

Application Guide

HOW TO LEAD GEN Z WELL WITH DR. TIM ELMORE



BOTTOM LINE:

Gen Z is entering the workforce with different expectations, priorities, and ways of operating. With the right leadership, they'll not only thrive in your organization but also help shape a better future for it.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- I. Generation Z has entered the workforce and is challenging leaders in new ways but, at the same time, making organizations better.
- II. Who is Gen Z?
 - A. Those born roughly between 1997 and 2012.
 - B. They represent the newest professionals joining work teams, as well as college, high school, and middle school students.
 - C. They are tech-native, screen-raised, and shaped by economic uncertainty and social upheaval.
 - D. Gen Z is not here to maintain the system—they're here to question and change it. *Today's leaders must become mentors to Gen Z's operators.*
- III. **The Peter Pan Paradox:** Age of authority is going down, and age of maturity is going up.
 - A. Gen Z brings influence and tech insight that older generations don't have, but they often lack emotional intelligence or interpersonal resilience. They may be highly capable but need help maturing socially and professionally.
 - B. Leaders must **listen and coach more** than previous generations required if you want to keep and lead Gen Z employees.
- IV. Leaders often assume Gen Z is lazy, disloyal, fragile, and not committed. Many Gen Zers are actually eager to work, but only in places where they feel **seen, heard, and valued**.
- V. How to have effective leadership of Gen Z without patronizing them:
 - A. Be **authentic**. Don't try to be a cool friend or something you're not—just be their leader.
 - B. Be **relational** and build connections by listening—authority often comes from building a bridge to the person you're leading.
 - C. Let them try something out and stumble and fall.
 - D. Be a **guide** not a gatekeeper.
- VI. A practical tool for offering feedback that builds trust and prevents defensiveness: **ALEG**.
 - A. **Ask** – Start with asking something like, “What were you thinking when you made that decision?” instead of telling them what they did wrong.
 1. Asking makes them feel valued.
 - B. **Listen** – It does little good to ask anything if we're not willing to do the work of active listening.
 1. Listening makes them feel heard.
 - C. **Empathize** – Name their emotions to build a bridge to them.
 1. Empathizing makes them feel understood.
 - D. **Guide** – Only offer direction or correction after asking, listening, and empathizing.
- VII. Job hopping is a big tendency with Gen Z.
 - A. They're not afraid to leave if the organization doesn't align with their values or growth goals.

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B. The average Gen Zer actually wants to stay in their job. But they only stay if certain criteria are met. They prioritize:

1. A culture of belonging.
2. Personal and professional development and growth.
3. Work they believe in.

VII. Use the **PERKS** acronym to understand and retain Gen Z talent:

- A. **Preferences:** Discover what their “nice to haves” in a job include. They aren’t deal breakers, but this lets them know you care about what they are thinking about.
- B. **Expectations:** Discover what they assume the job includes to ensure you are aligned from the start.
- C. **Requirements:** Discover what their nonnegotiables are.
- D. **Keys:** Discover what motivates them personally beyond the job—what do they love, what are they passionate about?
- E. **Salary:** Discussing compensation upfront avoids many complications later.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION OR TEAM DISCUSSION

1. What stereotypes might you be holding about Gen Z that this episode challenges?
2. Which part of the ALEG model do you find most difficult to practice when giving feedback?
3. How does your team or organization currently support a “culture of belonging”?
4. What changes are you personally willing to make to better lead the next generation?

RESOURCES MENTIONED

[The Future Begins with Z](#) by Tim Elmore

[Habitudes](#) by Tim Elmore

[The Eight Paradoxes of Great Leadership](#) by Tim Elmore

NEXT EPISODE

If you liked this episode, a great next listen would be: [Generational Diversity in the Workplace—From the Vault](#)

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