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The 5 Generations

- Traditionalists
- Baby Boomers
- Generation X
- Millennials
- Generation Z

Five Generations @ Work:
Transform Your Leaders, Teams, & Culture

FIND YOUR FUTURE

Five Workplace Forces

1. Nature of the WORLD has changed.
2. Nature of the WORK has changed.
3. Nature of the WORKPLACE has changed.
4. Nature of the WORKFORCE has changed.
5. Nature of CHOICE has changed.

change

FIND YOUR FUTURE

The 3 R's of Workforce Strategy

Recruitment

Reputation

Retention


FIND YOUR FUTURE

Changing Demands of the Workforce

PAST → **FUTURE**

- My Paycheck
- My Satisfaction
- My Boss
- My Annual Review
- My Weakness
- My Job

- My Purpose
- My Development
- My Coach
- My Ongoing Conversations
- My Strengths
- My Life



©Graham & Porter, "It's The Manager" 2020, Gallup Press, NY, NY.

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Top Ten Workforce Trends for 2026

10. Fractional Work
9. Career Path/Internal Mobility
8. Workplace Flexibility
7. Workplace Civility
6. Cultural Atrophy
5. Belonging/Networking
4. 5 Generations @ Work
3. Skills, Skills, Skills
2. AI – Use & Policy
1. Human Connections

Top Workforce Trends for Leaders in 2026, TTI'S Blog, 2/21/2025, SHRM, HR Daily, 2/21/2025, HR Dive, Carolyn Christ, 2/2/2025

Skills, Skills, Skills

Top Hard Skills

1. Use of software tools
2. Data analysis
3. Cybersecurity awareness
4. Project management
5. Technical writing & documentation
6. Quality assurance & testing
7. Automation & workflow
8. Product management
9. Data visualization
10. AI tools


Top Soft Skills

1. Communication
2. Professionalism
3. Time management
4. Accountability
5. Resilience
6. Problem solving
7. Critical thinking
8. Attention to detail
9. Collaboration
10. Adaptability


A Boomer...
My Husband.

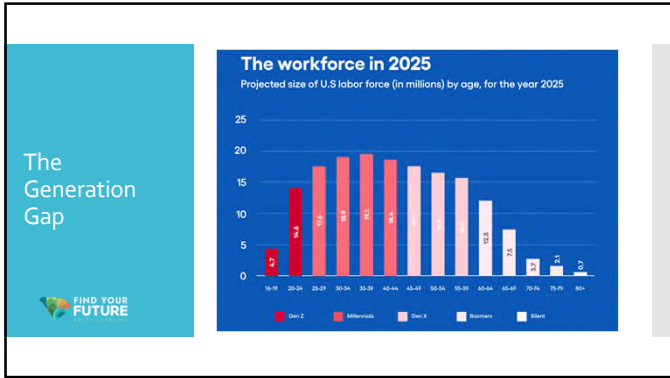


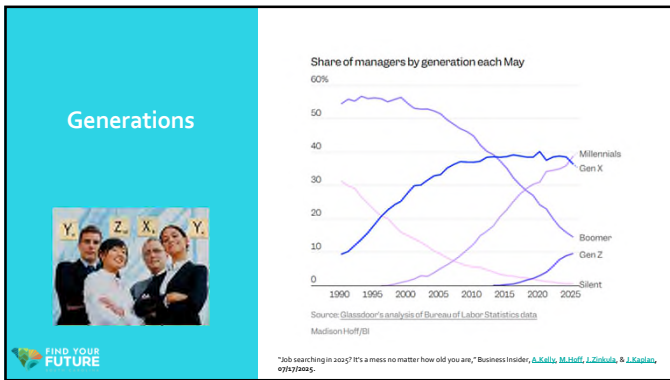
A Gen Xer...
Me.



A Gen Zer...
My Daughter.







