

TEACHING GEN Z

EVERYTHING WE WISH SCHOOLS KNEW
ABOUT OUR GENERATION AND EDUCATION



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About This Paper

Last month, the Star Tribune reported that despite years of work to boost test scores in Minnesota's schools, statewide reading scores remained flat for the third year in a row, and math scores declined. This is concerning to me as the parent of children attending Minnesota's schools – but as the CEO of a company that has been studying workforce and demographic shifts for 16 years, it comes as no surprise.

The failure of our education system has repeatedly made headlines. In international research, U.S. students continue to lag behind, often behind many other advanced industrial nations.

Education has, in fact, been cited as a failing concept since 1983. President Ronald Reagan's National Commission on Excellence in Education released the report *A Nation at Risk*, which took the U.S. school system to task for failing to prepare students for an increasingly global economy.

Thirty-five years later, there's no denying we're living in an ever-changing world economically, digitally, and demographically, or that education remains a failing concept putting our country at risk. Consider these stats:


- 82 percent of the nation's public schools fail to meet standards in reading and math – New York Times

- Proficiency in basic content has improved minimally since the 1970s - Center for Education Reform
- 38 percent of 8th graders are proficient in reading; 33 percent in math - National Assessment of Educational Progress
- 59 percent of students finish college – American Council on Education
- 48 percent of 18-24 year-olds are not attending college in 2018 - Brookings
- 34 percent of executives believe recent college graduates have the skills to advance - Association of American Colleges & Universities

All these stats prove the need for education to evolve, and further indicate the important role education plays in workforce development.

Kevin Kruse researches and frequently writes about the topic of employee engagement. He published an article in early 2017, bringing to light the lack of workforce training among young people:

“The educational system in the United States is clearly outdated. It's a model predicated on compliance and recall of facts and figures. Not only is there little context to how any of this matters in the present day (*Why do we need to memorize who Octavian was again?*), but even what we memorize isn't sticking.”



Michael Toth, CEO of Learning Sciences International, has also sounded the alarm on education's role, or lack thereof, in workforce development. He authored an article voicing his concerns about teachers relying on teacher-centered instruction and lecture-recitation.

"The data collected at Learning Sciences International suggests the majority of U.S. classrooms from primary to high school, even in advanced AP classes, are not supporting the level of cognitive complexity and student autonomy necessary to prepare students for the new economy workforce."

The challenges facing educators and education systems run broad and deep. It's not something that can be easily or quickly resolved, but that doesn't mean we should ignore the problem, be intimidated by it, or simply hope it will somehow be resolved.

I've been inspired by Ohio Society of CPAs, which launched a high school membership and shifted its organizational focus on to workforce development. And the Loxhatchee, Florida elementary school where students aren't told what to do, but determine for themselves what needs to be accomplished to meet the standards.

At the same time, I've been discouraged by the research which revealed that one industry was forced to retrain most of its new hires – all college-educated – on even the most basic of professional skills. And as a parent, I'm well aware of the fact that my children are adept at memorizing trigonometry formulas and World War II timelines but have spent precious little time at school engaged in career exploration or skill development.

Navigating a disruptive world and faced with an alarming rate of retirements, workforce and leadership development are more important than ever. And yet, how we educate hasn't changed much since the 1800s and has been notably failing since 1983.

I dedicated a chapter to workforce development and education in my book, *Talent Generation: How Visionary Organizations Are Redefining Work and Achieving Greater Success* (2017), exploring a few of the ways in which this challenge could be resolved.

But for this project, I turned to the experts – two high school students working on the XYZ University team – who conducted all of the writing and research themselves. This paper is written entirely from their vantage point as students and leaders in various student organizations.

Despite all the questions and options, debates, and frustrations, one thing is certain: what worked in the past isn't working anymore -- and neither is education. We must find a better way. Here's what these two Gen Z students recommend.



Sarah Sladek, CEO
XYZ University





Generation Z in the Classroom

FORWARD

The success of a society's educational system is one of the most striking correlations to the overall success of that society. Schools play a unique and important role in the development of people who will one day turn the world on its head. In fact, this seismic shift is already occurring.

This is forcing us to confront the harsh reality that our educational system may not be keeping up with the needs of today's generations. A school's job is to equip its students with the knowledge and experiences necessary to thrive in the real world. The world is changing, and if our generation and ones to come are to be successful, the school system must adapt to the current landscape and perhaps stretch the boundaries of what school was previously thought to be.

