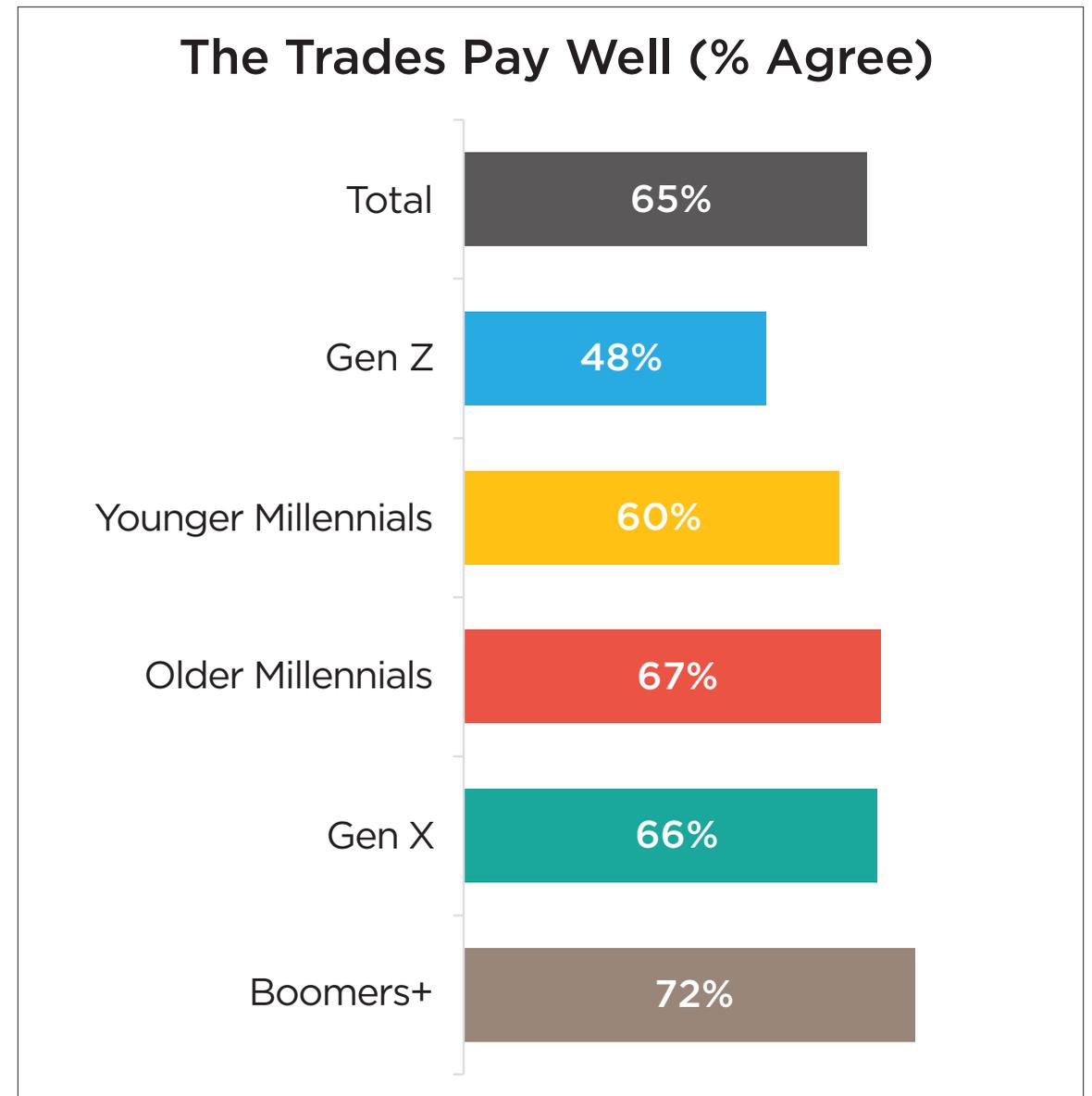
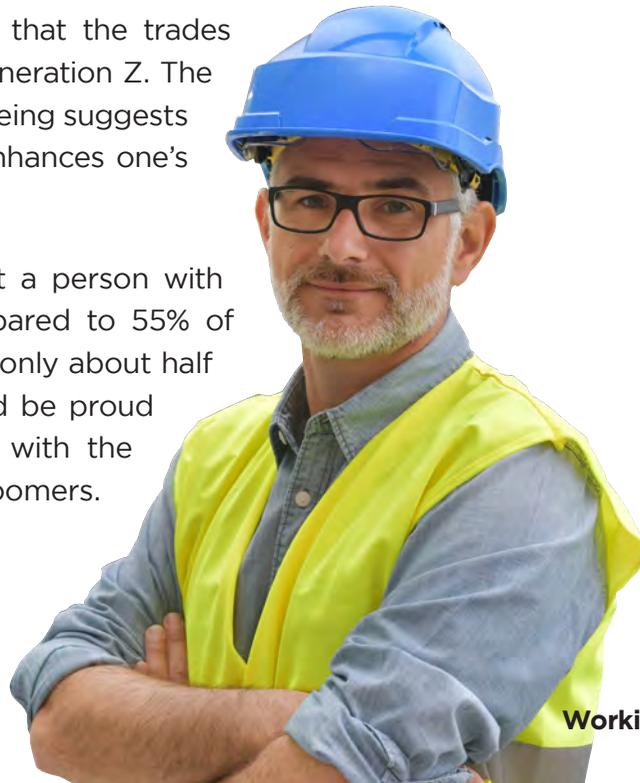
# Perceptions of a Career in the Trades

For decades now, business, elected officials and educators have lamented Canada’s skills shortage. In its 2002 report, *Solving the Skills Shortage*, The Conference Board of Canada admonished: “Many years of effectively treating the skilled trades as a secondary career path has had the consequence of diminishing the status of these trades in the eyes of many youth.” Since then, and indeed for many years before, governments in partnership with others have tried to encourage young people to consider a career in the trades.