Traditionalists

- Born 1925 to 1945
- 49 million people
- Grew up with many rules and pressure to conform
- Increased prosperity over their lifetime; however, they remember the Depression
- "Work First!"
- Children should be seen and not heard
- Expected lifetime career with one employer
- Prefer communication in writing
- Desire to leave a lasting legacy

#shutterstock 61426510

Traditionalists in the Workplace



- Polite
- Respectful
- Reserved
- Obedient
- Conformers



Baby Boomers



- Born 1946 to 1964
- 79 million
- Grew up with fewer rules and a more nurturing environment
- Lived in generally prosperous times, but experienced layoffs
- Women entered workforce in record numbers
- "Live to Work!"
- Spend "quality time" with children
- Excelling in their career is important
- Prefer telephone or face-to-face communication
- Desire challenge and opportunity



Boomers in the Workplace



- Uncomfortable with conflict
- Consensus building leadership style
- Formal
- Follow protocol
- Social
- Politically sensitive
- Idealistic



Generation X



- Born 1965 to 1981
- 49 million
- Grew up as latchkey or day care children
- Turbulent economic times – downturn in 80s, upswing in 90s
- “Work to Live!”
- Friends with their child, want to spend quantity time
- Expect their career to keep moving forward or they will leave
- Prefer electronic communications
- Change from job security to career security



Gen Xers in the Workplace



- Fast-paced
- Independent
- Confident
- Value personal time
- Challenge the status quo
- Loyal to staff leader



Millennials



- Born 1982 to 1996
- 75 million
- Attended day care, very involved “helicopter” parents
- Prosperity has increased over their lifetime
- “Live, then Work!”
- Achievement oriented
- Prefer instant or text messaging
- Want to build parallel careers – experts in multitasking



Millennials in the Workplace



- Task oriented
- Want options & choices
- Expect attention
- Expect feedback
- Multitask through multimedia
- Think "digital"
- Work toward weekend or closing time
- They are impatient
- Want to be led



Generation Z



- Born 1997 to present
- 61 million
- Always been wired
- They have seen porn
- Racially diverse and multiracial
- Independent
- Justice-minded
- Open to faith
- Private



Generation Z in the Workplace



- Understand workplace is changing due to technology
- Motivated by financial incentives and career advancement
- Entering job market with less job experience
- Expect social media availability at work
- Expect transparency, self-reliant, freedom, and flexibility
- Multitask through multimedia
- Optimistic about the future
- Work, but let them have their phones
- They worry about having the right soft skills
- Start the job search early and expect fast response



15 Mind Blowing Stats About Generation Z, Giulio Abramovich, CMO by Adobe

GEN Z Insights

- ❖ **Basic Communication Skills** – Listening, Asking Questions, Eye Contact
- ❖ **Time Management** – Used to freedom and flexibility and have to adjust to more formal schedules.
- ❖ **Storytelling** - Tell them stories that are relatable and make you human.
- ❖ **Collaboration** – Want to be on a team, but are very used to technology and being individual.
- ❖ **Hierarchy** – More comfortable with horizontal or flat organization structures.
- ❖ **Training** – Etiquette, Communication, Technical, Time Management, Conflict Resolution
- ❖ **Variety of Tasks** – “I get bored easily.” “I learn by doing. It has to be in my hands.”
- ❖ **Networking** – Looking for someone to “guide” them. A mentor/buddy.
- ❖ **Certificates and Credentials** – See these as Recognition of accomplishment, but also part of the career pathway you have to design.

FIND YOUR FUTURE

GEN Z Insights

What do you wished you had learned in high school/college that would have better prepared you to move into the workforce?

- They had given us more time to focus on career path options. (They crammed it all into one year.)
- Be honest about what jobs are available.
- Less structure in how we communicate. I was not prepared to offer an opinion.
- More people skills...how to communicate better.
- I wish they had taught me words of comfort for people in their time of need.
- How to deal with office politics...different opinions.
- How to know what to say to people.
- Soft skills on paper does not compare to soft skills in real life.
- How to manage conflicts.

SC Coordinating Council for Workforce Development (CCWD) Gen Z Panel Discussion, 6/24/2024

FIND YOUR FUTURE

Generation Z

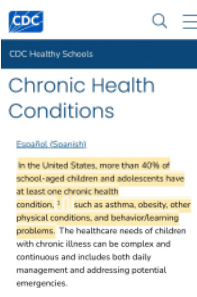
Depressive symptoms in US 8th, 10th and 12th graders

Year	I can't do anything right	My life is not useful	I do not enjoy life
2011	~25%	~25%	~25%
2015	~28%	~28%	~28%
2020	~40%	~35%	~30%
2023	49.5%	44.2%	43.9%

Source: Monitoring the Future; analyzed by Jean Twenge. Note: 2020 data was collected in February and early March, before schools shut down during the COVID-19 pandemic.