For the past several years, the world has been focused on understanding and adapting to the largest generation in history—Generation Y. Born 1981-1996 and nicknamed the Millennial, this generation has opened up an important dialogue about generational differences and challenged all industries to adapt and evolve in order to meet the needs of a rapidly modernizing world.

But now, the world is breathing a collective breath of fresh air as they turn their attention

to **Generation Z** (1996-2009)—the oldest of whom will turn 23 this year—to gain a better understanding of what will define and drive this next generation of students, workers, and consumers.

Generation Z is especially important to consider as we engage in a dialogue about the modernization of educational systems. This demographic, ages 9-23, currently makes up the majority of students in primary and secondary school as well as traditional college-aged students on campuses all over the world. Simply due to our strength in numbers, it is vital for educators to understand the ways in which we prefer to learn and engage with our studies.

XYZ University has spent the last year researching Gen Z and their findings have been nothing short of fascinating. As a high school junior and senior, respectively, we find ourselves in a unique position to offer industry-leading insights by using our authentic Generation Z perspective and XYZ University's top-notch research on our generation.

In this paper, we will discuss how Generation Z has changed education and how educational institutions can establish themselves as future-focused and relevant in an era marked by change, actively adapting policies and mindsets to offer a more effective

and engaging educational experience that will, in turn, prepare its students for the real world.

It's an important mission. The goal of education is to prepare students with the tools, resources, and mindset needed to achieve their dreams and contribute to their community. And this paper is meant to act as a guide for proactive educators looking to understand Generation Z.

