

A hand is shown holding several medals with ribbons. The ribbons are in various colors, including red, white, and black. The medals are gold and have intricate designs. The background is a bright, sunlit sky with a lens flare effect.

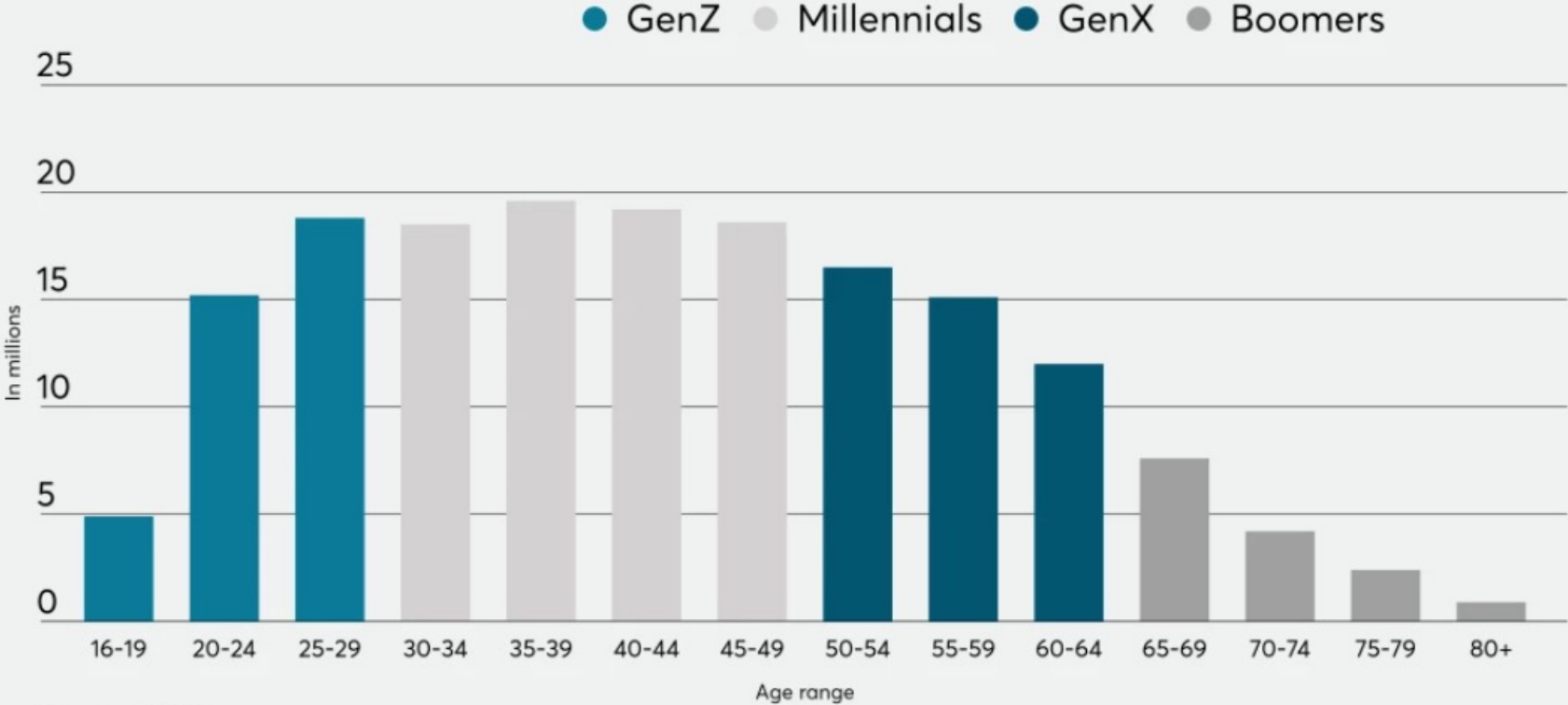
# Training for the Gold, Growing Our Future Leaders

Developing Leadership Development Programs for Generation Z

Michelle Prosser, EdD



# Projected workforce size by 2030



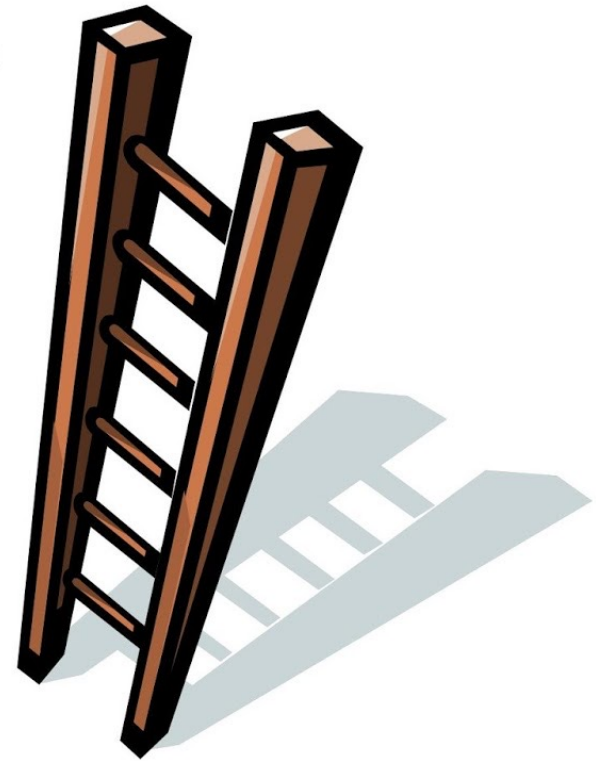
Source: DOL

*After I got my gold medal, I thought,  
'This isn't just me. It belongs to my  
team, my friends, my family, the  
fans, everybody who's impacted my  
life - this is our gold medal.'*

Alex Morgan,  
Olympic Gold Medalist  
for Soccer



# EMERGING LEADERS



LEADERSHIP... NOT A POSITION, BUT A PROCESS.