FIND YOUR FUTURE

Generation Z




CDC Healthy Schools

Chronic Health Conditions

[Español \(Spanish\)](#)

In the United States, more than 40% of school-aged children and adolescents have at least one chronic health condition, such as asthma, obesity, other physical conditions, and behavior/learning problems. The healthcare needs of children with chronic illness can be complex and continuous and includes both daily management and addressing potential emergencies.



Workplace Challenges

- Poor communication
- Decreased productivity, quality, & innovation
- Misunderstood attitudes, relationships & working environments
- Less engaged volunteers & coworkers
- Lack of motivation, initiative, and team work






FIND YOUR FUTURE SOUTH CAROLINA

Research Spotlight



South Carolina Workforce Pulse: Perceptions, Priorities, and Policy Implications

June 2025

Survey Conducted by:



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Goals

- Better understand public perceptions, priorities, and barriers to related employment
- Identify actionable insights that can guide outreach, training, and engagement strategies for high-demand sectors

Sectors

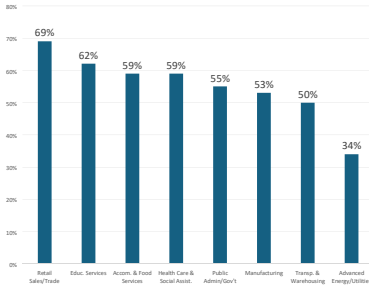


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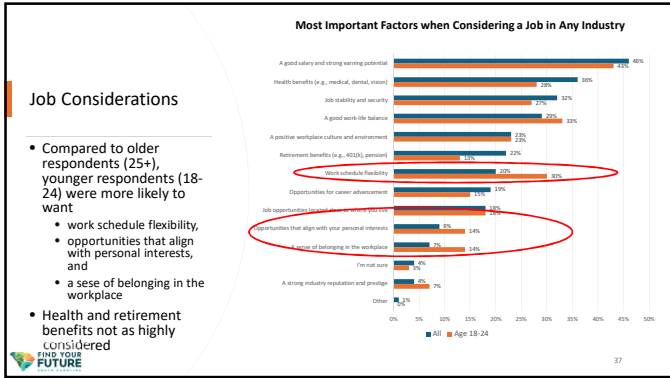
Industry Familiarity

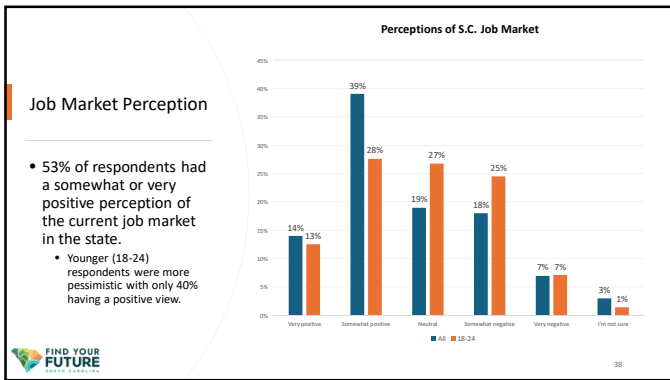
- At least half of the respondents had at least "somewhat" familiarity with the high-demand industries except for Advanced Energy/Utilities.
- Retail Sales/Trade had the highest degree of familiarity.

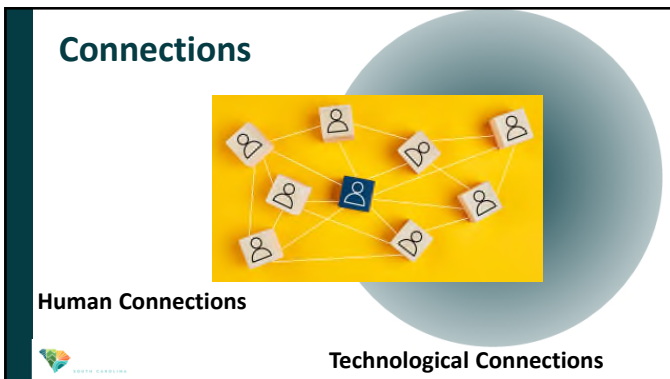
Pct. Of Respondents Very, Fairly, or Somewhat Familiar with Industry Sector



