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Data science jobs are a top pick for Gen Z, per new Glassdoor report

BY MEGHAN MALAS

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PEDESTRIANS IN THE FINANCIAL DISTRICT OF SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, AS SEEN IN JULY 2022. (PHOTOGRAPHER: DAVID PAUL MORRIS—BLOOMBERG/GETTY IMAGES)



Data science is one of the fastest-growing, most critical fields of the past decade. With massive volumes of data created every day, there is an increasing need for people who can make sense of, and draw conclusions from, data. In fact, computer and information research jobs—including data scientist positions—are projected to grow 22% between 2020 and 2030, according to [the Bureau of Labor Statistics](#).

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Since interest in data science took off a decade ago, data scientist [job satisfaction has also climbed](#). Glassdoor has listed data scientists as among the top three of the [50 Best Jobs in America](#) for the past seven years in a row.

But how does the newest generation of workers feel about this burgeoning field? Gen Z considers the role of data scientist to be one of the most satisfying occupations, according to [a new Glassdoor report](#). Gen Z includes people born between 1997 and 2012. For this study, the only companies included were those with reviews left by U.S. full-time employees who are at least 18 years old. Students, interns and employees in the military were excluded.

Despite young workers showing a strong preference for creative roles, data scientist is ranked No. 4—and the only other tech occupation ranked in the top 10 was IT specialist.

Fortune spoke with Richard Johnson, an associate economist for Glassdoor, to find out more about why Gen Z employees favors data scientist jobs, and what else they prioritize in their careers.

Gen Z likes competitive salaries, flexibility, and creativity for data scientists

One result of the demand for data science talent is the high wages awarded to those who are hired. While the mean salary for a data scientist in the U.S. is \$108,660, [according to the BLS](#). But in the San Jose metro area—which [also has the highest concentration of data scientist jobs in the U.S.](#)—the mean salary for data scientists is \$157,110.

“Previous Glassdoor research has shown that [data scientists often earn high salaries, have plenty of job openings and high job satisfaction](#),” Johnson says. “So there’s no doubt that these factors are appealing to younger workers starting their careers.”

A career that promises employment prospects [and high compensation](#) may be especially appealing to a generation that has already experienced a lot of economic turbulence. Entering the workforce during the COVID-19 pandemic hasn’t been easy for Gen Z, but younger workers are reporting higher satisfaction working for larger companies that are established to withstand turbulent economic periods, according to the Glassdoor report.

Flexibility is also important to this generation, Johnson says. Since data scientists aren’t necessarily required to be in an office like some other roles, it’s very likely companies are able to offer these workers more flexibility to work remotely if they prefer.

While creative roles are heavily favored among Gen Z workers—the top three jobs for the generation were corporate recruiter, marketing manager, and social media manager—the field of data science also requires some creativity.

“Data scientists have to make sense of complex data patterns and interweave it into a simplified narrative for a variety of stakeholders,” explains Johnson. “So in a way, [data scientist could be considered a creative tech role](#) on this list, making it appealing for Gen Z.”

Data scientist is favored more among Gen Z workers than other generations

While the role of data scientist is a top-ranked job overall by Glassdoor, the occupation didn't make the top 10 for any other generation besides Gen Z. This is in part due to the newness of the discipline.

“In a way, every company is becoming a tech company and as data continues to play an integral part of how businesses make strategic decisions, working with and understanding data will become an expected skill for many Gen Z workers,” Johnson says. “With this in mind, Gen Z will have [more access to data scientist opportunities](#) than older generations.”

The Glassdoor report notes that data science positions allow Gen Z employees to participate in [strategic decision-making](#). Additionally, workers interested in broadening their social impact might be inclined to consider pursuing ethics in artificial intelligence (AI), [a growing subfield within data science](#).

Highly-preferred employers hire data scientists

Finally, the Glassdoor report also shows that the youngest generation of workers want to work for some of the most-established companies. Gen Z ranks Big Tech companies as the best employers, with [Microsoft](#) and Google taking the top two spots.