A photograph of a group of young people in a classroom or meeting setting. In the foreground, two men are looking at a laptop. The man on the left has a beard and is wearing a blue denim shirt over a white t-shirt. The man on the right has curly hair and is wearing a blue and white plaid shirt over a white t-shirt. They are both smiling and looking at the laptop. In the background, two women are visible, one with blonde hair and one with red hair, both looking towards the laptop. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

**Generations think  
and work differently.**

**Generation Z has  
unique preferences  
and traits.**

## Learning Objectives

After participating in this workshop, participants will be able to:

- Understand the six defining characteristics of Generation Z
- Learn how Generation Z defines leadership and leadership development, which is different from other generations
- Discover how to develop and deliver training geared towards Generation Z's preferences in a leadership development program



**Gen Z**

Born between  
1996-2010  
Ages 12-26



**Millennial**

Born between  
1980-1995  
Ages 27-42



**Gen X**

Born between  
1965-1979  
Ages 43-57

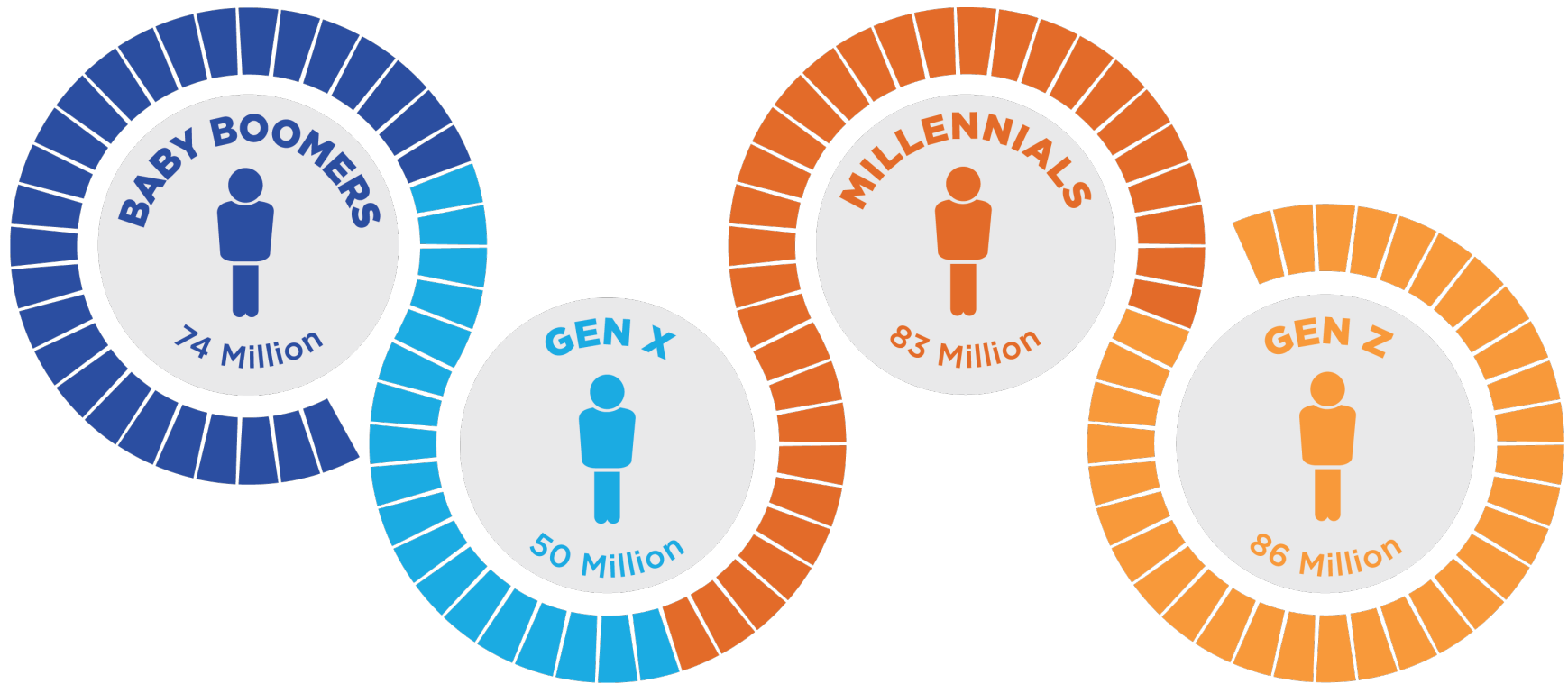


**Baby Boomer**

Born between  
1944-1964  
Ages 58-78



# Generations by the Numbers



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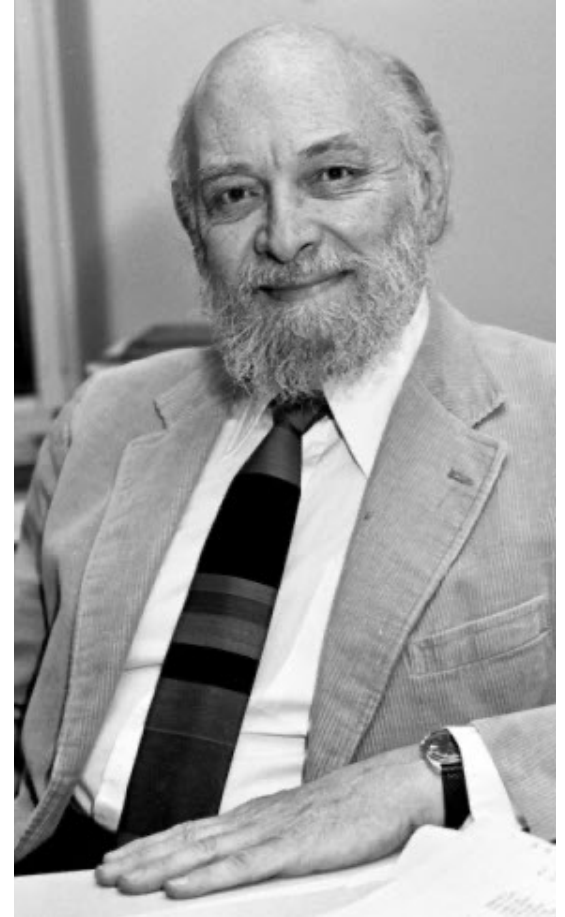
Generation  
Theory

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Generational  
Cohort Theory



*Karl Mannheim*



Generation	Cohort Birth Years	Workplace
<b>Silent Generation</b> Also called Traditionalists	1925 – 1942	Retired
<b>Baby Boomers</b> Also called Boomers	1943 – 1964	Retired or preparing to leave workplace
<b>Generation X</b> Also called Latchkey Kids, Slackers	1964 – 1981	Starting to assume leadership roles
<b>Generation Y</b> Commonly referred to as Millennials	1982 – 1995	Starting to assume leadership roles
<b>Generation Z</b> Also called Zoomers, iGen, Digital Natives, Net Gen	1996 – 2011	Entering workplace
<b>Alpha Generation</b>	Born after 2012	K through Middle School

# How Generations filter their world:

	<b>Boomers</b>	<b>Xers</b>	<b>Y/Millennials</b>	<b>Zs</b>
<b>Outlook</b>	Optimistic	Skeptical	Hopeful	Optimistic
<b>Work Ethic</b>	Driven	Balanced	Determined	Entrepreneurial
<b>View of Authority</b>	Love/hate	Unimpressed	Polite	Respectful
<b>Leadership by</b>	Consensus	Competence	Pulling Together	Team



## The Purpose “We-centric” Generation

# Big Z, Little z



# Generation Z's Unique Characteristics

Diverse and  
Inclusive

Purposeful and  
Solution-  
oriented

Ambitious and  
Pragmatic

Digitally Native  
and  
Technologically  
Ambivalent

Individualistic  
and Identity-  
oriented

Entrepreneurial  
and Innovative

## We-Centric Diverse and Inclusive

This generation's racial  
makeup:

50% White

25% Hispanic

14% Black

6% Asian

and 5% some other race  
or two or more races

Pew Research Center, 2020





# Purposeful and Solution-Oriented: True Gen

The Pew Center (2020) says Generation Z wants to have a mission they can connect with and make a difference.