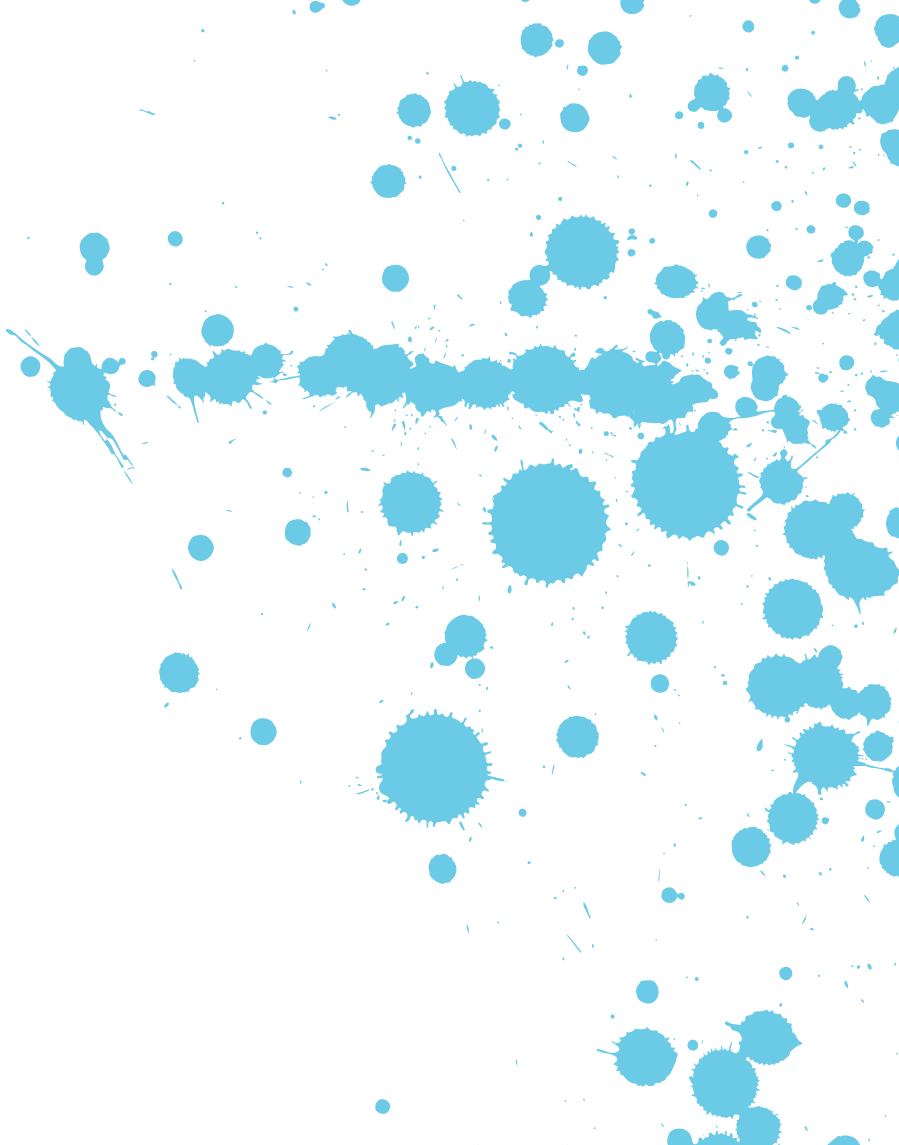
Sincerely,

Josh Miller

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Anna Sladek

Gen Z Writer and Researcher
XYZ University



Josh Miller

Director of Gen Z Studies



Anna Sladek

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AN EVOLUTION IS OCCURRING

Within the next twenty years, we are expected to add nearly two billion people to our world population. This leads to a multitude of questions that need to be answered simply to guarantee the continuity of the human race. How are they going to feed everyone? How are they going to handle their continuously



changing environment?

In order to answer these questions, it is essential that we train Generation Z to be creative and innovative. This means that we must teach students to adapt, change, and discover new methods of science, agriculture, economics, and architecture. But how?

One of the most pressing issues facing our economy today is the labor shortage. Companies are struggling to build a pipeline with qualified talent in order to fill open positions created by the mass retirement of Baby Boomers.

This makes the role of education more important than ever. Society needs to reevaluate the effectiveness of school in its current model because workforce-ready students who are able to critically think and solve real-world problems are desperately

needed. In fact, one of the main critiques of the current educational system is that teachers often find themselves in situations where they have no choice but to focus on preparing for an upcoming standardized exam rather than engaging students with content that is relevant for the real world.

WHO IS GEN Z?

A key thing to understand about generational research is that generations are marked by events, not dates. That's why the U.S. Department of Education recognizes Gen Z's official birth years as 1996 to 2009. The reason 1996 was chosen as the start date is because Generation Z is defined as those who do not remember 9/11. If you were born in 1996 or later, you simply cannot process the significance of what happened on that day and what the world was like before.

If 9/11 is history to you, then you are a member of Generation Z.

Like all other generations, Generation Z has been shaped by the circumstances they were born into such as terrorism, school shootings and the Great Recession. These dark events have had profound effects on the behavioral traits of this generation, but they have also provided this generation with the inspiration to change the world.

Generation Z is 57 million strong. They are the most diverse generation in American history and also the last generation where Caucasian people will make up the majority of the population within the generation. Think of the impact those traits have on Generation Z's worldview.

Characteristics of Gen Z

GEN Z IS COMPETITIVE

Generation Z is possibly the most competitive generation in history. This can be attributed to three key things: academic and athletic pressures, parental influences, and the economic situation they were born into.

ACADEMIC AND ATHLETIC PRESSURES

Members of Gen Z carry the mindset that they are not necessarily at school to learn, but rather to get good grades. This is the generation that has been thrown into perhaps the most competitive educational environment in history. Grading curves and standardized test scores, among other things, have led this generation to care very deeply about their academic success.

In fact, Gen Z holds academic success in such high esteem that losing sleep is glorified.

“Not getting enough sleep is glorified in my school,” said high school student Margaret Zheng. “This is due to the perception that a good student is one that studies long and late to prepare for tests.”

Gen Z is a very data-driven generation, a great example is online grading portals where they can see their grades up to the minute.



Think of the need for instant gratification that grading portals have developed in members of Gen Z. In the past, students had to wait to see a test grade. Now, students will get frustrated if they can't see their test scores within a few hours. And not only can students see

their grades—their parents can too.

Not only are members of Gen Z put in a competitive environment inside the classroom, but they also find themselves immersed in sports and academic competitions. Gen Z is



the first generation where youth sports, even younger than high school, have become ingrained into the fabric of their culture. This is the generation of elite youth sports teams and fantasy football. They also find themselves competing in robotics, debate, and other activities that test mental attributes.

It is important for educators to understand that most Generation Z students are very self-motivated to win. And while the definition of winning varies between generations, Gen Z views winning in a much more traditional sense. It means getting good grades, getting into a good college, and finding a good job that pays well.

