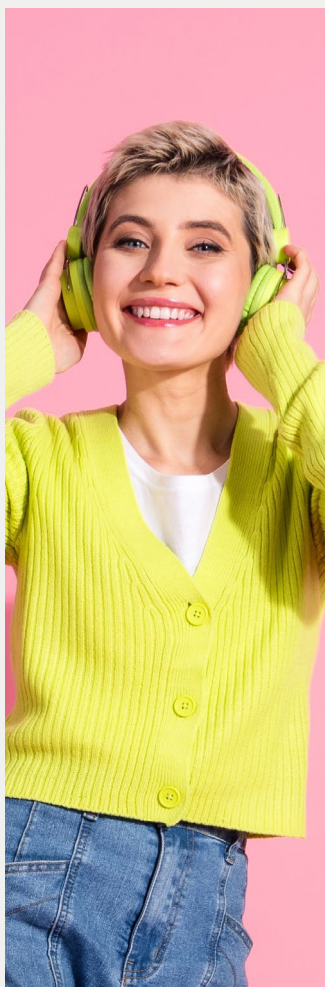


THE STATE OF **GEN Z**[®]

2025

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



CGK'S NEW NATIONAL STUDY REVEALS SURPRISING INSIGHTS INTO GEN Z AS EMPLOYEES AND WORKFORCE TRENDSETTERS

It is with great excitement that we share the executive summary of the 2025 State of Gen Z® National Research Study.

This annual study is led by The Center for Generational Kinetics—the pioneers in separating myth from truth about generations to help leaders solve challenges, inform strategy, and drive growth. This year's exciting discoveries continue the 8-year track record of unexpected annual findings that have made the national study series the go-to resource for executives, media outlets, and leaders around the world.

Below are ten highlighted findings from the study—with many more packed into the full-length white paper. These ten findings are a preview of the groundbreaking Gen Z research uncovered about trust, workplace culture, workforce expectations, mental health, pay and benefits, and so much more. All study participants were members of Gen Z and employed full-time or part-time.



Download your copy of the complete 36-page white paper with all the findings and discoveries for free [by clicking here](#).

Want to schedule a media interview or request information about CGK's speakers? Reach out. We're here to help you unlock the potential of Gen Z and every generation.

Solving generational challenges and bridging generations is our passion. We've led more than 150 studies around the world and would love to be a resource for you.

Contact CGK's Friendly Team:

+1 (512) 259-6877

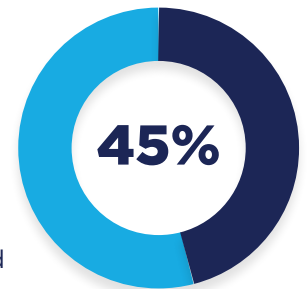
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TEN HIGHLIGHTED FINDINGS FROM THE 2025 STATE OF GEN Z[®]

1 NEARLY HALF OF GEN Z EMPLOYEES (45%) WOULD WILLINGLY TAKE A 10% PAY CUT TO WORK FOR A BOSS THEY COMPLETELY TRUST!

Trust is emerging as one of the most influential factors in how Gen Z employees view their job, their manager, and their future with an organization. Trust shapes their engagement, effort, and likelihood to stay in a job. When trust is present, compensation becomes just one part of the retention equation—not the whole story. Leaders who place a priority on trust, integrity, and ethics are best positioned to retain Gen Z employee talent and build stronger employee loyalty.



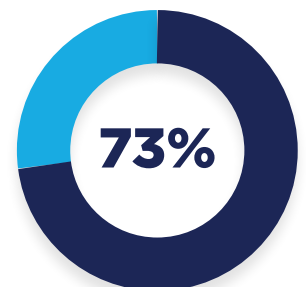
2 48% OF GEN Z WORKERS ARE ACTIVELY LOOKING FOR A NEW OR DIFFERENT JOB RIGHT NOW.