**This study suggest that many young people continue to undervalue the trades. Specifically, the younger one is, the less likely they are to hold positive views of the trades, with Boomers at the positive end and Generation Z at the negative.**

For example, 72% of Boomers agree that the trades pay well, compared to only 48% of Generation Z. The fact that 60% of Young Millennials agreeing suggests that a few years in the labour force enhances one’s valuation of a career in the trades.

Only 34% of Generation Z agree that a person with a trade will always have a job, compared to 55% of Gen X and 59% of Boomers. Similarly, only about half of Generation Z (52%) say they would be proud to tell someone to work in a trade, with the proportion rising with age to 72% of Boomers.



Q: Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: Base: All Respondents, n=1,500

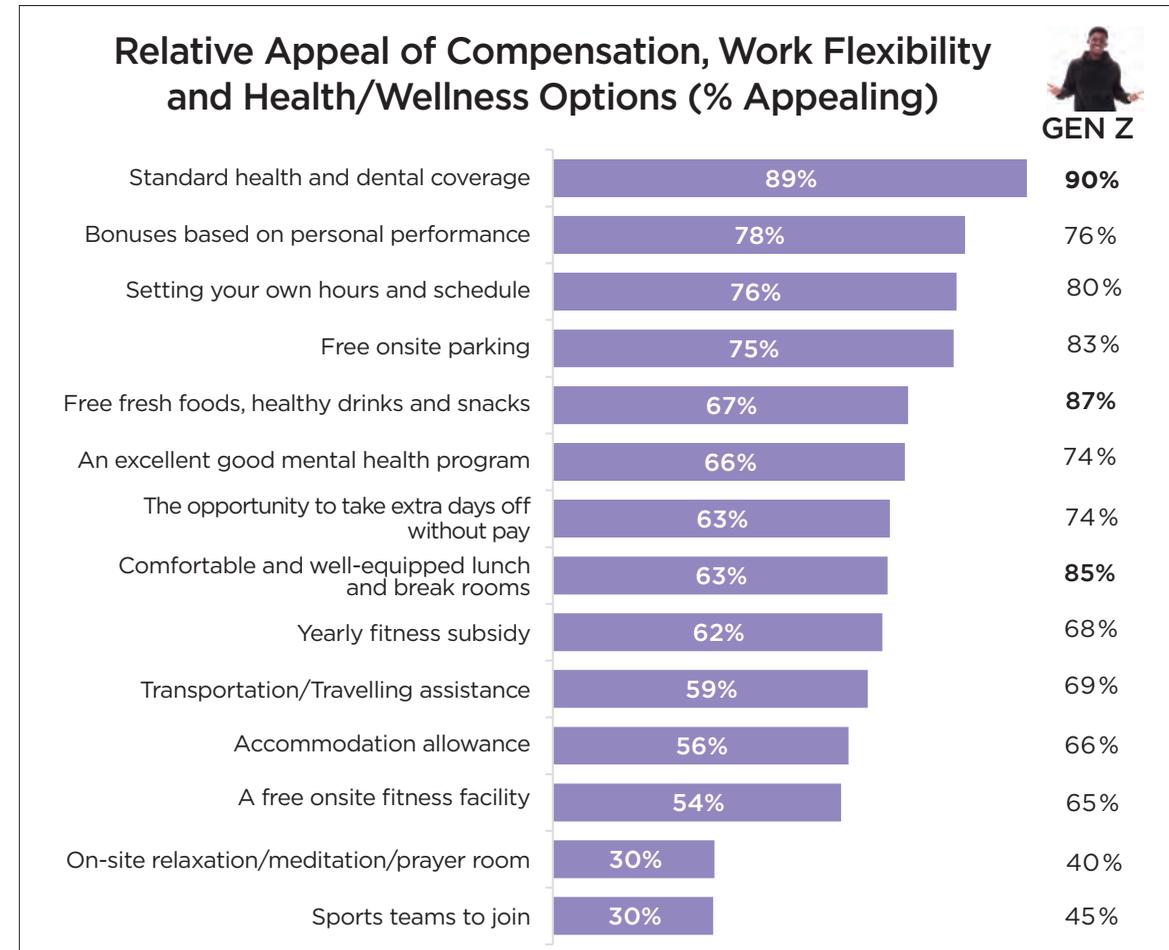
# Relative Appeal of Various Options for Improving Recruitment and Retention

Perhaps the salient workplace trend over the past decade has been the improvement of physical environments to encourage employee health and wellness.

Tony Schwartz, writing in the Harvard Business Review Blog, has found that the promotion of employee physical, emotional and social well-being increases employee energy, focus and sense of purpose. Research by consultants Willis Towers Watson finds that a growing number of employers are defining integrated workplace health as a central part of company culture and strategy. Reshaping the physical environment to encourage healthy behavior includes adding healthy foods to breakrooms and restaurant delivery menus, ergonomic workstations, and appropriate lighting.

While the literature often links employer emphasis on employee health and wellness to productivity gains, this study examined this issue through the lens of employee recruitment and retention. The core question measured the attractiveness of 14 options related to compensation, benefits, workplace health and wellness and workplace flexibility.

**Overall, the four most appealing options are traditional ones: standard health and dental coverage (appealing to 89%), personal performance bonuses (78%), the setting of one’s own hours and schedule (76%), and free parking onsite (75%).** The appeal of these options is consistent across generations.



Q. If you were looking for a job, how appealing would you find each of the following: Base: All Respondents, n=1,500

A second tier of appealing options includes: free fresh foods, healthy drinks and snacks (67%), an excellent mental health program (66%), comfortable and well-equipped lunch and break rooms (63%), the opportunity to take extra days off without pay (e.g., taking every Friday off in the summer; 63%), and a yearly fitness subsidy (e.g., to pay for membership, sports equipment, fitness classes; 62%).

**There are many significant differences in the appeal of options across the health and wellness options, including those aimed at promoting social solidarity. Essentially, the younger one is, the more appeal these options hold.** The most striking results are found in the Generation Z responses, whose top three choices are: standard health and dental coverage (appealing to 89%), free fresh foods, healthy drinks and snacks (87%), and comfortable and well-equipped lunch and break rooms (85%).