In a previous XYZ University study, it was discovered that 2 out of every 3 Gen Zs would rather have a job that offers financial stability over a job that they enjoy. This statistic is the opposite of Millennials, who are generally much more concerned with finding a job they enjoy and is self-fulfilling.

However, there is also a downside to this amount of pressure placed on Gen Z. Studies show that Gen Z is twice as likely as any other generation to be diagnosed with anxiety or depression. This is concerning data, and many believe that schools can be doing more to help.

“I do think that high school is academically

preparing students for college, but socially and mentally, I am not so sure. The enormous stress that today’s high school student faces from social media and the inability to unplug and disconnect is defining and dangerous,” said Keri Bahar, Founder of KSB College Consulting.

According to a study by Pew Charitable Trusts, “Retirement Security Across

Generations: Are Americans Prepared for Their Golden Years?,” Gen Xers lost nearly half (45 percent) of their wealth—about \$33,000 on average—during the Great Recession of 2008.

The economic hardship faced by Gen X will undoubtedly have an

effect on how Gen Z views finances. In fact, because they have been exposed earlier to the ‘real world’ than any other generation due to more resources at their disposal—such as Twitter and 24 hour news networks—they expect schools to offer curriculum on more practical skills.

“Schools need to focus on teaching students key skills for life success, including soft skills like critical thinking and fundamental skills like paying bills, managing a bank account, and maintaining healthy habits,” said Allison Tu, High School Student and CEO of Non-Profit *STEMYLou* based in Louisville, KY.

Every generation is shaped by the behavioral characteristics of their parents. Since most of Gen Z’s parents fall within the Gen X demographic, their trademarks of skepticism and individuality have been passed down to Gen Z.



CHANNELING COMPETITIVENESS IN THE CLASSROOM

Even though older Gen Zs witnessed the worst economic meltdown since the Great Depression, they are not naive to the fact that there is a lot of money to be made in today's economy. Shows like the business-themed reality show "Shark Tank" have inspired young people. Business and entrepreneurship is extremely attractive to Gen Z with an XYZ University survey showing 58 percent of Zs wanting to own a business one day.

A great way to engage Gen Z in the classroom is to utilize 'Shark-tank' style competitions that allow students to come up with ideas

and products. Another great way to capture Gen Z's attention is to engage in simulation stock-market games. Their desire for financial success combined with real-world application will definitely lead to higher levels of student engagement.

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INDIVIDUAL VS. COLLABORATION

Generally, Millennials prefer collaborative work environments, challenging conventional workplace cultures everywhere. In fact, many offices have completely eliminated cubicles and offices to promote a more collaborative environment. Millennials have been seeking companies that boast boss-free or team-managed workplaces.

In contrast, Zs have been raised with an individualistic and competitive nature. Many carry the mindset that someone else's success is their own failure and vice versa. This means they're going to see the trend shift away from collaborative workplaces towards a more individualistic and competitive environment. In school, Z's have a tough time

trusting peers during group projects and would much prefer a chance to show what they know individually unless they feel they are less competent and would prefer to use their peers' knowledge to their advantage.



Gen Z is very enamored by the stock market. Only 2 percent of Gen Z looks at the stock market in a negative way, while 48 percent look at it in a positive way. The remaining 50 percent is indifferent, attributed to by the fact that 3 out of 4 Gen Zs say that the education system has not provided them with adequate financial skills. But the desire to learn is there, as 73 percent of respondents say they are interested in learning more about the stock market. - FLAME

MOTIVATED BY A GRADE

Gen Z's always know the score. A common critique of the current school system is that students are not being taught to critically think and become problem solvers; instead, students are checking items off of lists or filling out worksheets.

This is why it's more important than ever for educators to offer open-ended projects that emphasize critical thinking skills to be used in life after school. It's this type of work that evaluates thinking and separates good students from great students, not blindly filling out worksheets that can prove what a student has memorized.

“Gen Zs are often overly pressured to perform in a strict academic, note-memorization sense. In the current system, those who excelled in these memory games leave the bubble of school and enter the real world with no idea how to function,” said Tu.

GEN Z'S VALUES AND BELIEFS INFLUENCE THEIR EDUCATIONAL PATHS AND PERSPECTIVES

“College, in my opinion, is for helping a student learn to communicate, write, and think analytically in a desired field, while also giving them the real life skills to start to navigate the adult world,” said Bahar.