Gen Z workers are signaling a strong desire to change jobs—and that carries real, and often costly, implications for retention. Nearly half of Gen Z workers are exploring new roles, creating real-time pressure for employers to invest in leadership, culture, and career clarity before top talent walks out the door. That doesn't always mean more pay or promotions—it often starts with feeling seen, supported, and positively challenged by leaders they trust to help them grow. This also shows that even if Gen Z employees stay with an employer, it doesn't always mean they aren't actively looking elsewhere.

3 73% OF GEN Z WORKERS BELIEVE THERE IS A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS IN TODAY'S WORKFORCE.

This overwhelming majority reflects the urgency and importance Gen Z workers place on mental health—and the opportunity to provide mental health services as a valued benefit. Gen Z has navigated COVID, school shootings, nonstop social media, polarized discourse, and so much more. They are looking for employers who are willing to provide mental health resources so they can be their best selves. Gen Z is not necessarily looking for their bosses to counsel them directly, but they do feel that the mental health crisis in the workforce today deserves attention and resources. The good news is that providing these types of benefits can help every generation.



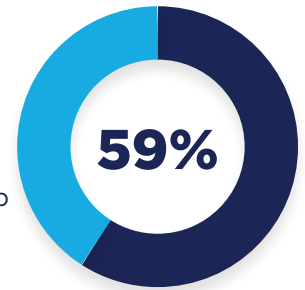
4 ALMOST ONE IN THREE (32%) GEN Z EMPLOYEES REPORT THAT THEIR CURRENT WORKPLACE HAS AN UNHEALTHY OR TOXIC CULTURE.



Most Gen Z employees report positive work environments, but a notable share says the opposite. For employers, this is a signal to candidly check in on the culture they are fostering. These perceptions may stem from communication breakdowns, unresolved interpersonal issues, or a lack of psychological safety. And while those concerns may not always be visible to senior leaders, their impact on morale, productivity, and reputation will show up in tangible ways. Small, intentional changes from leadership—especially around communication, feeling valued, and recognition—can have a positive ripple effect.

5 59% OF GEN Z EMPLOYEES DO NOT BELIEVE A COLLEGE DEGREE IS NEEDED TO TAKE A MANAGERIAL ROLE IN THEIR WORKPLACE.

Gen Z is rethinking what it takes to effectively lead in the workforce. They're more likely to believe that skills, experience, and performance—not formal degrees—are the requisites to be a manager. This shift aligns with broader conversations around skills-based hiring and gives employers a chance to expand their leadership pipeline beyond those with college degrees. Creating new pathways for emerging talent starts with recognizing where potential already exists.



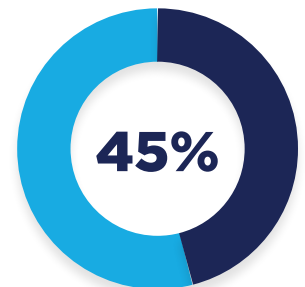
6 65% OF GEN Z BELIEVE THEIR BOSSES VALUE IN-PERSON WORKERS MORE HIGHLY THAN HYBRID OR FULLY REMOTE WORKERS.



As companies continue to navigate evolving expectations around hybrid, remote, and in-person work, Gen Z is noticing both subtle and overt signals about who is seen, heard, valued, and promoted. This perception—intentional or not—directly impacts morale, engagement, and trust. To address it, leaders must set clear expectations for workplace performance, communicate consistently with employees who are not physically present, and provide transparency about what it takes to earn promotions and greater responsibility. While it is still unclear whether in-person or remote workers are promoted more quickly, Gen Z's perception that in-person workers are valued and advanced faster is clearly visible today.

7 45% OF GEN Z DO NOT SEE THEIR JOB OR CAREER AS PART OF THEIR IDENTITY.

Unlike previous generations, Gen Z is less likely to define themselves by their job title or employer. This doesn't mean they don't care about their work. Instead, it means they consider more aspects of their life as being key factors in their identity. For employers, this insight is a chance to connect with Gen Z in broader ways that align with their values, help them find purpose in their work, and support their goals outside of the workplace. For multigenerational teams, the fact that almost half of Gen Z defines their identity outside of the workplace can create tension with colleagues who see work as central to who they are.