This segment is also much more likely to value a free onsite fitness facility (65% compared to an average labour market result of 54%) and sports teams to join (e.g., softball, bowling, volleyball, broomball; 45% compared to an average of 30%).

Young Millennials also tend to place a higher value on the health and wellness/social options, but not to the same extent as their juniors.

### Generation Z's top three choices were:

- Standard health and dental coverage
- Free fresh foods, healthy drinks and snacks
- Comfortable and well-equipped lunch and break rooms.

**The final section of the questionnaire was devoted to an experiment to test the relative appeal of employment opportunities that offered A) flexible work arrangements and B) progressive/health and wellness options. The results of the experiment suggest that employers who offer such arrangement and options are more likely to attract recruits.**

As with the first experiment (discussed earlier in this report) the sample was randomly divided into three:

- One-third of the sample served as a control group and received a posting that only described duties, qualifications, compensation/benefits, and a bit of background on the company.
- Another third received the posting that also included flexible work arrangements.
- The last third of the sample received the posting that included progressive/health wellness option instead of flexible work arrangement description.

Each third was asked to consider two food and beverage manufacturing employment postings: one for a laboring position and another for a food scientist (see the tables on the following pages for the text of the six job postings).

The versions of the job ads were identical, except that the “flexible” and “progressive” versions included information not found in the “control” version.

## GENERAL LABOUR POSITION

<p><b>Control Version</b></p>	<p>Position: General Labour for Beverage Manufacturing Facility (Full-Time Position)</p> <p>Job description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Following recipes for mixing/blending beverages</li> <li>• Some lifting (under 10 kg/ 22 pounds)</li> <li>• Transporting ingredients</li> <li>• Sanitizing equipment</li> <li>• Working on the production and packaging line</li> <li>• Quality control</li> <li>• Full time - early shift 6:30am start, Monday to Friday</li> </ul>	<p>Traditional work environment and work hours</p>	<p>Company profile:</p> <p>Earthwise Beverage Company is a well-established family business specializing in liquid supplements, functional beverages and juices in glass bottles.</p>	<p>Required Education, Skills and Qualifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must understand English, other languages an asset</li> <li>• Must be able to follow instructions and pay attention to detail</li> <li>• Physically fit and able to stand for long periods of time</li> <li>• High school or equivalent</li> <li>• Food and beverage industry experience extremely helpful</li> <li>• Must have safety shoes</li> </ul>	<p>Compensation:</p> <p>\$18.75 per hour plus health and dental benefits after 90 days. Room for advancement for right person.</p>
<p><b>‘Flexible’ Version</b></p>	<p>Position: General Labour for Beverage Manufacturing Facility (Full-Time Position)</p> <p>Job description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Following recipes for mixing/blending beverages</li> <li>• Some lifting (under 10 kg/ 22 pounds)</li> <li>• Transporting ingredients</li> <li>• Sanitizing equipment</li> <li>• Working on the production and packaging line</li> <li>• Quality control</li> </ul>	<p>Flexible workplace, with employees making their own schedule each month:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choose to work between 24 to 44 hours per week</li> <li>• Weekend, night and day shift available</li> <li>• Part-time and contract positions also available</li> </ul>	<p>Company profile:</p> <p>Earthwise Beverage Company is a well-established family business specializing in liquid supplements, functional beverages and juices in glass bottles.</p>	<p>Required Education, Skills and Qualifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must understand English, other languages an asset</li> <li>• Must be able to follow instructions and pay attention to detail</li> <li>• Physically fit and able to stand for long periods of time</li> <li>• High school or equivalent</li> <li>• Food and beverage industry experience extremely helpful</li> <li>• Must have safety shoes</li> </ul>	<p>Compensation:</p> <p>\$18.75 per hour plus health and dental benefits after 90 days. Room for advancement for right person</p>
<p><b>‘Progressive’ Version</b></p>	<p>Position: General Labour for Beverage Manufacturing Facility (Full-Time Position)</p> <p>Job description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Following recipes for mixing/blending beverages</li> <li>• Some lifting (under 10 kg/ 22 pounds)</li> <li>• Transporting ingredients</li> <li>• Sanitizing equipment</li> <li>• Working on the production and packaging line</li> <li>• Quality control</li> <li>• Full time - early shift 6:30am start, Monday to Friday</li> </ul>	<p>Progressive workplace:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comfortable and well-equipped lunch and break room</li> <li>• Complementary fruit, snacks and drinks provided</li> <li>• Join one of our in-house sports teams or clubs</li> <li>• Monthly social events organized by employees</li> <li>• Volleyball and basketball courts onsite</li> </ul>	<p>Company profile:</p> <p>Earthwise Beverage Company is a well-established family business specializing in liquid supplements, functional beverages and juices in glass bottles.</p>	<p>Required Education, Skills and Qualifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must understand English, other languages an asset</li> <li>• Must be able to follow instructions and pay attention to detail</li> <li>• Physically fit and able to stand for long periods of time</li> <li>• High school or equivalent</li> <li>• Food and beverage industry experience extremely helpful</li> <li>• Must have safety shoes</li> </ul>	<p>Compensation:</p> <p>\$18.75 per hour plus health and dental benefits after 90 days. Room for advancement for right person.</p>