Students select a college major based on potential job opportunities, compensation, and amount of schooling. For example, business degrees—such as management, economics and finance—are very popular among Gen Zs

because it is deemed a relatively safe major and is applicable to many different fields. It is a flexible degree and tends to pay well.

Degrees in STEM are also very popular. Being raised by cynical Gen Xers and watching Millennials struggle to find jobs with degrees in the humanities have led Gen Z to be attracted to the stability and opportunity of a degree in business or STEM.

In the past, people went to college to figure out what they wanted to do with their life. Now, Gen Zs enter college already having a good idea of what they want to do for a living, changing the value proposition of college entirely.

While degrees in law or medicine are very attractive, many Gen Zs simply don't have the financial luxury of being able to go to school instead of work. Many qualified students may end up opting out of medical or law school to pursue other interests that may have a higher starting salary.

HANDS-ON LEARNING

New research has led us to question what the role of a teacher should be in today's school system. In the past, the role of a teacher was simply to provide the resources, and it was the student's responsibility to memorize and understand the material out of a lecture or textbook.

Today, Gen Z students can access this information and these resources online. And since Gen Z is so independent and resourceful, the role of a teacher—especially in advanced classroom settings—should be to guide and advise students as they learn and discover new information on their own. For example, Maple Grove Senior High School in Maple Grove, MN, offers a class in partnership with a local hospital that allows students to volunteer and learn about healthcare in a real-world setting.

XYZ University discovered that 55 percent of Gen Zs prefer to learn a new skill by doing

it. Proactive schools and colleges have now started to embrace experiential education and allow Gen Zs to learn in a non-traditional



Schools shouldn't focus on teaching students **WHAT** to think but rather **HOW** to think.

setting. Internships and science labs allow Gen Zs to get their feet wet in a specific occupation and really understand what a job in a specific field is like. Students are actively looking for opportunities outside the classroom and those opportunities may even determine a college selection.

Gen Z has had the road to perceived success mapped out for them their entire lives. College has been deemed to be an essential part of 'success,' with an XYZ University study showing 84 percent of Gen Zs planning to attend college.

Experiential Learning

“THE SILENT EPIDEMIC”

“The Silent Epidemic,” a study done by the Gates Foundation, discovered that almost one third of public high school students fail to graduate with their class. And according to the study, the number one reason students gave for dropping out was that their classes simply weren’t interesting.

Four out of five (81 percent) said, “there should be more opportunities for real-world learning and some in the focus groups called for more experiential learning. Students need to see the connection between school and getting a good job to be truly engaged.”

According to Rob Franek, Editor in Chief at the Princeton Review, there are three main benefits of experiential learning for students.

1. Discover What You Love

Experiential learning is a great way to find out what a student likes and what they don’t. For example, a program shadowing a doctor for the day at a local hospital may convince a prospective student to enter medical school. It can even help students discover the type of work environments they prefer. These types of activities are also chances to discover new interests and to develop talents and strengths outside of their comfort zone.

2. Take a Risk

Since hands-on learning experiences require students to “take initiative, make decisions and be accountable for results,” students may also “experience success, failure, adventure, risk-taking and uncertainty,” according to the Association of Experiential Education. Students are at a stage in life where it’s okay to experiment with different career paths and schools should use potential failure as a learning opportunity.

3. Learn How to Talk about Your Skills

“The final component of an experiential learning experience is reflection,” states Franek. “What specifically did you learn through the experience? How could you apply what you’ve learned to other settings? Landing a great job after college means articulating your strengths and demonstrating their value to a potential employer.”

For example, upon reflection it will become clear that a role as managing editor at the school newspaper has strengthened a student’s ability to manage a team and communicate clearly.

Five life lessons schools can only teach in
real-world settings:

1. Making money takes a lot of work.
 2. Learning is never done.
 3. In life, there is no report card.
 4. Professionalism is everything.
 5. Your network is your net-worth.
-



Alternative Routes

GEN Z ALTERNATIVE ROUTES

Since Gen Zs are financially cautious and attempt to avoid student debt, they are willing to look at options other than traditional schooling.

In fact, traditional schooling has alienated students who don't necessarily thrive in a traditional school environment. Schools are just starting to realize those students can still offer tremendous value to society, possibly even more than their peers who do just fine in the classroom.