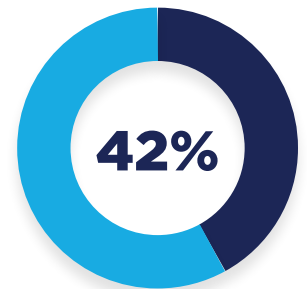
8 82% OF GEN Z WORKERS SAY COMPANIES SHOULD PLACE GREATER PRIORITY ON OFFERING MENTAL HEALTH BENEFITS TO EMPLOYEES.



As the study has revealed, Gen Z workers believe there is a mental health crisis in the workforce today. From Gen Z's perspective, the solution is for employers to offer mental health support as a core employee benefit. Gen Z employees are sending a strong signal: they want workplaces that support the full human experience—including mental and emotional well-being. That might mean access to telehealth counseling or simply reducing the stigma around asking for help. For leaders, this is an immediate opportunity to strengthen culture, attract talent, and demonstrate that their people truly matter.

9 42% OF GEN Z WORKERS BELIEVE THEY COULD DO THEIR MANAGER'S JOB BETTER THAN THEIR MANAGER.

We couldn't resist sharing this insight! Gen Z's confidence in their ability to do their manager's job better than their manager may come from their work experience, life experience, frustration, or even a lack of fully understanding the responsibilities of being a manager. Regardless of the reason, this insight is an interesting message for organizations to place a priority on leadership development. When younger employees don't feel well-led, they start imagining how they'd do it differently. That can be a risk—or a chance to mentor and grow the next generation of managers. Organizations that invest in developing their leaders and creating clear growth paths for Gen Z will turn this insight into a competitive edge.



10 70% OF GEN Z EMPLOYEES AGREE THAT WORKERS UNDER THE AGE OF 30 SHOULD SEEK ON-SITE JOBS TO DEVELOP THEIR INTERPERSONAL SKILLS AND GAIN ON-THE-JOB EXPERIENCE.



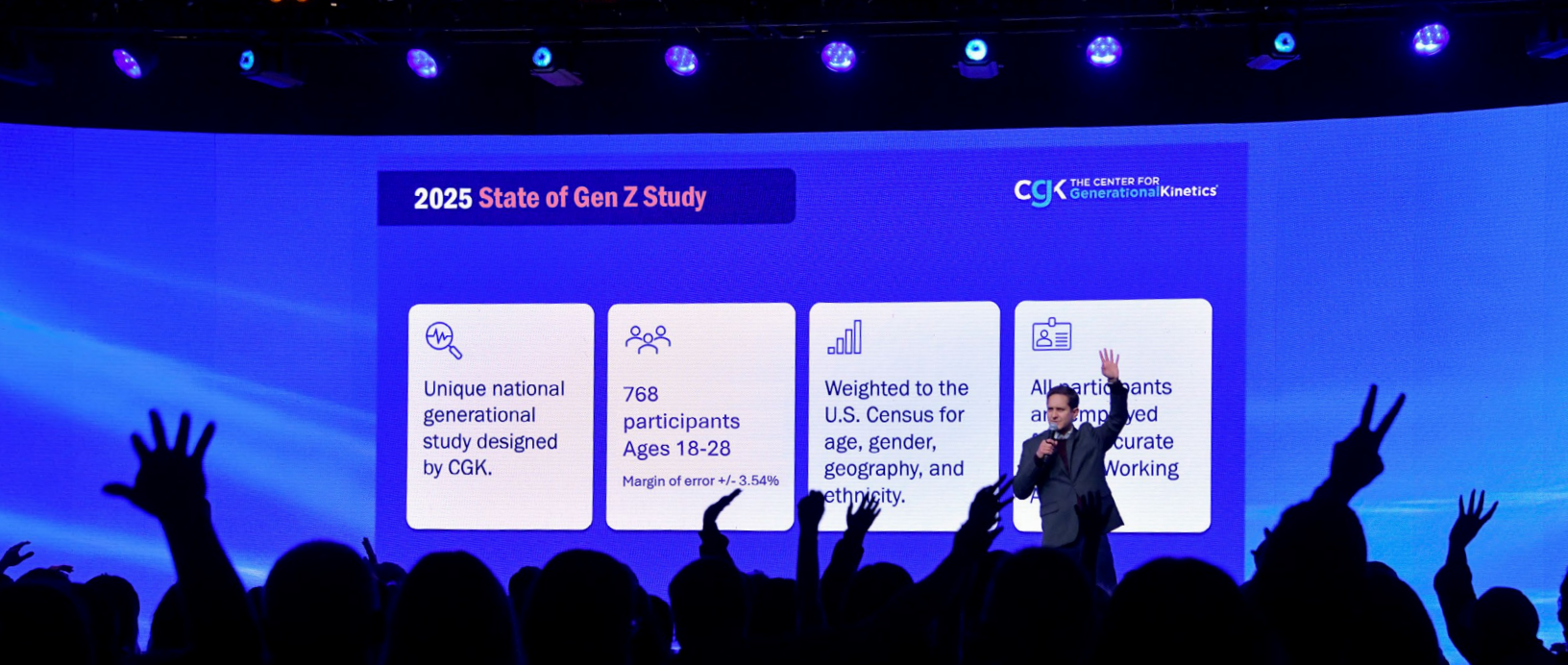
While Gen Z employees are known for valuing hybrid and remote flexibility, this finding shows their recognition of the unique benefits of in-person work—especially early in a career. Gen Z employees view on-site roles as a way to develop real-world skills, gain visibility with leaders that can open doors to new opportunities, and build meaningful workplace relationships. For employers, this insight highlights the chance to position in-person roles as pathways for growth and development rather than as limitations.