FOOD SCIENTIST POSITION

<p><b>Control Version</b></p>	<p>Position: Associate R&amp;D Food Scientist (Permanent Position)</p> <p>Job description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with Chief Food Scientist on R&amp;D initiatives related to baked goods and bakery ingredients</li> <li>• Develop prototype products at bakery pilot plant level and then launch on commercial scale in cooperation with R&amp;D Pastry Chef.</li> <li>• Analyze impact of mixing different types of raw ingredients on production process performance.</li> <li>• Responsible and accountable for the entire flour blending development strategy, implementation tactics and follow through.</li> <li>• Work with suppliers to develop innovative solutions and resolve technical problems.</li> </ul>	<p>Traditional work environment and work hours</p>	<p>Company profile: Earthwise are a leading wholesale bakery manufacturer in the foodservice and retail markets.</p>	<p>Required Education, Skills and Qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum bachelor's degree in food science or technology</li> <li>• At least 3 years of relevant R&amp;D experience in the bakery industry.</li> <li>• Strong experience in bakery, flour, raw ingredients, dough properties, enzymes, improvers, hydrocolloids, fibers, etc.</li> <li>• Strong presentation skills an asset.</li> </ul>	<p>Compensation: \$74,000.00 salary plus competitive benefits package.</p>
<p><b>'Flexible' Version</b></p>	<p>Position: Associate R&amp;D Food Scientist (Permanent Position)</p> <p>Job description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with Chief Food Scientist on R&amp;D initiatives related to baked goods and bakery ingredients</li> <li>• Develop prototype products at bakery pilot plant level and then launch on commercial scale in cooperation with R&amp;D Pastry Chef.</li> <li>• Analyze impact of mixing different types of raw ingredients on production process performance.</li> <li>• Responsible and accountable for the entire flour blending development strategy, implementation tactics and follow through.</li> <li>• Work with suppliers to develop innovative solutions and resolve technical problems.</li> </ul>	<p>Flexible workplace, with employees making their own schedule each month:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set your own hours</li> <li>• Work from home, the lab and the office</li> <li>• Work a compressed workweek</li> <li>• Take up to two week of additional unpaid leave per year</li> </ul>	<p>Company profile: Earthwise are a leading wholesale bakery manufacturer in the foodservice and retail markets.</p>	<p>Required Education, Skills and Qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum bachelor's degree in food science or technology</li> <li>• At least 3 years of relevant R&amp;D experience in the bakery industry.</li> <li>• Strong experience in bakery, flour, raw ingredients, dough properties, enzymes, improvers, hydrocolloids, fibers, etc.</li> <li>• Strong presentation skills an asset.</li> </ul>	<p>Compensation: \$74,000.00 salary plus competitive benefits package.</p>
<p><b>'Progressive' Version</b></p>	<p>Position: Associate R&amp;D Food Scientist (Permanent Position)</p> <p>Job description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with Chief Food Scientist on R&amp;D initiatives related to baked goods and bakery ingredients</li> <li>• Develop prototype products at bakery pilot plant level and then launch on commercial scale in cooperation with R&amp;D Pastry Chef.</li> <li>• Analyze impact of mixing different types of raw ingredients on production process performance.</li> <li>• Responsible and accountable for the entire flour blending development strategy, implementation tactics and follow through.</li> <li>• Work with suppliers to develop innovative solutions and resolve technical problems.</li> </ul>	<p>Progressive workplace:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comfortable and well-equipped lunch and break room</li> <li>• Complementary fruit, snacks and drinks provided</li> <li>• Join one of our in-house sports teams or clubs</li> <li>• Monthly social events organized by employees</li> <li>• Volleyball and basketball courts onsite</li> </ul>	<p>Company profile: Earthwise are a leading wholesale bakery manufacturer in the foodservice and retail markets.</p>	<p>Required Education, Skills and Qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum bachelor's degree in food science or technology</li> <li>• At least 3 years of relevant R&amp;D experience in the bakery industry.</li> <li>• Strong experience in bakery, flour, raw ingredients, dough properties, enzymes, improvers, hydrocolloids, fibers, etc.</li> <li>• Strong presentation skills an asset.</li> </ul>	<p>Compensation: \$74,000.00 salary plus competitive benefits package.</p>

Respondents were asked two questions: 1) How likely would you be to share the following job listing with someone who is qualified for this type of work? 2) Thinking about yourself, how interested would you be in that job?

**The results of the experiment are that respondents were more likely to recommend the Flexible and Progressive version of the labourer job ad than the control version. There were no differences, however, with respect to recommending the food scientist job posting.**

Responses are consistent across generations.

	Likely to Recommend to a Friend (4-5 out of 5)		
	Control Version	Flexible Version	Progressive Version
Labourer	60%	66%	67%
Food Scientist	70%	71%	73%

The personal interest ratings for the laborer position are consistent across the three versions. Interest in the position of food scientist, however, is slightly higher in response to the “flexible” and “progressive” versions of the posting.

Once again, responses are consistent across generations.

	Personally Interested (4-5 out of 5)		
	Control Version	Flexible Version	Progressive Version
Labourer	24%	26%	25%
Food Scientist	29%	33%	35%

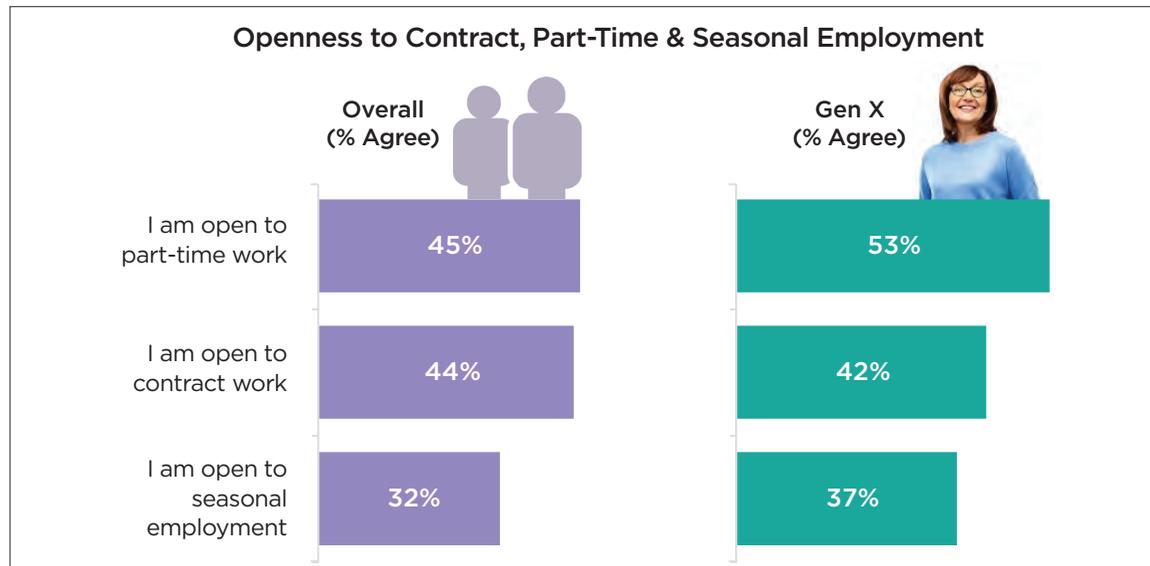
The responses were consistent across all generations when it came to recommending the food scientist job posting.