"Instead of the usual "one-size fits all" school, districts should develop options for students, including a curriculum that connects what they are learning in the classroom with real life experiences and with work, smaller learning communities with more individualized instruction, and alternative schools that offer specialized programs to students at-



risk of dropping out," according to "The Silent Epidemic," a study done by the Gates Foundation to raise awareness of the high school dropout epidemic.

Many proactive schools are holding technical school college fairs and inviting branches of the military to come to the school and show students there are other ways to become

contributing members to society. In fact, Gen Zs are starting to realize they can have a rewarding career in ways that don't involve going to college. And since Gen Zs are so concerned with their financial well-being, many are drawn to the skilled-trades simply due to the

fact they can offer high starting compensation.

SUPPLYING THE TALENT PIPELINE

Interest in the skilled trades is great news for the economy since the talent shortage is perhaps the most pressing issue currently



being faced. It's important to utilize recruitment strategies to identify young workers early. And early no longer means college but rather high school, and even middle school to some extent. The opportunity to do this is more prevalent than ever due to the growth of STEM programs and the trend of Gen Zs being farther along their career path than previous generations at this stage in their young lives. XYZ University has found only 3 percent of Gen Zs say they haven't given any thought to their career choice.

THE ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY IN SCHOOLS

A major barrier keeping educational institutions from engaging Gen Z is a false belief that they are successfully engaging Gen Z just because they have provided technology for students.

It's important to modernize learning and technology can be great when used effectively, but it needs to be understood that Gen Z can do a lot more than stare at a computer screen. In fact, a 2,200-person study conducted by Oregon Student Voice discovered that

technology resources were only the fifth most important issue to students out of all the issues currently being considered by K-12 policymakers in the state.

GEN Z MISCONCEPTIONS

Before Gen Z was decided on as the official name for this generation, there were a few other potential names as well: Selfie Generation and iGen, just to name two.

A common misconception about Generation Z is that they are only about technology. When Gen Zs were asked, they found those remarks—along with the previously proposed names for Gen Z—quite condescending. To prove it, XYZ University found that face-to-face is the preferred communication method of Gen Z. While it is common to see a group of Gen Zs on their phones playing games or

snapchatting, it's important to recognize that type of technology usage is for the purpose of entertainment—not communication. Social media is important and has affected who

Five things the skilled trades can do to engage Gen Z.

- Change the perception and portray it as a worthy career choice.
- Emphasize the 'high-paying' salaries available as Zs seek financial security over job enjoyment.
- Offer mentorships and apprenticeships.
- Introduce and recruit early in primary schooling as students explore career choices.
- Highlight the entrepreneurial aspects of the trades.



they are as a generation, but when they communicate about something that matters to them, they seek authenticity and honesty; two things best achieved in-person.

Essentially, successfully engaging with Gen Z requires a balance between traditional interactions (face-to-face) and online social engagement. Both are important, and Gen Z needs to feel satisfied in both ways in order to become fully engaged.

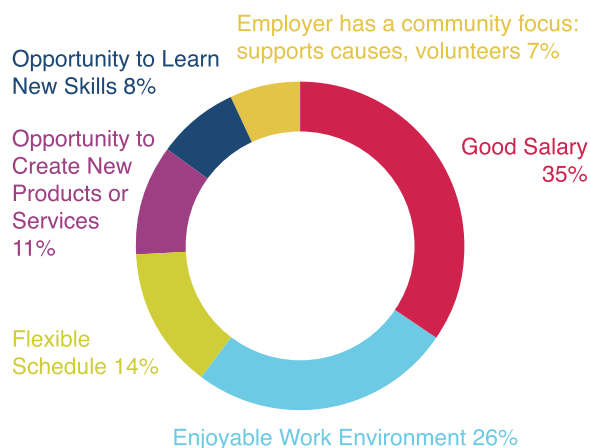
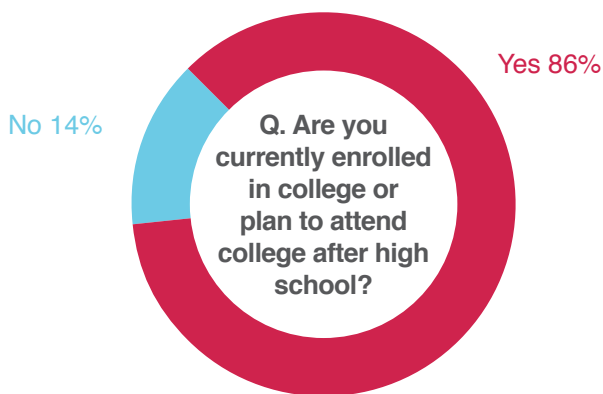
“University leaders who understand the connection between digital engagement and student experience will cause dynamic changes within their organizations,” said Eric Stoller, Higher Education strategic communications consultant. “Student-focused efforts, led via savvy social media practitioners, will win the day.”

