

Understanding the Career Aspirations of Generation Z

INTRODUCTION

Problem statements serve as the cornerstone of any successful project or analysis, offering a structured view of the issues at hand and guiding all subsequent actions.

This document aims to analyse and define the challenges faced by Generation Z (Gen Z) in achieving their career aspirations and the parallel challenges faced by employers in managing this emerging workforce. Using the 5W1H framework, we break down the core aspects of the problem to bridge the understanding gap between Gen Z and their potential employers.

WHO

Target Group:

- Generation Z (individuals born between 1997–2012)
- Employers across industries, especially those adapting to a young workforce

From my experience:

As a Gen Z individual myself, I've seen peers struggling to find companies that align with their values like mental wellness, remote flexibility, and learning opportunities, mostly employers asking experiences.

WHAT

The Problem:

- Gen Z finds it difficult to secure jobs that align with their purpose, values, and aspirations.
- Employers, on the other hand, are unsure how to attract, retain, and engage Gen Z effectively.

From my experience:

I've noticed many talented friends who have technical skills still jobless or switching jobs frequently due to cultural misfit or lack of value alignment and most of them became victims of scammers.

WHEN

Timing:

- This issue is emerging now as more Gen Z graduates enter the job market post-2020.
- It's a critical time for HR teams, hiring managers, and universities to bridge the gap.

From my experience:

After graduation in 2023, I realized job expectations vs real work cultures vary widely, especially when applying to MNCs. Because of recession at the time no one gave the chance to freshers those who graduated 2023 still finding difficulty in getting job.

WHERE

Context:

- Global corporate landscape: companies hiring remote or hybrid

- Sectors: Tech, Startups, NGOs, Public Sector
- Recruitment, Onboarding, and Employee Engagement processes

From my experience:

I've applied to remote jobs in India and noticed how some cultures are more transparent and inclusive than others.

WHY

Why It Matters:

- Organizations failing to engage Gen Z will face high attrition, brand damage, and loss of innovation.
- Gen Z offers fresh perspectives, tech fluency, and purpose-driven work ethics.

From my experience:

Most of my friends follow brands that “walk the talk” —we look beyond salary into company values and impact.

HOW

How the Problem Manifests:

- Lack of two-way feedback during hiring
- Miscommunication between expectations and roles
- Traditional HR systems not matching Gen Z's digital-first mindset

From my experience:

I once joined a short-term project where the job promised creativity but ended up doing repetitive tasks—this mismatch made me quit early and also doing internship but they were forced to learn a lot of things at short span of time which lead me to stress, depression at last I can't pass the interview became unemployed.

FINAL STATEMENT

Despite being the most digital-native, value-driven generation, Gen Z continues to face challenges in pursuing career roles that match their aspirations.

Simultaneously, employers are unable to design engagement strategies that attract and retain this emerging workforce. This misalignment results in job dissatisfaction, attrition, and missed opportunities for innovation. Through understanding Gen Z's values, motivations, and expectations, this project aims to bridge the gap between Gen Z's career desires and employer practices using insights from the 5W1H framework.

CONCLUSION

A comprehensive understanding of Generation Z's career aspirations is essential to address the disconnect between what Gen Z seeks in the workplace and what employers currently offer. By applying the 5W1H framework, we have highlighted the motivations, challenges, and contextual factors that define this issue. Organizations that adapt to these insights will be better equipped to attract, retain, and empower Gen Z talent, thereby fostering a dynamic, forward-thinking, and inclusive workplace environment.