Desire to engage in ways that involve fundamentally changing the structure of what is causing the social issue to persist rather than addressing the issue (Dr. Seemiller)





Purposeful  
with their own  
solutions



# Ambitious and Pragmatic

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- Both ambitious and pragmatic.
- Being pragmatic affects their ambition and may lead others to believe they lack drive.
- Young workers are highly ambitious but not interested in following the traditional corporate ladder (Fortune Magazine).

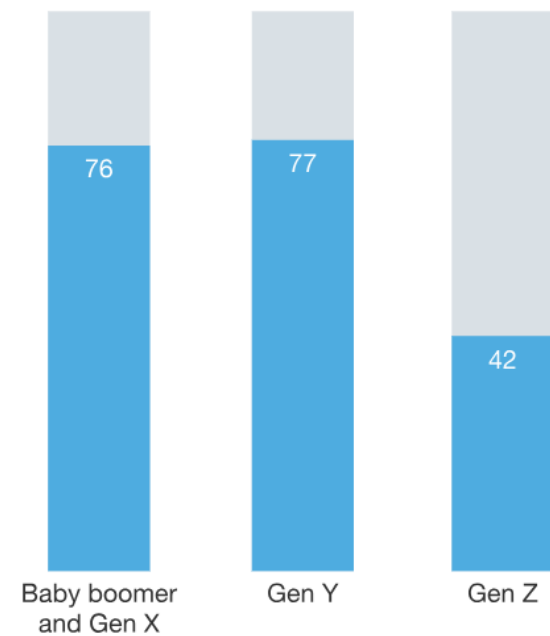


# Corporate Girlies

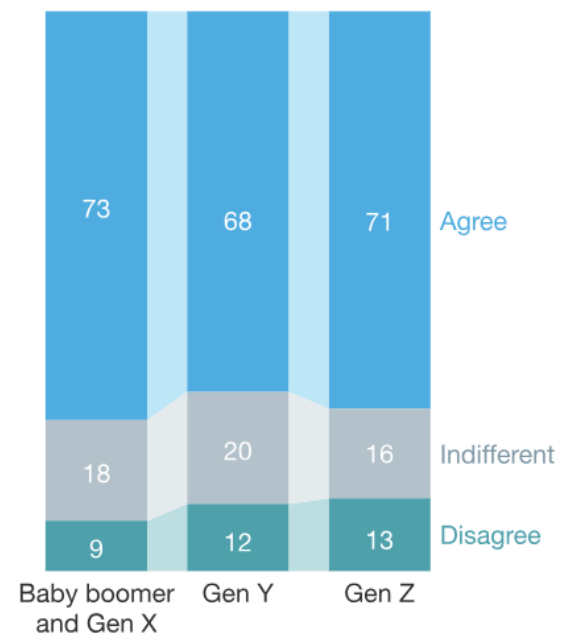


## Gen Zers live pragmatically; they are realistic.

Respondents who say that they are gainfully employed, %



Respondents who say that having formal or registered job is important, %



Note: Based on an online survey conducted in October 2017 with 2,321 men and women from 14 to 64 years of age and various socioeconomic brackets in Brazil.

**Digitally Native  
and  
Technologically  
Ambivalent**



# Technology Ambivalence

Despite relying on texting and social media, Generation Z report ambivalence about technology.

Out of all the communication methods:

- 83% of those in Generation Z reported that face-to-face communication was a preference for them, higher than any other method, including texting.
- Only 2% disliked face-to-face communication. *Generation Z Goes to College Study* (2017)

# Individualistic and Identity- Oriented



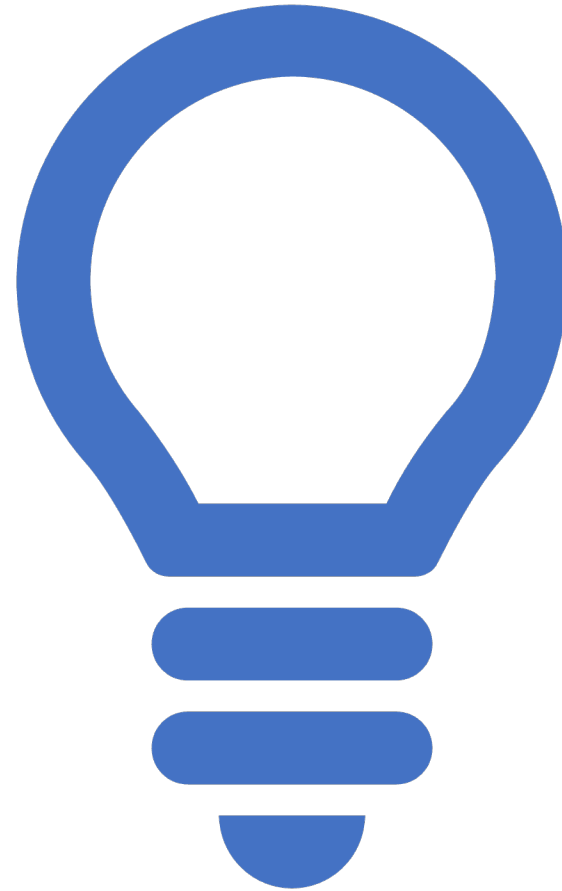
This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-SA-NC](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/)



- Dislike being labeled and defined in one way
- “Identity Nomads”
- Want to control how others perceive them and take care to curate their social media identities to multiple audiences
- These identities are often used to aid their entrepreneurial ventures and inspire creativity



**Entrepreneurial  
and Innovative**





## Entrepreneurial

- Creative
- Driven
- Digital Natives

## Top Row, Left to Right

- **Beth Reekles**, by 18, won a three-book contract after her first book *The Kissing Booth* was released online
- **Nick D'Aloisio**, by 18, sold his news app for \$30 million
- **Maya Van Wagenen** by 15 landed a film deal with DreamWorks
- **Lorde**, by 17 won two Grammy awards and landed a commission to soundtrack the next Hunger Games film.
- **Billie Eilish** by 19 won multiple Grammys – five at the 2020 Grammy Awards

## Bottom Row, Left to Right

- **Jalyn Hall**, an American actor, who plays Emmett Till and a young MLK
- **Kendall Bassett**, a photographer who at 21 years old, he has already collaborated with *The New York Times*, Netflix, and *Teen Vogue*.

The search for the truth is at the root of all Generation Z's behavior.

