

The changing expectations of the Gen Z workforce



The global pandemic and the resulting shift in working behaviours has meant that people are re-assessing what's important to them in the context of the workplace. So much so, that many employees are now looking to find new opportunities and explore greener pastures. Known as the 'Great Resignation', employees are changing jobs at an unprecedented rate – young people in particular.

74% of 18-24 year olds are hoping to be in new work within 12 months¹.

So, what is driving this vast departure, and more importantly, what can you do to attract and retain the younger workforce?





Tip 1:

Maximise the work/life balance

While the trend is a global one, research has found that **67% of Gen Z respondents in Ireland place particular emphasis on greater work/life balance in their employment choice, compared to the global average of 50%².**

So, to appeal to this new generation of workers, look to create a more accommodating work schedule with benefits such as flexi-time and hybrid working.

In our latest commissioned research³, **63% of Irish workers expect greater flexibility in the hours they work each day/week**, to accommodate a better work/life balance.

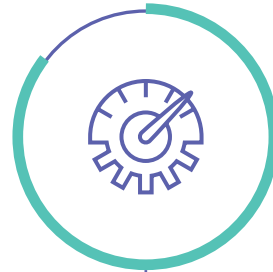
But, this number jumps to **87% for respondents aged 18-24** – which shows just how important it is to this group.





Tip 2:

Give them work worth doing



80% of Irish Gen Z-ers said they would still want to work even if they had enough money to live as comfortably as they'd like for the rest of their lives.³

So, despite any misplaced myths about this being the distracted, snowflake generation, Generation Z clearly has a drive and determination that could become the foundation of your successful business.



With this in mind, put them to work. Give them clear targets, provide personal development projects and offer up something they can really get their teeth stuck into.

Tip 3:

Top up your tech



Generation Z does not know a world before the internet – they simply didn't experience it.

When you hear the phrase 'digital natives', this is the age group of people that are being talked about. During the pandemic, **82% of this generation spent more time on TikTok and Instagram, in addition to entertainment sought through YouTube (93%), Netflix (91%), and online gaming (40%)⁴.**

So, if you want your business to appeal to Gen Z, don't even think about using paper and pens. **85% of 18-24 year olds said they would be enticed back to the office for access to technology and facilities** that wouldn't be available at home. With this in mind, make sure you have a wealth of digital tools, mobile devices, and accessible cloud storage if you want to engage them – and empower them to do their best work.



Tip 4:

Consider mental health

As a generation that has grown up in the world of 24-hour news channels and 'always-on' connectivity, it's unsurprising to hear that these individuals can easily suffer with stress and anxiety.



41% of Irish Gen Z-ers said their employers had done a poor job supporting their mental health during the pandemic⁵.



So, as an employer, you have a responsibility to support these employees and to do all you can to maintain their mental health.

Whether this is open discussions in the workplace, access to an employee assistance programme (EAP), supportive reading materials, or a combination of all of these, it's vital that you fulfil your duties to Gen Z workers.



Tip 5:

Make health and wellbeing a priority



Through our research, we found that 51% of Irish employees said having access to health & wellbeing supports (such as gym facilities and yoga classes) would entice them back to the office environment.

However, among Gen Z respondents, this number jumped to 83% - that's a 62% increase above the average.

So, it's clear if your business is to appeal to 18-24 year olds, then you better have a focus on health and fitness. This can include subsidised gym memberships, an on-site gym (if you have space), or even just offer work flexibility so they have time to workout during their day.

Encouraging the use of tools like MyLife motivates employees to get active and embrace positive lifestyle changes – and rewards them for doing so!

Audrey Bleach, Engagement Manager at Cisco Galway shared their experience:

“We’ve found that when recruiting graduates we’re being asked more and more about the health & wellbeing supports we offer. It’s a clear priority for Generation Z, and a reason why they want to work with us”.



Make health & wellbeing a priority for your younger workforce

Our research found that while 67% of Irish Employees said 'health & wellbeing supports should form a greater part of the culture where I work', this number increased to **89% for 18-24 year olds**. So, let us help you.

At Irish Life Health, we are more than simply a health insurance provider – we are your partner in health and wellbeing. We help organisations just like yours to transform their aspirations for employee wellbeing programmes into a sustainable asset that demonstrates the strategic value of employee wellbeing. We provide a tailored solution designed around supporting the health and wellbeing of your people and your unique business environment.

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Sources:

Metro¹ | ²AB magazine | ³Irish Life Health, Red C Research Omnibus, October 2021. | ⁴Maynooth University | ⁵The Irish Times | ⁶Irish Examiner