Generational Expectations of Leave Absence Programs

Understanding diverse needs across age groups

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Defining the Generations



Traditionalist (~1928-1945)

Loyal, disciplined, value hierarchy and experiences

Boomers (~1946-1964)

Strong work ethic, loyal, career-focused

Gen X (~1965-1980)

Independent, practical, purpose driven

Millennials/Gen Y (~1981-1996)

Tech-savvy, collaborative, values work-life balance

Gen Z (~1997-2012)

Digital native, adaptable, values flexibility and mental health

Gen Alpha (~2013 to roughly 2025)

They are coming…

Why Leave Expectations are Changing Rapidly



Generational Expectations

Rise in Leave Requests

Employee Experience and Retention

Flexible Leave Policies

Workplaces Are Complex



Multigenerational Workforce Complexity

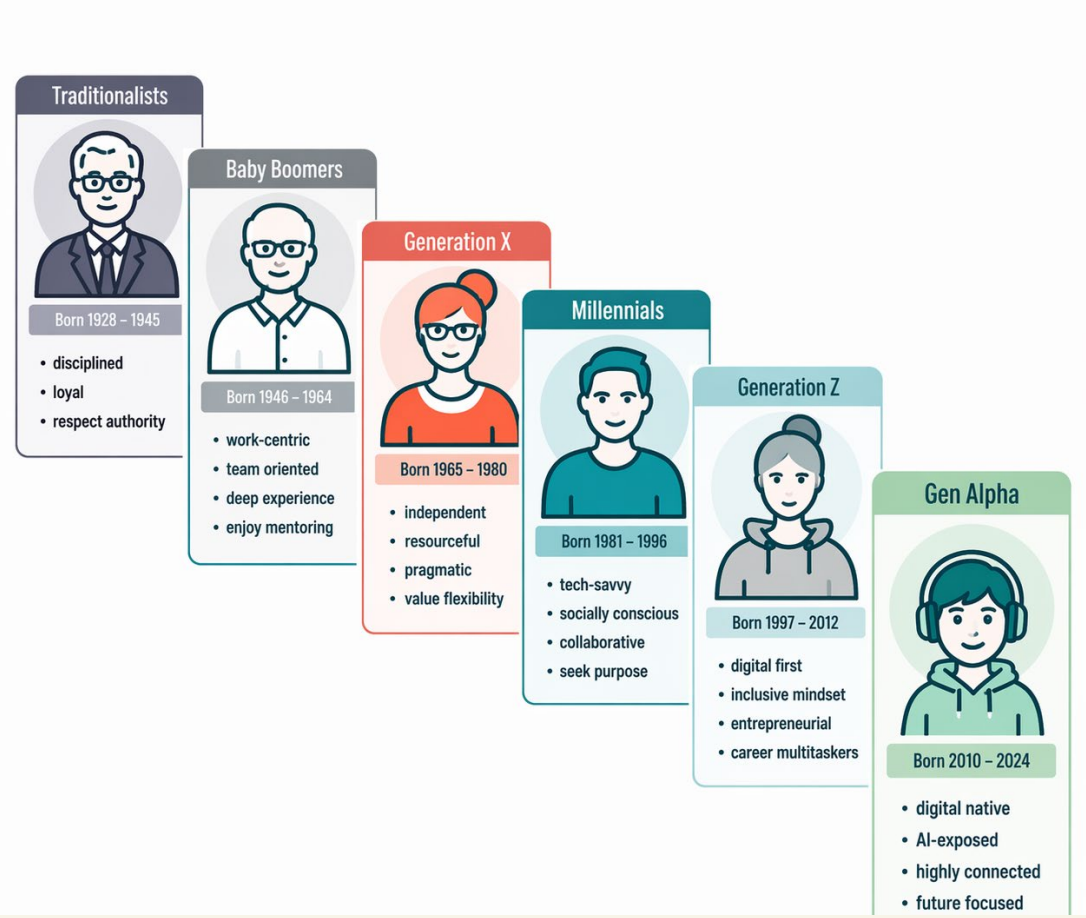
Evolving Leave Programs and generational expectations

Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic

Strategic Advantage through Adoption

Impact on engagement, RTW and retention

Why Business Should Care



- **Generational Diversity in Workforce**
- **Distinct Generational Work Preferences**
- **Distinct expectations for leave and benefits**
- **Impact of Life Stages**
- **Tailored Benefits and Policies**

Baby Boomers: Expectations and implications



Workforce Experience and Values

Leave Priorities

Fairness and Policy Consistency

Supporting Aging Workforce

What is Gen X Looking for?