**'Undefined ID'**

"Don't define yourself  
in only one way"



Expressing  
individual **truth**

**'Communaholic'**

"Be radically  
inclusive"



Connecting through  
different **truths**

**'Dialoguer'**

"Have fewer confrontations  
and more dialogue"



Understanding  
different **truths**

**Realistic**

"Live life  
pragmatically"



Unveiling the **truth**  
behind all things

# Recap: Generation Z's Unique Characteristics

Diverse and  
Inclusive

Purposeful and  
Solution-  
oriented

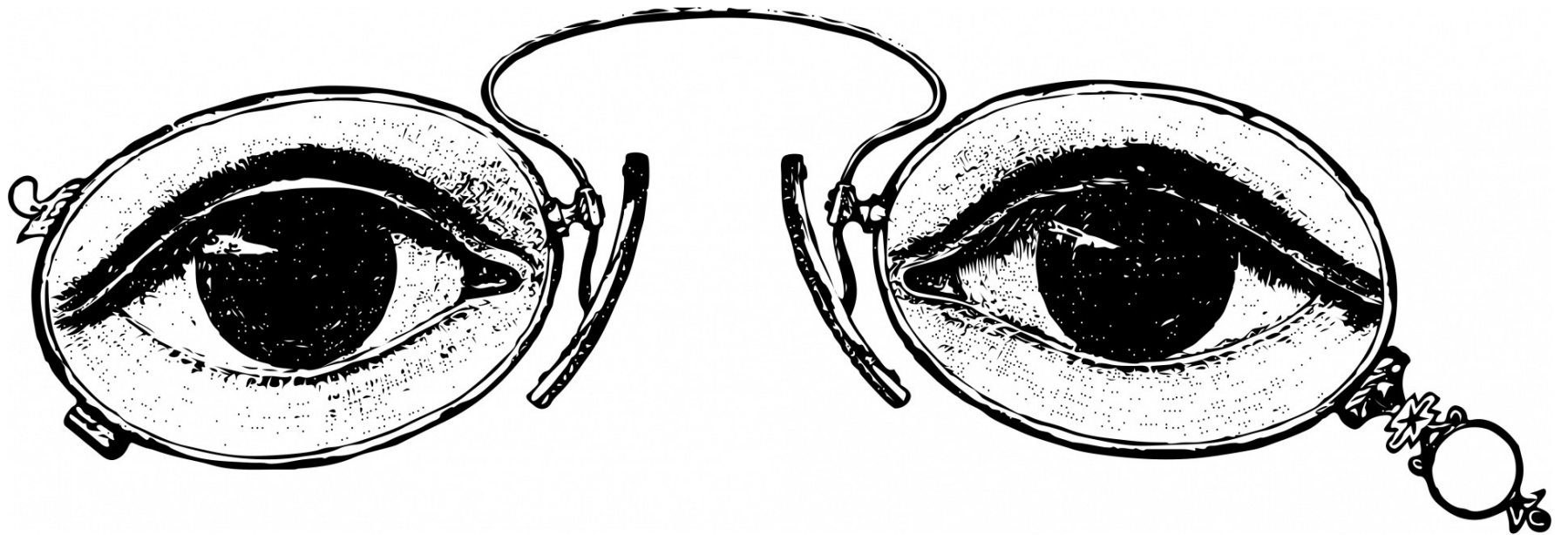
Ambitious and  
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Digitally Native  
and  
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Individualistic  
and  
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Entrepreneurial  
and Innovative

What other characteristics have you noticed?



# Gen Z on Stereotypes





# Generation Z in the Workplace

## Expectations

Mentoring and Training  
Opportunities  
Authority Figures are  
Equals  
Work-Life Balance  
DEI