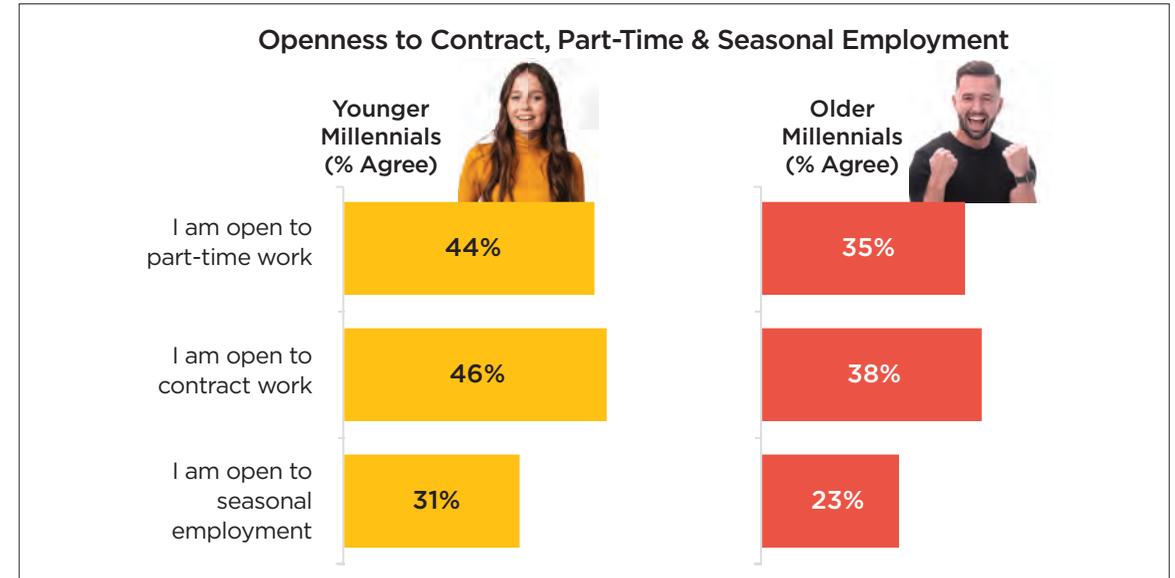
# Openness to Contract, Part-Time & Seasonal Employment

The food and beverage manufacturing sector includes many seasonal operations. More broadly, there is a continued proliferation of contract and part-time across the economy. For many workers, anything less than a full-time permanent job is second best, while for some, the flexibility of so-called “gig” work arrangements is advantageous, if not ideal.

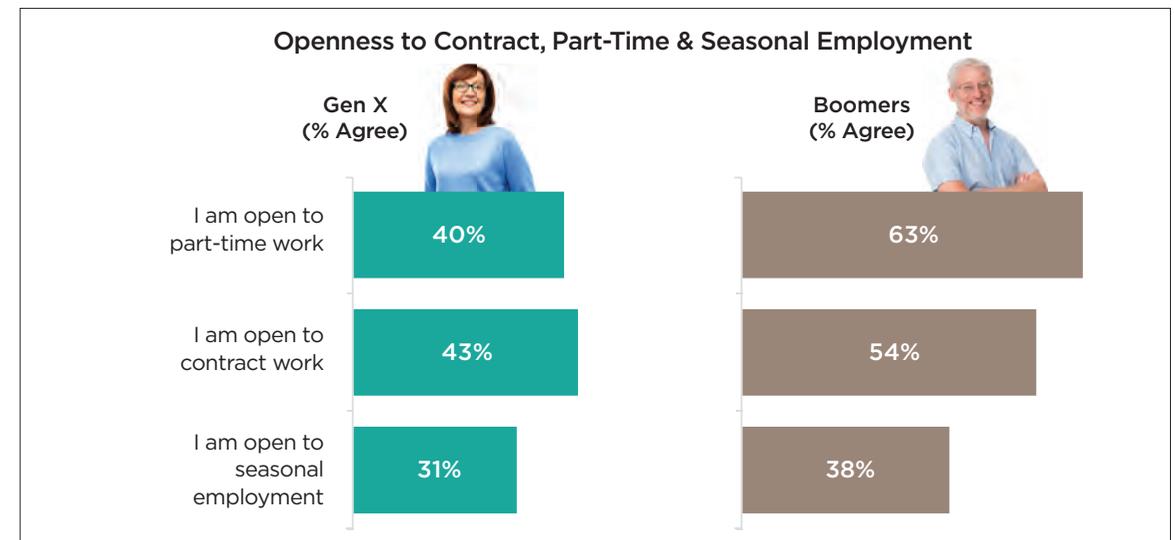
**Overall, the study finds that large segments of the workforce are open to working part-time (45%), contract work (44%), and seasonal employment (32%). The most open to these work arrangements are Boomers, of whom 63% are open to working part-time and 54% would consider contract work.**



Q: Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: Base: All Respondents, n=1,500



Q: Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: Base: All Respondents, n=1,500