- Stability and clarity
  - Clear rules
  - Predictability
  - Efficient processing of claims
  - Income protection
  - Caregiver & chronic condition support





Millennials Expectations

- Flexibility and Integration
- Transparency
- Digital tools
- Inclusive policies
- Flexible leave options
  - Equitable Parental leaves
- Supportive workplace cultures



Gen Z is looking for

- Authenticity
- Simple experiences
- Mobile first solutions
- High expectation for empathy
- Expect BH support as part of the benefit package



Looking Ahead-Gen Alpha

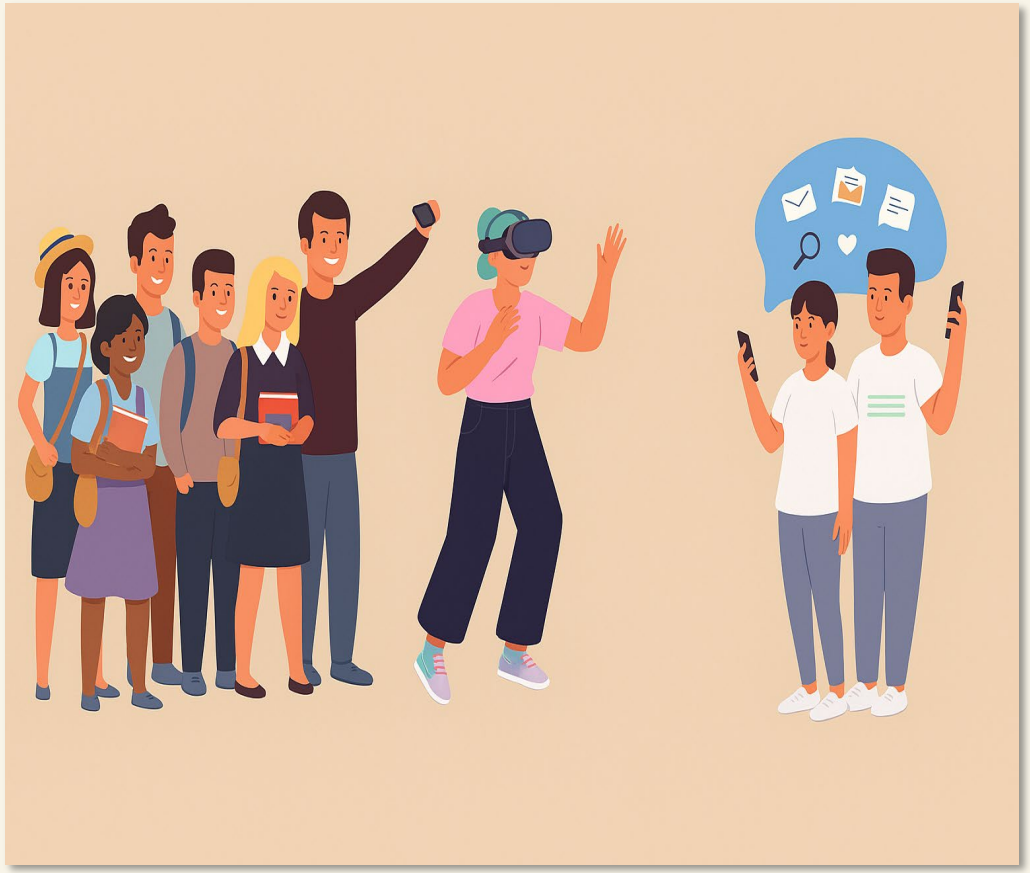
- Personalized benefits
- Integrated experiences
- AI driven tech and experiences



Modern Challenges and Future Design



What They All Expect



Shared Expectations

- ✓ Flexibility
- ✓ Fairness
- ✓ Transparency
- ✓ Ease of Use
- ✓ Empathy
- ✓ Financial protection

Key Tensions and Shared Expectations



Flexibility Versus Consistency

Personalization and Equity

Speed and Compliance Trade-off

Future Design Principles and Action Steps



Flexible Leave Options

Adopt adaptable leave policies like intermittent and caregiver leave to meet diverse employee needs across life stages.

Inclusive and Transparent Policies

Ensure definitions of family and caregiving reflect workforce diversity with clear communication on leave pay and benefits.

Digital Transformation

Leverage user-friendly digital platforms enabling real-time leave information and self-service functionalities for employees.

Action Steps for Implementation

Audit leave experiences, simplify communications, and train managers to ensure consistent, supportive policy application.