## Competency Weaknesses

Communication  
Complex Reasoning  
Creativity

## Struggles

Complex World  
Fatigue  
Mental Health Challenges

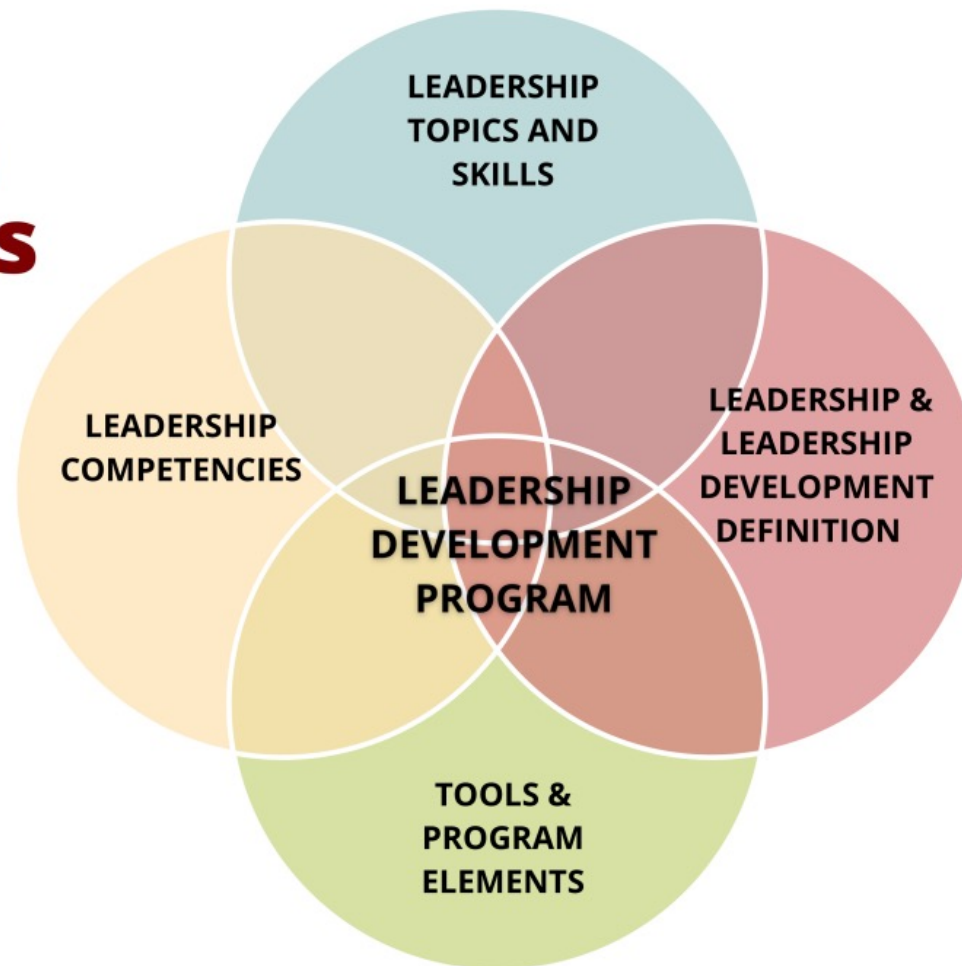


CHRISTOPHER  
NEWPORT   
UNIVERSITY

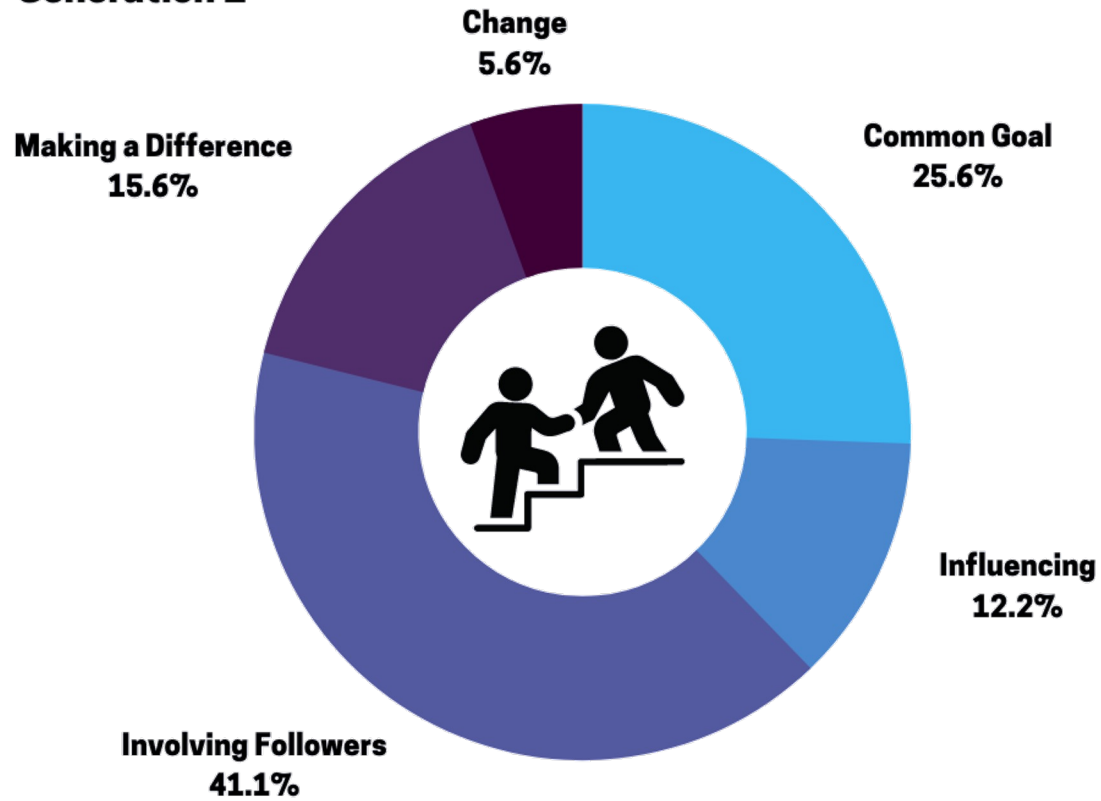


PRESIDENT'S LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

# Four Research Questions



## Definition of Leadership Generation Z



# Generation Z Definition of Leadership Development

*In your view, which of the following best defines leadership development?*

## Generation Z Responses



It strengthens the ability to take full responsibility for guiding others to achieve results



It is the expansion of a person's capacity to be effective in leadership roles



It increases the capacity to influence through skills and behaviors



It is a specific effort that provides opportunities to learn, grow and change



It is a program that makes people become better leaders



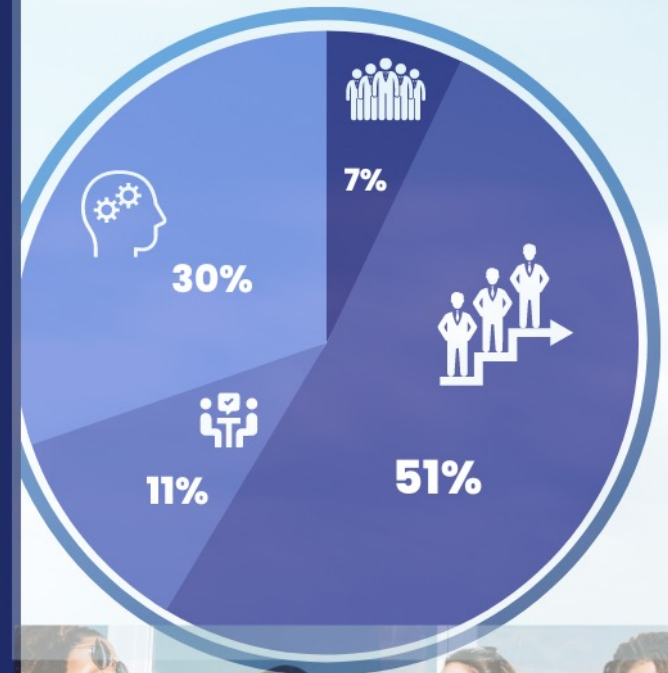
It is the teaching of leadership qualities



0%



0%



# Senior Executive Definition of Leadership Development

*In your view, which of the following best defines leadership development?*

Senior Executives (Borderless Survey 2016)



It strengthens the ability to take full responsibility for guiding others to achieve results



It is the expansion of a person's capacity to be effective in leadership roles



It increases the capacity to influence through skills and behaviors



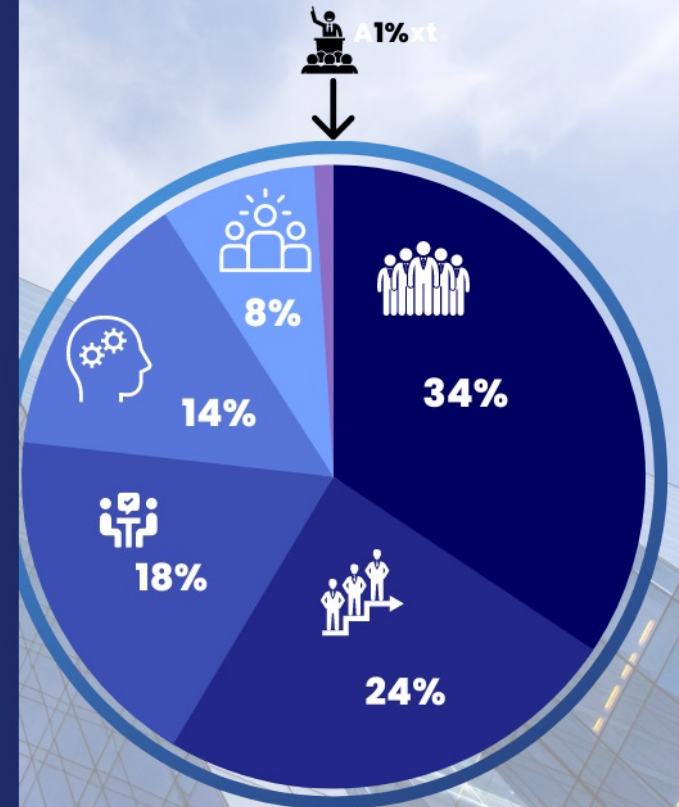
It is a specific effort that provides opportunities to learn, grow and change