LOOKING AHEAD AND CLOSING THOUGHTS

"Gen Z is driving workforce trends across every aspect of organizations today. This exciting generation is impacting recruiting, retention, communication, innovation, trust, and much more. This year's State of Gen Z® highlights unexpected insights and discoveries that leaders at all levels can use to inform their workforce and people strategies. I'm especially excited about Gen Z's views toward mental health, benefits, and trust!"

—Jason Dorsey, President and Lead Researcher,
The Center for Generational Kinetics; Co-Author of *Zconomy*





ABOUT THE CENTER FOR GENERATIONAL KINETICS

CGK leads its annual *State of Gen Z*® National Research Study each year to bring new research-backed insights that inform workforce strategy and leadership approaches, foster innovation, and fuel bottom-line growth.

Our team is proud to work with many of the world's most respected and global brands across industries such as financial services, healthcare, technology, manufacturing, hospitality, and many more.

Are you ready to go deeper into the discoveries to transform them into actions to drive measurable results?

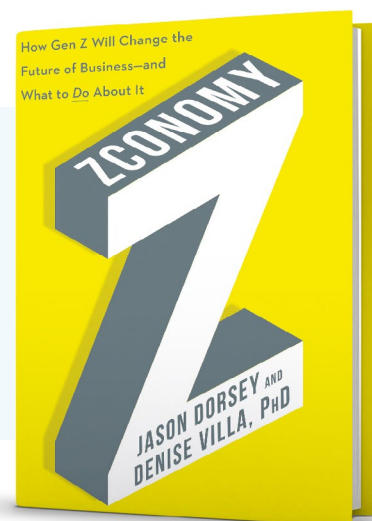
Reach out to CGK's friendly team to schedule an introductory conversation and learn more about our custom take-action keynotes, in-depth research solutions, and acclaimed advisory services.