“We know that highly-rated employers tend to show up for their workers with competitive perks and benefits to attract and retain talent,” Johnson says. “[Many Big Tech companies have relatively large teams of data scientists](#) and are in a better position to offer these competitive benefits, which in turn, can lead to higher job satisfaction for employees.”

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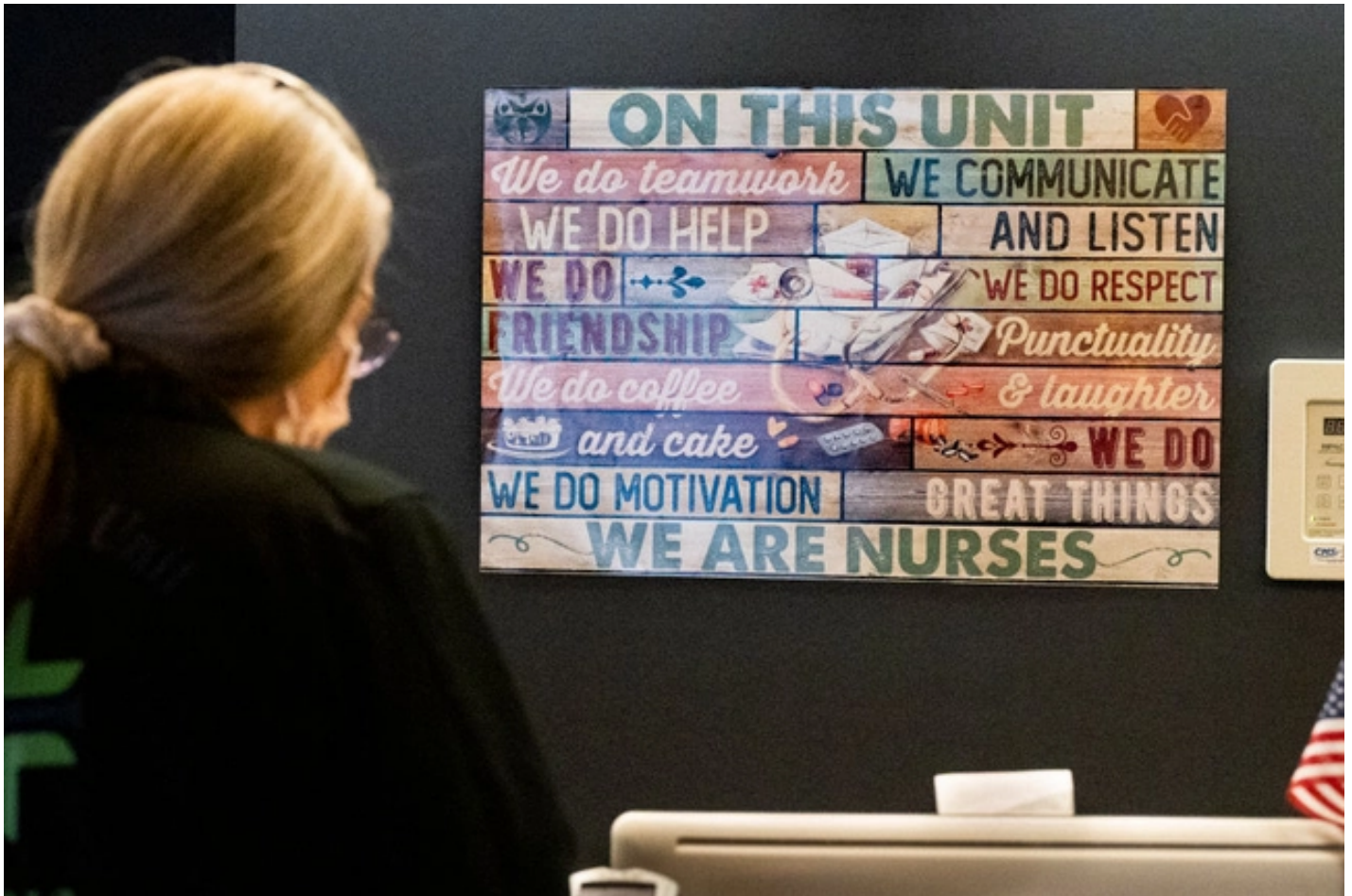
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