GEN Z WANTS A VOICE IN THEIR EDUCATION

“Students are the main stakeholder in their own education and deserve a say in the decisions that impact their lives. Businesses don’t create products or services without consulting consumers, so why should education be any different? Only students truly understand the problems they live through every day, and our voices need to be listened to in order to maximize the success of our school system,” said Tu.

“If I were Secretary of Education for a day, the first thing I’d do is develop a student voice program focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion. These are some of the most pressing issues in education, but at the highest levels of education policy, students are rarely listened to.” Including Gen Z students in the decision-making process on issues that affect them will be sure to drive

86% of Gen Zs say they plan on going to college. Salary is the most important aspect of a job to Gen Z.



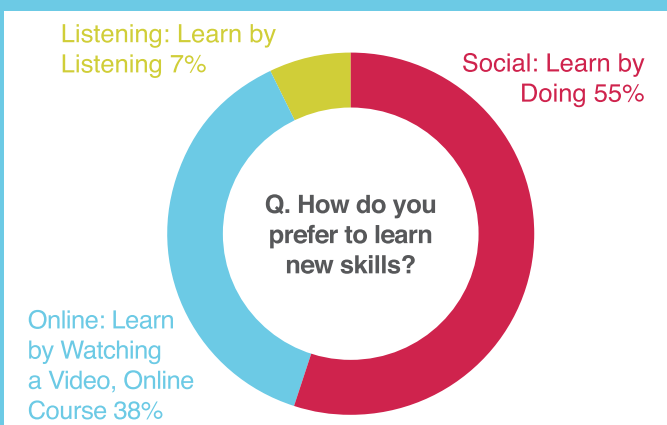
higher levels of engagement and interest.

Jean Mutton, who has 30 years' experience in higher education management, states that educators need to listen to Gen Z. "Work together as co-producers with students and figure out what is the best way to reach out to and teach them. The best practice schools can use is to let students have a say in the design and delivery of their course and broader student experience."

Lancaster University is a great example of an institution that has attempted to utilize a student-centered approach with its creation of the iLancaster App. With more than 79,000 users, iLancaster attempts to engage

students from application to enrollment and throughout their time at the University. To build the app, Lancaster attempted to use the student journey to offer a more user-centric experience, as students have been integral to the design and development of the app.

The iLancaster initiative is a step in the right direction of schools modernizing their traditional norms.



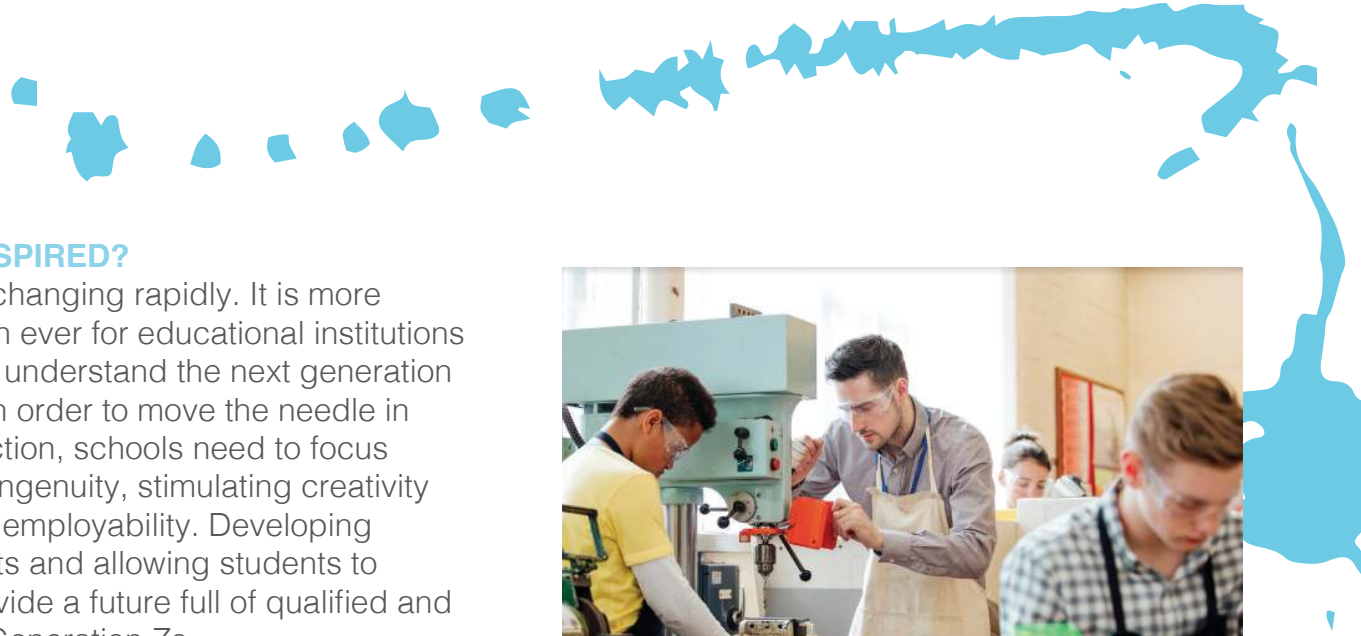
Since Gen Z craves face-to-face interactions, the education world needs to reevaluate how to best put the 'human' aspect back into schools. For example, classroom discussions and debates are a great way to encourage Gen Z to work on public speaking skills and allow them the opportunity to think critically.