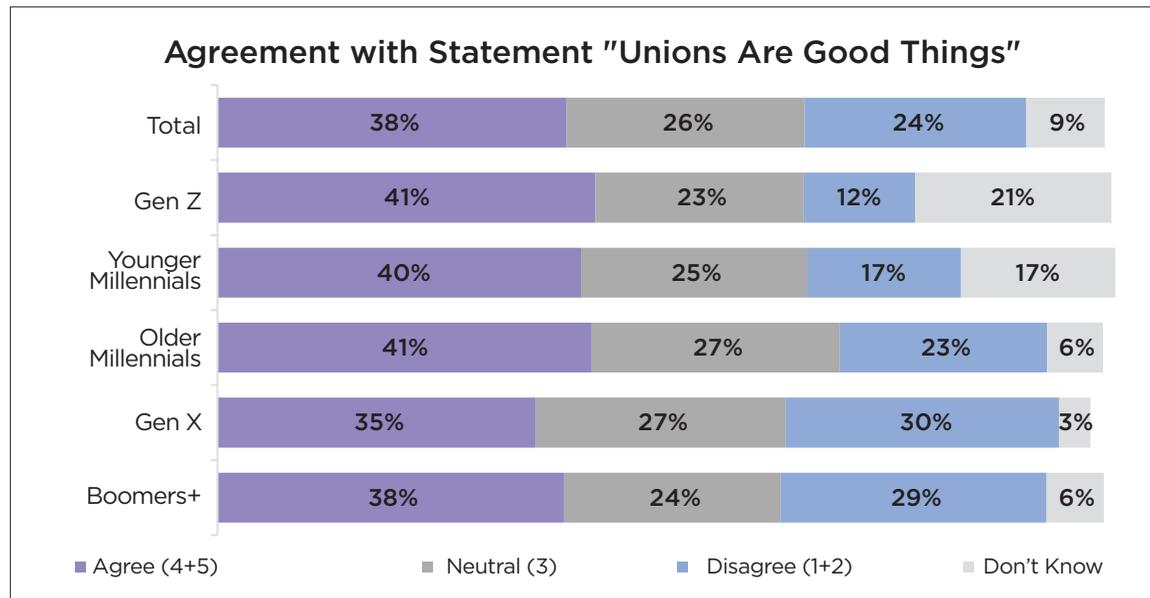


Q: Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: Base: All Respondents, n=1,500

# Perceptions of Unions

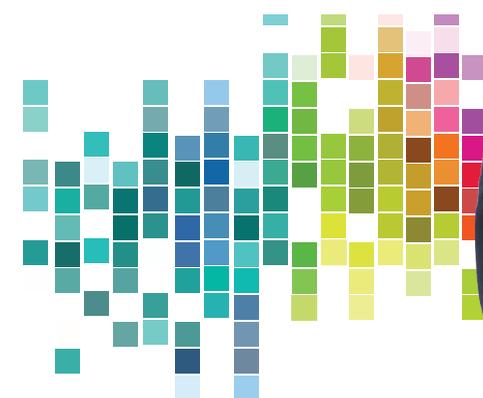
According to Statistics Canada, the rate of unionization fell from 37.6% in 1981 to 28.8% in 2014, with decline steepest in the private sector and among young men.<sup>11</sup> Much has been written about the decline in union membership in North America, including its link to the shrinkage of the manufacturing sector and the concomitant growth of traditionally non-unionized jobs (e.g., in-services and hospitality). In addition, some argue that trade unions are much less relevant in the eyes of younger workers.<sup>12</sup>

**This study shows that while overall perceptions of unions are divided (i.e., 38% agree that “unions are a good thing” and 24% disagree), younger people are actually less likely to have a negative perception of unions:** 29% of Boomers and 30% of Gen-X disagree that unions are a good thing, compared to only 17% of Young Millennials and 12% of Generation Z.



Q. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: Base: All Respondents, n=1,500

Younger people are actually less likely to have a negative perception of unions.



## Detailed Gender Analysis

Women are not as open to working in manufacturing, either generally or specifically with respect to food and beverage. The terminology used to describe the setting (e.g., in a job posting) can also make a difference – the word “plant” (as opposed to “factory” or “workshop”) seems to have particularly negative connotations for women as compared to men.

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**Key Stat:** 26% of women would consider a career in food and beverage manufacturing compared to the labour force average 35%.

This study suggests that among the items tested women and men have similar career goals and motivation, but women are more likely to place importance on managing their work-life balance and on making a positive impact on society. Similarly, they are more likely than men to place importance on working for an organization that shares their values.

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**Key Stat:** 79% of women compared to the labour force average of 72% say that making a positive impact on society is an important care goal.

While both women and men are equally concerned about most work-related issues tested in this study, such as making enough money to support themselves

and their family, women express a significantly greater degree of concern about getting burned-out and balancing work and a healthy lifestyle.

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**Key Stat:** 61% of women compared to 49% of men worry about being overworked/getting burned-out.

This study suggests women are less likely than men to ascribe to the generational stereotypes that “younger workers are unrealistic about advancement” and “older workers only care about money”.

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**Key Stat:** 44% of women agree that younger workers have unrealistic expectations about advancement compared to 53% of men.

The relative appeal of the various potential compensation, work flexibility and health/wellness options examined in the survey is similar for women and men, with a few notable exceptions. Consistent with their higher level of worry about burnout and balancing work and a healthy lifestyle, a workplace that provides fresh foods, healthy drinks and snacks and/or one that offers an excellent mental health program is significantly more appealing to women. In contrast, having sports teams to join has significantly less appeal to them.

This study suggests that women are more likely to place importance on managing their work-life balance and on making a positive impact on society.

It is also worth noting that this study suggests women are more open to trade unions, with only 17% disagreeing that “unions are a good thing” compared to 31% of men.