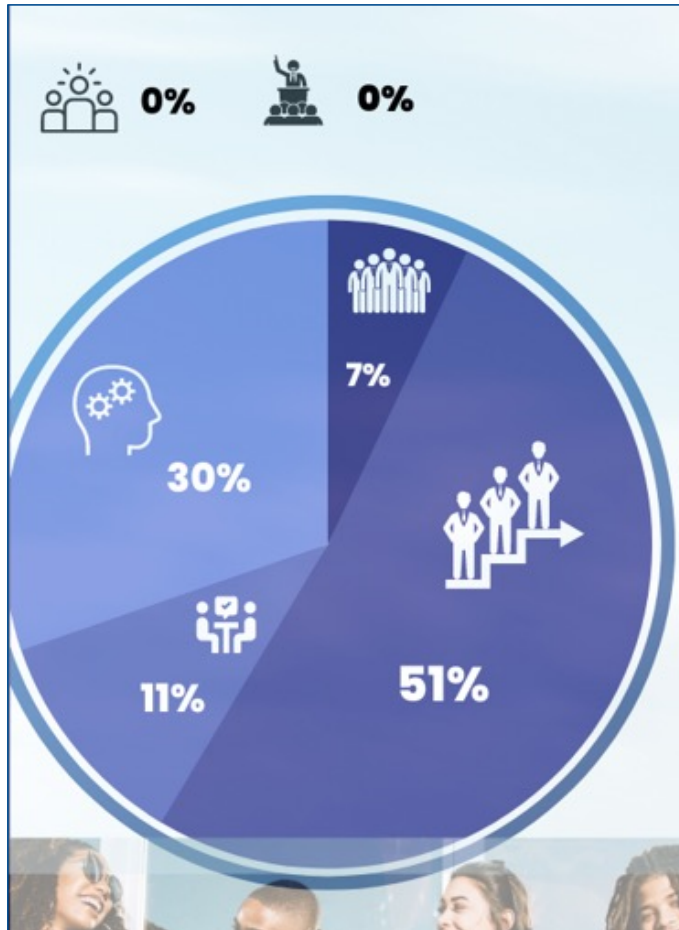
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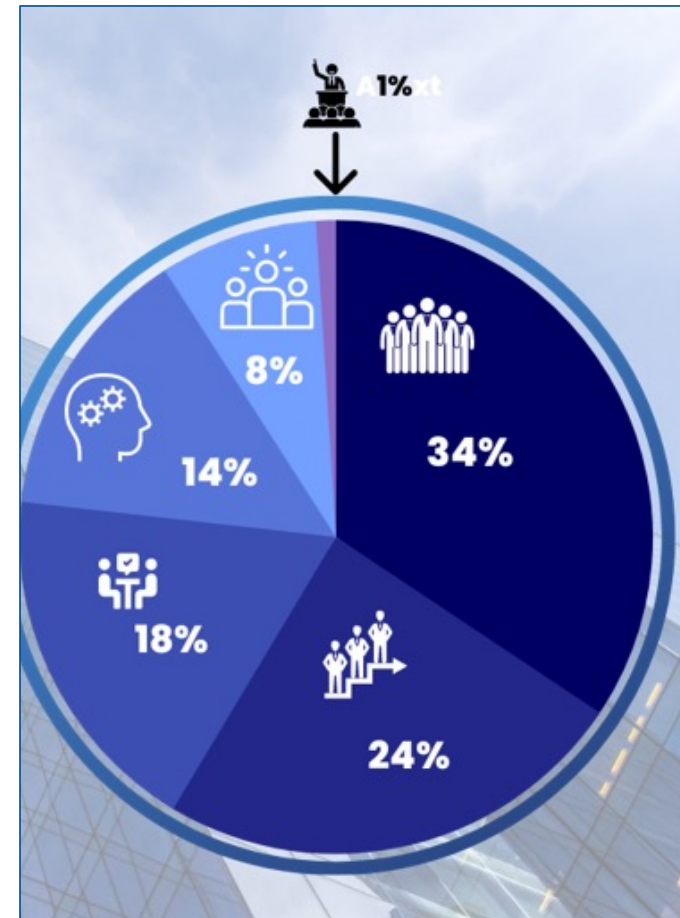
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## Gen Z



