



Attracting and retaining the next generation workforce



This is part of a series of information sheets based on research funded by Wayfinder industry sponsors and FIAL in 2020.

No matter what our age, we all want to be treated respectfully and fairly – to be recognised, valued, and appropriately compensated. But there is no denying that different factors motivate different generations.

A key challenge for recruiters in supply chain and logistics is making the job attractive not only to women but to all millennials (those born between 1981 and 1996) and Gen Zers (those born after 1997) – they are the supply chain leaders of the future.

What matters to the next generation workforce?

Having a job with a purpose

Millennials and Gen Zers want to be part of something bigger than themselves, and the supply chain industry's role in supporting sustainable practices has the potential to be a major recruitment drawcard. It's rarely showcased, but into the future, modern supply chains have a key role to play in paving the way for fuel efficient shipping and freight, recyclable packaging and improved biosecurity.

The millennial generation cares about issues such as climate change and ethical supply chains and they want to see company values demonstrated and not just talked about. They have high expectations around corporate social responsibility and want the businesses they work for to focus more on people, products and purpose and less on profit.

Workplace flexibility

The next-generation workforce expects greater flexibility in their working hours and better work life balance than their predecessors. They are the first generation to enter the workforce with access to technology that enables them to seamlessly work remotely, and demand for greater flexibility is also driven by an increase in dual income households. Millennials are almost twice as likely to have a partner working full-time than baby boomers and while women continue to take the major responsibility for childcare, fathers are much more involved in parenting than previous generations.

Flexible jobs can help attract and retain millennial talent. It can be in the form of remote working, job sharing, parental leave, four-day weeks or volunteer time off – and even small concessions can make a difference. Providing work is completed on time and to the client's satisfaction – where it happens is becoming increasingly irrelevant.

A clear way forward

Millennials and are not afraid to seek employment elsewhere to progress their careers when it makes sense to them, but when it comes to progressing careers, steady work with compensation and good benefits, along with an opportunity to learn and grow, is a common thread that links all generations.

The next generation workforce expects opportunities for professional development and training, including the secondment and shadowing opportunities that will encourage talented workers to see they have a career with the company not just a job. And in selecting participants it is important to focus on transferable skills not years of experience or specific industry experience – many will have highly valuable hard and soft skills but not length of time or experience in a particular industry.