**Key Stat:** 74% of women compared to 59% of men rate an excellent mental health program as appealing.

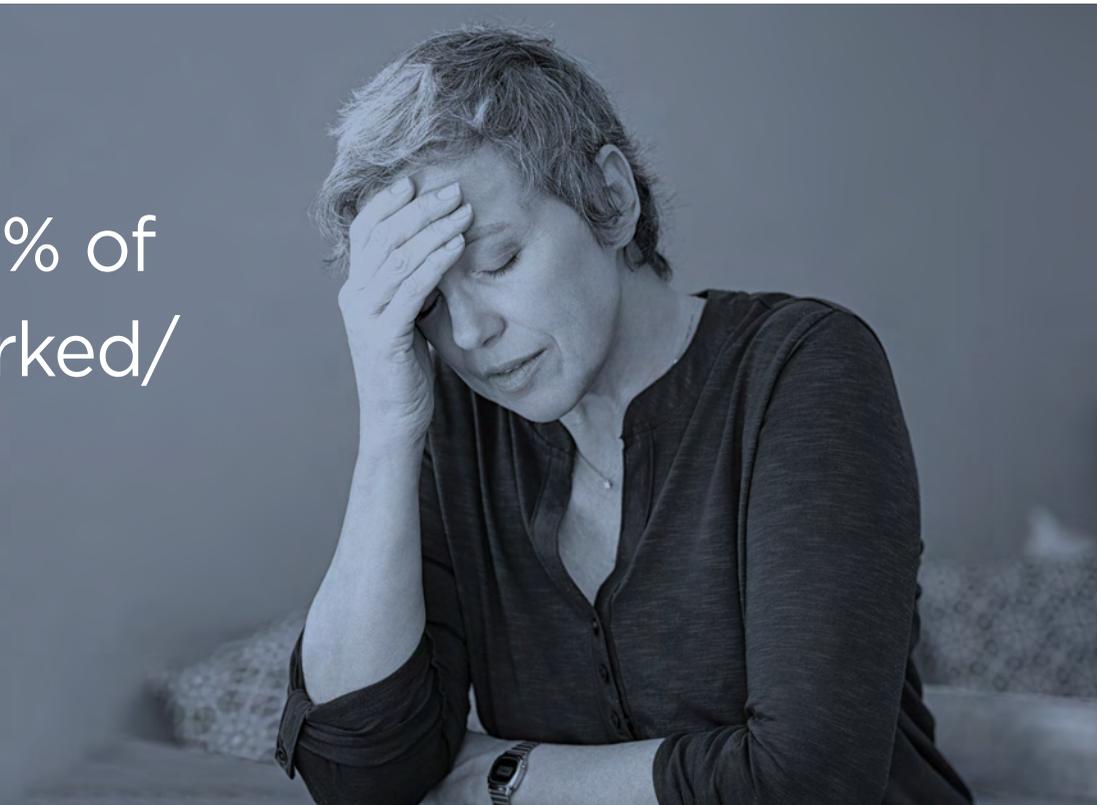
Perhaps the most interesting gender difference in the study is found in the job description experiment, with respect to the labourer position. The position becomes significantly more attractive (i.e., would recommend to a friend they believed was qualified) among women when it includes flexible work arrangements (i.e., the flexible version of the job posting) or progressive/health and wellness programs (i.e., the progressive version). In contrast, men are unmoved.

Likely to Recommend Labourer Position (4-5 out of 5)			
	Control Version	Flexible Version	Progressive Version
Women	57%	67%	68%
Men	64%	64%	64%

Notwithstanding the above results, the labourer job is significantly more personally interesting to men (29% say they are interested in it) than to women (20%).

The appeal of the food scientist position did not vary overall or by gender across the control and two treatment versions. Like the labourer job, the food scientist position is also more personally interesting to men (38%) than women (27%).

61% of women compared to 49% of men worry about being overworked/ getting burned-out.



# Regional Analysis: Quebec Compared to the Rest of Canada

**There are relatively few regional differences in the data, with the exception of Quebec.**

Quebecers are notably different when it comes to career goals, aspirations and concerns, and with respect to their lack of openness to working in food and beverage manufacturing. It is important to note, however, that the Quebec part of our sample has a somewhat larger proportion of Generation Z in it (14% compared to 9% in the rest of Canada sample).

Quebecers' career goals, aspirations and concerns tend to be more oriented to values (e.g., wanting to work for an organization that shares theirs), achieving work-life balance and the importance of the social aspects of work.

**Key stat:** 85% of Quebecers say that work should be fun most of the time, compared to only 54% of those living in other parts of Canada.

The survey suggests that Quebecers are much less open to working in food and beverage manufacturing than other Canadians. It is important to contextualize this result by noting that Quebecers are also less interested in working in the other eight sectors examined as part of the same question.

Quebecers are more likely than other Canadians to view the terms “plant” (*usine de production*) and “factory” (*usine the fabrication*) as having a negative connotation. Not so with the term “workshop” (*atelier*), however.

Quebecers are also less interested in working in “smart manufacturing”.

**Key stat:** Only 15% of Quebec would consider working in food and beverage manufacturing compared to 35% of those living in other provinces.

Compared to other Canadians, Quebecers have a less positive view of the trades, while the opinion of unions is consistent across the country.

**Key stat:** Most Canadians outside of Quebec agree that the trades pay well (69%), compared to about half of Quebecers (48%).

Quebecers and other Canadians have similar views and preferences regarding the appeal of compensation, work flexibility and health/wellness options. The study does reveal, however, that Quebecers find personal performance bonuses less appealing.

They are also less open to part-time and seasonal work, but more open to having a supervisor who is younger than they are or from an older generation.

**Key Stat:** Only 31% of Quebecers, compared to 50% of Canadians in other provinces, are open to part-time work.

Quebecers are notably different when it comes to career goals, aspirations and concerns, and their lack of openness to working in food and beverage manufacturing.

# Chapter 3: Conclusions and Recommendations

As noted in the introduction of this report, the aim of this study is to help organizations attract and retain workers. This report endeavors to provide practical advice without appearing presumptuous or unrealistic. The food and beverage manufacturing sector is incredibly diverse, and it is out of respect for this diversity that employers, as well as other stakeholders, are encouraged to reflect on the considerations and questions outlined below.

## Conclusions

There is a great commonality in how different generations of workers view the world of work. Financial security and work-life balance are key goals for almost everyone. Workers of all ages want to continue to learn throughout their lives. Performance bonuses and health/dental coverage are attractive to everyone. Wages and benefits form only part of the attraction, however -- workers want to be proud of where they work, and as part of that, want to understand key aspects of the corporate "big picture" and context. Everyone wishes to work for someone who is fair, open and transparent. Most workers, young and old would like to remain with an organization for as long as possible.

Older workers have more modest expectations about what they hope to derive from work and have higher levels of job satisfaction. They are more self-sufficient, and flexible (e.g., more open to part-time work). They require less feedback and are fine with learning new things on their own. They value honesty above all. They strive for work-life balance but are not as attracted by corporate health and wellness policies and programs.