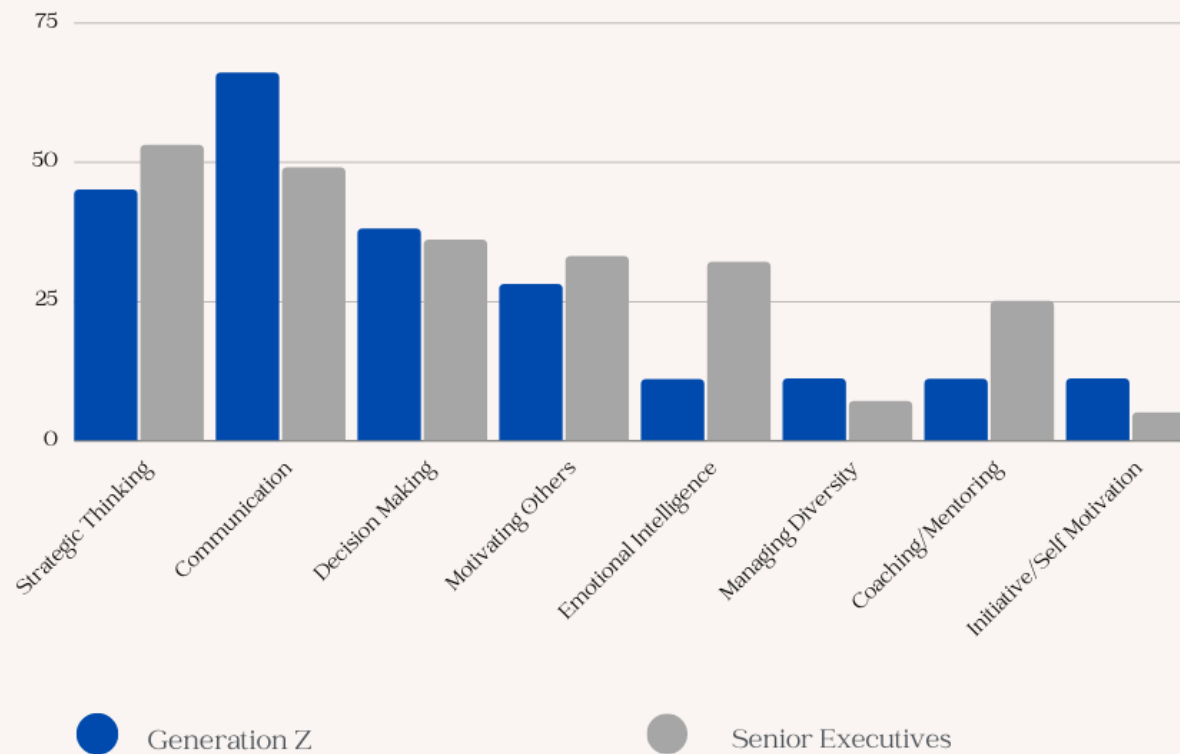
## Senior Executives





# Leadership Competencies by Importance

Generation Z compared to Sr. Executives



# Qualitative: Five Themes Emerged on Leadership Competencies



Communication



Initiative



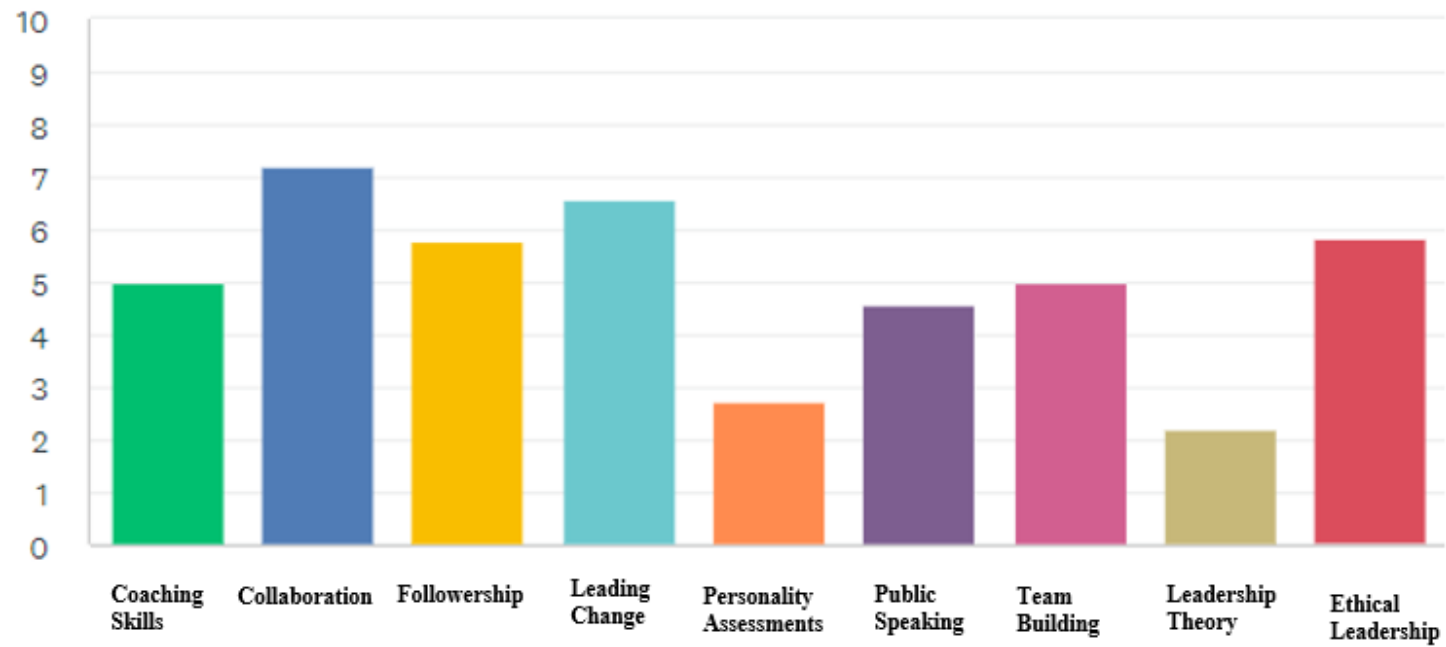
Emotional  
Intelligence



Ethics



Purpose



# Leadership Knowledge and Skills

Qualitative  
Themes  
around  
Leadership  
Knowledge  
and Skills

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Collaboration

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Leading Changes

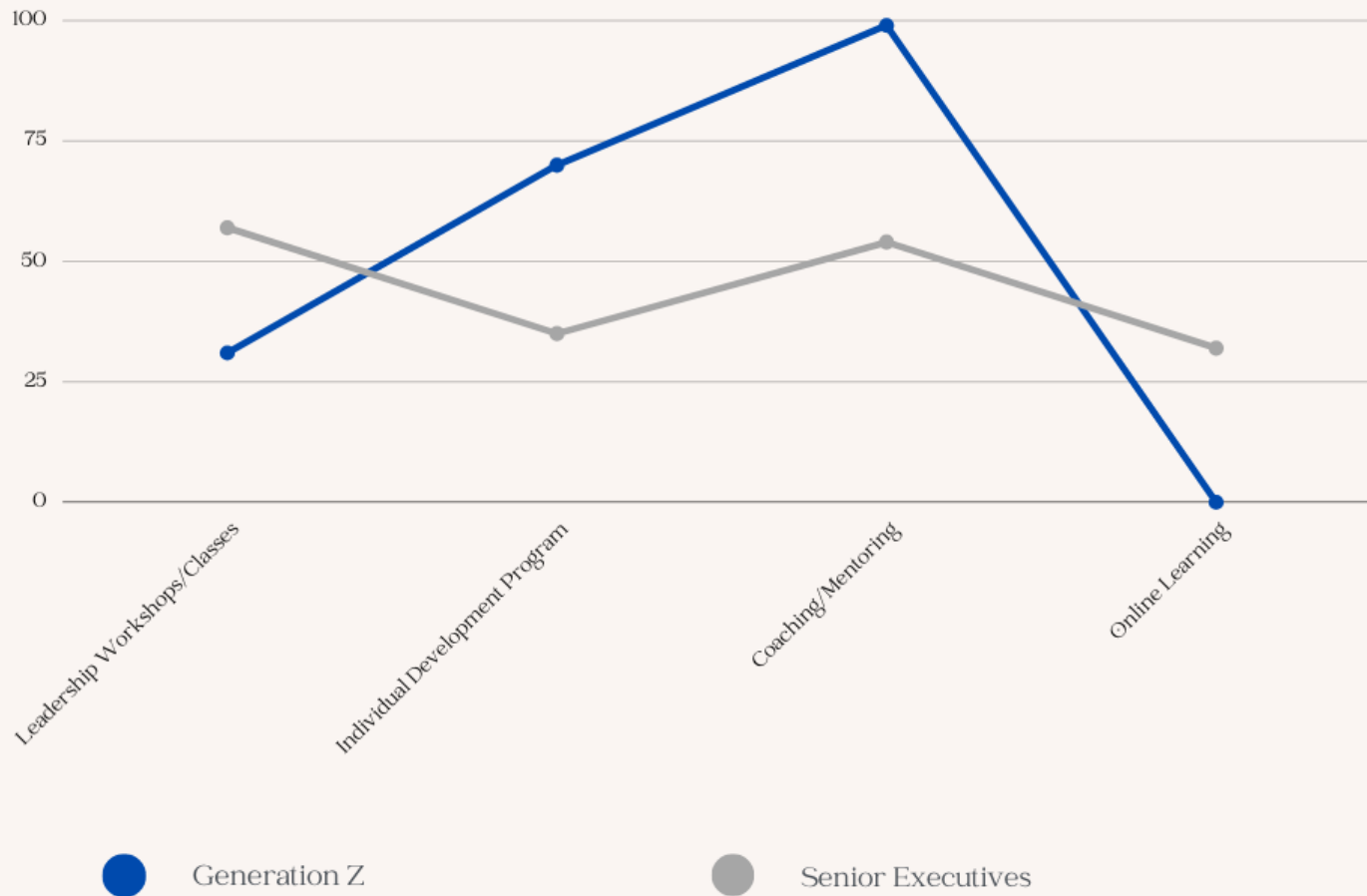
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Ethical Leadership