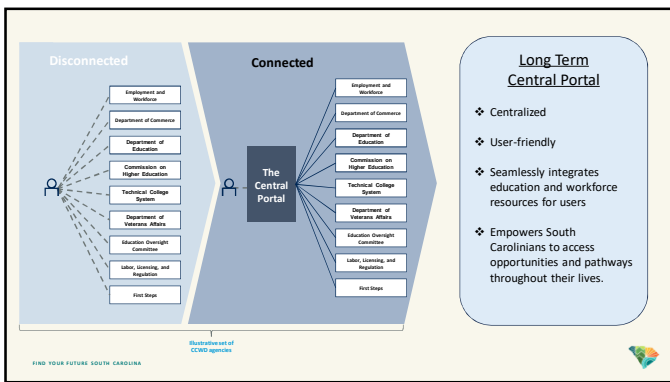
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Find Your Future SC



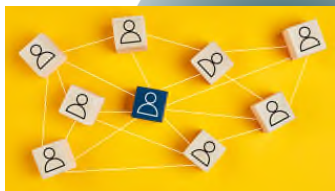
WHAT IS IT?

- From a collective of education stakeholders, employers, organizations, and government entities, the campaign represents education and workforce development in the state and the resources needed for individuals to thrive.
- FindYourFuture.sc.gov is a central hub that hosts information from over 30+ agencies and organizations.
- Connect with education and workforce resources.
- Our **Future Finder Tool** uses your experiences and education to create a customized roadmap for your educational and job journey, helping you discover and connect with the opportunities and resources that fit your needs.

Have suggestions? Help shape future website changes by filling out our survey at FindYourFuture.sc.gov. This is a growing site, so check back for new updates as more content is added!





Connections



Human Connections

Technological Connections



Talent Pipeline

What Can You Do...NOW?

INTERNSHIPS
High School & College




Work Based Learning/Internships

- High School
- College
- Paid
- Networking
- Skills Acquisition
 - Hard Skills
 - Soft Skills



<https://www.strada.org/reports/internships-and-beyond>



Benefits of Internships

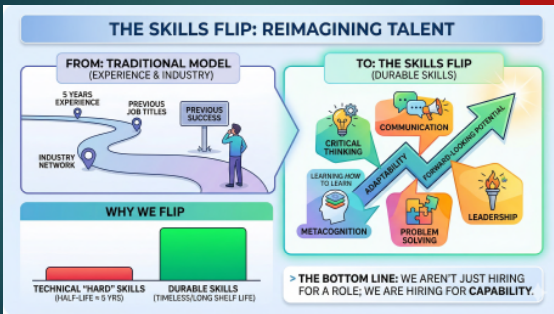


- Recruitment of Future Talent
- Candidate Readiness for Full Time Work
- Retention of Employees
- Workload & Capacity
- Leadership Development
- Innovation & Adaptability
- Employee Brand Value
- Community & Industry Development

<https://www.strada.org/reports/Maximizing the Value of Internships: Advice From Employers>



The Skills Flip



The "No Education or Experience" Myth

Education tells us what they knew yesterday.

Durable Skills tell us what they'll be able to learn tomorrow.



• **Durable (Soft) Skills:**

Empathy, Adaptability, Problem Solving

• **Proof of Work:** *Show your body of work*

• **AI Collaboration:** *If you use AI to be more efficient, that IS a job skill.*



Skills, Skills, Skills



Role	The "Before" (Experience-Based)	The "After" (Durable Skill-Based)
Sales / BD	"Must have 5+ years of experience in SaaS medical software sales and an established book of business."	"Proven ability to distill complex technical info into persuasive narratives and build trust with high-level stakeholders."
Project Mgr	"Required: 3 years of experience using Jira in a construction or engineering environment."	"Systems Thinking: Demonstrated ability to manage multi-phase workflows and adapt timelines in fast-changing environments."
Customer Success	"Background in retail management or hospitality required to handle high-volume foot traffic."	"Emotional Intelligence: Excellence in de-escalating high-stress situations and problem-solving under pressure."

Final Thoughts


- Remember that all generations want:
- To be treated fairly
 - Work that provides personal satisfaction
 - Employers who understand personal lives are important
 - Work that is valued by employers and customers
 - A clear sense of purpose from employers



Final Thoughts
Generation Z

"If they expect me to quit, I will."

- Gen Z Panelist, SC Workforce Development Symposium, 09/12/2024


Action Planning

- ✓ Start or expand your Internship Program?
- ✓ Do a "Skills Flip" to reimagine your recruitment and retention strategy.
- ✓ Read the SC Perceptions Report.
- ✓ Check out FindYourFuture.SC.Gov.
- ✓ Local Action – Local Impact!




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Thank you!

LEARN MORE AT FindYourFuture.SC.GOV