Youngest workers and labour market entrants look at the world of work through a wider lens and have higher expectations about what a job should provide them, beyond a paycheck. They want to make friends, have fun at work, and hope to have a supervisor who is friendly. Like older workers, they want to be proud of where they work and what they do, but they are also keen to see how their work/organization contributes to the greater good. A sense of belonging is important to them. They want more feedback about how they are doing and need more structure. They are very attracted to health and wellness policies and programs.

As Generation Z ages into Younger Millennials, advancement becomes more important. They hope to see a path forward and are particularly keen to learn new things.

# Critical Questions for Organizations

Based on the results of this study, here are the critical questions an organization should ask when attracting and retaining younger people and women:

What is our approach to employee health and wellness? Do employees know we have such policies/programs? Can we make improvements (e.g., a good supply of free healthy food and drink in a nice lunch/relaxation area) and then tell employees about them?

What do our job postings and other outreach/recruitment efforts say about our organization? Are we only communicating about duties, qualifications/experience and remuneration? What can we say about values, contributions to community/country, the work environment, advancement possibilities, and our health and wellness policies/programs? Is it possible to avoid words such as “plant” and “factory”?

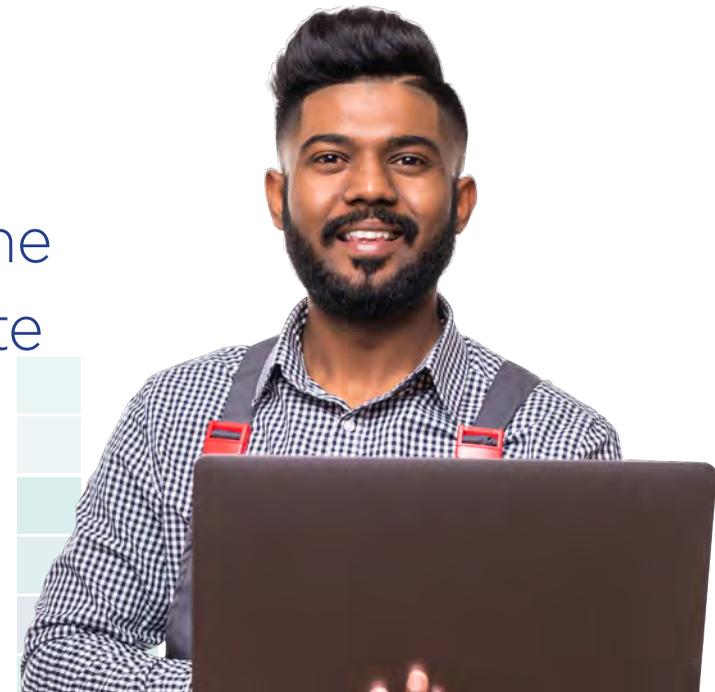


When attracting and retaining younger people and women, Is it possible to avoid words such as “plant” and “factory”?

# Recommendations

- Review onboarding for new employees under the same lens as the critical questions from the previous page.
- Consider how easy it is for employees to make friends and social connections at work. Determine if opportunities differ across the organization (e.g., office versus production staff). Identify activities and events (including after work hours) that can be developed and implemented with employees (e.g., clubs, teams, charity events linked to CRS initiatives, parties).
- Consider having younger employees report to younger supervisors. This will reinforce the idea that it is possible to advance and could lead to tighter bonding.
- Consider providing information on the “big picture” issues (e.g., corporate plans, goals, success, challenges, performance) but in a manner that isn't forced or burdensome, for example through a modular approach (e.g., provide an overview along with options for those who want to know more).
- Consider having multiple ways for employees to learn. For younger employees, remember that they are used to school and having a lot of feedback and support.
- Consider discussing career path/advancement with employees, especially Young Millennials, along with the learning and training they require to advance.
- Consider tailoring feedback frequency to individual needs as part of a career development plan.
- Examine how the organization projects its values and principles to a range of audiences, from junior employees to customers, along with suppliers, the communities you work in, and governments. For example, are junior employees aware of your CRS efforts? Are they participating in them? Similarly, do employees have a sense of how the organization contributes to feeding Canadians/the world, or how it contributes to the communities in which it operates?
- Finally, consider ways of allowing employees to input into decisions and planning (e.g., CRS initiatives, scheduling).

Consider providing information on the “big picture” issues such as corporate plans, goals, success, challenges, and performance.



## Endnotes:

- 1 <https://fpsc-ctac.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/LMI-GENERAL-Brochure-03-11-20.pdf>
- 2 FPSC, Atlantic Canadian Fish and Seafood LMI Final Report, 2019.
- 3 <https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/news/hr-magazine/pages/070815-chief-culture-officers.aspx>
- 4 <https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/multigenerational-workplace.htm>
- 5 Costanza, D.P., Badger, J.M., Fraser, R.L. *et al.* Generational Differences in Work-Related Attitudes: A Meta-analysis. *J Bus Psychol* **27**, 375–394 (2012). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-012-9259-4> quoted in <https://hbr.org/2019/08/generational-differences-at-work-are-small-thinking-they-re-big-affects-our-behavior>
- 6 It is important to note that the Quebec part of our sample, has a somewhat larger proportion of Generation Z in it (14% compared to 9% in the rest of Canada sample).
- 7 <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/81-004-x/def/4153361-eng.htm>
- 8 <https://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2016/10/06/1-changes-in-the-american-workplace/>
- 9 Krishnan PhD, Dr. L R K. (2013). An Empirical Examination of Performance Management on Employee Retention. IJRCM, ISSN No 0976-2183. Volume No. 4. Page Nos. 149-157.
- 10 Estimates vary based on several factors, including tenure, unionization and position. [https://www.payscale.com/research/CA/Industry=Automotive\\_Manufacturing/Salary](https://www.payscale.com/research/CA/Industry=Automotive_Manufacturing/Salary) <https://neuvoo.ca/salary/?job=Automotive%20Industry>
- 11 <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-630-x/11-630-x2015005-eng.htm>
- 12 <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/trade-unions-fewer-young-people-joining-frances-ogrady-tuc-a8382696.html>

NOTE: The Appendices for this publication are available in electronic format upon request. Please contact **Food Processing Skills Canada (FPSC)** by email or phone.

# Notes







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