It also means they'd like at least some live instruction from teachers. YouTube is great and should be used as a complement to in-class instruction, particularly since studies have shown Gen Z watches YouTube more than TV, but it's important that teachers are also actively answering questions and making sure students understand the content.



Roadmap to student engagement

1. Create clear avenues of communication between administrators, teachers, and students.
 2. Educate students about how schools and districts make decisions.
 3. Provide students with an authentic seat at the table in school and district decision making through vehicles such as student government, stakeholder surveys, etc.
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ARE YOU INSPIRED?

Education is changing rapidly. It is more important than ever for educational institutions of all types to understand the next generation of students. In order to move the needle in the right direction, schools need to focus on releasing ingenuity, stimulating creativity and boosting employability. Developing those key traits and allowing students to thrive will provide a future full of qualified and empowered Generation Zs.

Gen Z is ready to learn. What will you teach us?



Stay Connected





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INTERVIEWEES

Keri Bahar
Allison Tu
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Jean Mutton

ABOUT XYZ UNIVERSITY

Struggling to engage younger employees? Challenged with membership decline? Wondering how you're going to appeal to the next generation of consumers? We're here to help! XYZ University's speaking, training, research, and strategy services will give your organization the guidance it needs to succeed in this era of disruption. Our clients know what (and who) is coming next. As a result, they successfully engage in human capital, stay ahead of the curve, and build relevant, growing organizations.

Authors & Researchers



Sarah Sladek CEO, XYZ UNIVERSITY

Sarah Sladek is a best-selling author, speaker, and CEO. Since 2002, her life's work has been dedicated to helping organizations engage future generations of members and talent. As a leading researcher of generational insights, she has authored five books and several research papers. Her latest book, *Talent Generation: How Visionary Organizations are Redefining Work and Achieving Greater Success* (2017), identifies the core strategies essential to engaging today's talent. As the founder and CEO of XYZ University, Sarah has grown a future-focused company comprised of researchers, presenters, and strategists helping organizations worldwide engage younger generations of members and talent.



Josh Miller
DIRECTOR OF GEN Z STUDIES, XYZ UNIVERSITY

Josh Miller, 16, is a passionate and informed advocate for his generation—Gen Z. He started speaking on national stages at the age of 13 and his list of accolades include being an award-winning entrepreneur, television show co-anchor, and thought-leader who has been mentored by several notable business leaders. Miller is an integral part of the XYZ University team, educating clients through keynote presentations and workshops which draw on his experiences as both a high school student and consultant to Fortune 500 companies.



Anna Sladek
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Anna Sladek is a high school senior with plans to pursue a degree in political science in college. She brings her love for research to XYZ University, writing blogs and research papers on the topic of Generation Z. As a member of the high school debate team, Anna never shies away from controversial or challenging topics. She also has a passion for service projects and has participated in five Habitat for Humanity projects.