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Followership

# Preferences about Program Elements and Tools in Leadership Development Programs



# Qualitative: Professional Development Elements and Tools

Customized  
Individual  
Development  
Programs

Coaching and  
Mentoring

Exposure to  
Leaders

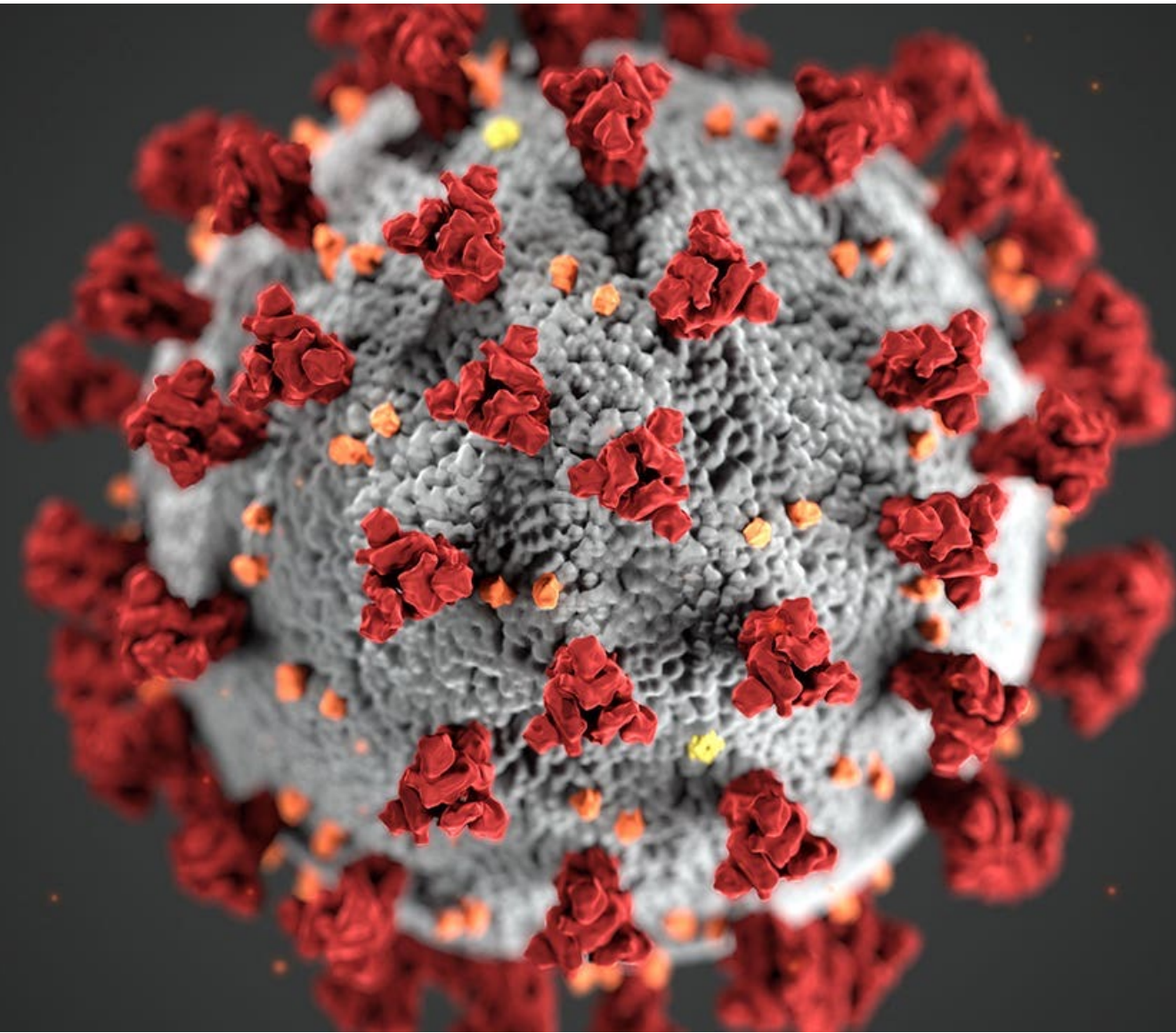
# The Pandemic's Impact on Learning

In-person vs. Online



What is a surprise?

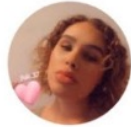




# REMOTE LEARNING







**Teya**  
@tey\_an



Gen Z will drink one medium caramel latte, not eat a single thing till 4 pm, verbally abuse a racist, crack a joke about their mental health and pick up a tear gas canister with their bare hands, but get nervous when they have to call to make a doctors appointment.

12:59 PM · 2020-06-08 · [Twitter for iPhone](#)

**196** Retweets **548** Likes







Leadership and  
learning are  
indispensable to  
each other.

— ” —

**JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY**





How does this  
impact your  
leadership  
program?



# Summary



# Gen Z Preferences to Include in Emerging Leaders Programs

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**Communication, Strategic Decision-making, Ethics, and Emotional Intelligence** are ranked as the most important **leadership competencies** to develop as a young leader in the workplace.

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**Collaboration, Ethical Leadership, Leading Change and Followership** ranked as the **most important topics** in a leadership development program.

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Lastly, Generation Z members expressed strong preferences for **individual development plans, coaching/mentoring, and exposure to leadership**. There was a strong preference for learning **in person** and against too much online learning.

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Overall, the data support that Generation Z has unique workplace and training preferences.

# Ageism Goes Both Ways



# Reminders!

**It is easy to generalize and oversimplify.**

**While everyone is unique, each generation is largely shaped by the experiences encountered during their formative years.**

**It is important for leaders to understand the basics of each generation so that they can quickly adapt to their differences.**

# Assume Good Intent

- Everyone has filters that color what they see and hear
- Try to see other people's stories
- Try to see your stories
- There must be a good reason for the behavior
- Give people the benefit of the doubt
- Value the strengths of each generation
- Diversity makes a stronger team

## Learning Objectives

After participating in this workshop, participants will be able to:

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