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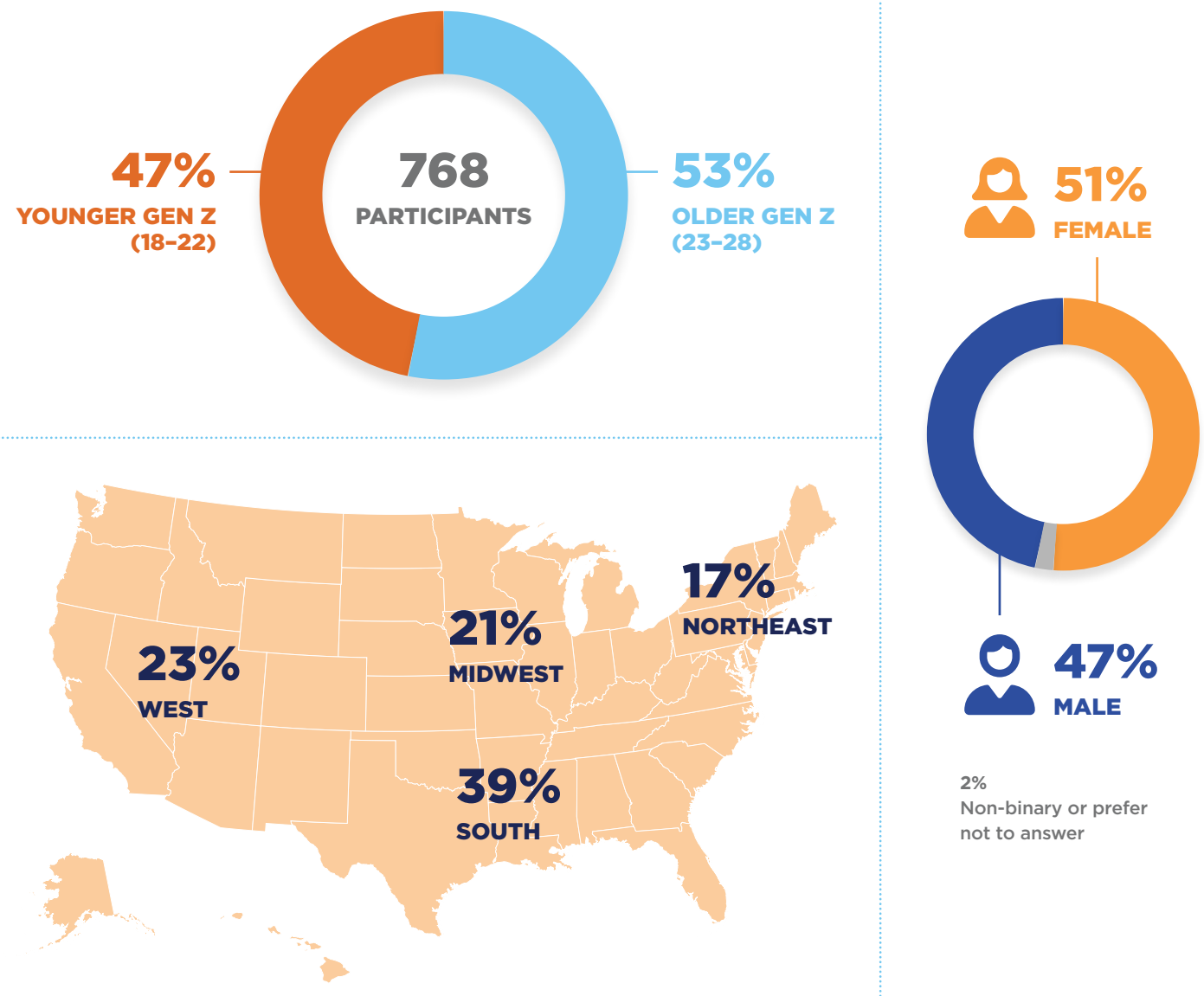
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CGK's latest bestselling book on Gen Z. [Click here](#) to learn more.

NATIONAL STUDY METHODOLOGY

This year’s *State of Gen Z*® study included 768 Gen Z participants, ages 18–28, all employed part-time or full-time, to capture a true snapshot of “Gen Z Working America.” The sample was weighted to align with the 2020 U.S. Census for age, gender, geography, and ethnicity. The research was fielded online from December 4–14, 2024, with statistically significant results at the 95% confidence level and a margin of error of +/-3.54%.



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