



2026 Kahoot! Gen Z Report: Singapore Edition

Transition, Tension,
and Talent Retention

12B+

non-unique participants
since launch

50M+

annual participants from
workplaces globally

97%

of the Fortune 500 use
Kahoot! to engage
employees

Kahoot! 360 - the ultimate workforce engagement platform, empowers professionals, teams and organizations of all sizes and industries to improve employee performance, productivity and retention. With Kahoot! 360 companies can transform the way they conduct meetings, host events, deliver training, onboard new starters and communicate with their teams.

Intro

As companies in Singapore continue to compete for talent, understanding the workplace experiences, expectations, and drivers of engagement of Generation Z has become increasingly critical. Gen Z employees (office workers aged 18 to 28), represent a growing segment of the workforce and are set to become the largest generation in the workplace in less than a decade. Looking to the future of the workforce, it is critical that businesses act now to equip younger employees to succeed and thrive at work.

Gen Z professionals are entering corporate environments with their own values, shaped by digital fluency, innovations in formal education, and a heightened focus on work-life balance, fairness, and personal development. Many of these run contrary to traditional corporate norms, so developing a workforce engagement and development strategy that meets younger employees' expectations and needs is key. Not only for retention and productivity, but to unlock the potential of Gen Z to drive innovation and lead.

The findings from this survey provide a snapshot of the various factors that influence Gen Z retention, motivation, and expectations. Within this report, Gen Z professionals provide insights into the top challenges they experience during the first years in a corporate environment, relating to culture shocks, belonging, communication with managers, and developing key skills through training. Organizations can utilize these findings to help guide the design of workforce engagement and learning strategies that are better aligned with the needs and realities of early-career employees.

Equipping Gen Z for workplace success is an important goal for organizations worldwide. However, with Singapore's position as one of the key gateways to the Asian market for international companies, and an innovation cluster for many industries, understanding the challenges and opportunities for Gen Z workers in Singapore is vital. Singapore stands as a major hub for industries including aviation, finance, and maritime shipping, demanding strong professional skills from current and future employees. As the business landscape of Singapore evolves, it will be critical to have a workforce that is agile, engaged, and prepared to innovate.

-Ahteram Uddin, Growth Director, Asia and MENA, Kahoot!



This report is based on polling conducted by Milieu in January 2026, surveying 265 Gen Z office workers in Singapore who have graduated from university and have been in a corporate environment between 12 and 36 months. By focusing on this early-career window, the report captures perceptions formed after their initial onboarding, once employees have been exposed to real workplace norms, expectations, and organizational practices.

Respondents shine a light on the challenges young professionals in Singapore face in the workplace, including uneven engagement and the demands of a fast-paced work life. However, they also make clear what they need most to succeed, from supportive teams, to more structured and engaging training, providing employers invaluable insights into how they can help Gen Z employees truly thrive.



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Key takeaways

49%

of Gen Z workers are either disengaged or neutral on engagement.

29%

describe their experience with mandatory workplace training as engaging.

45%

want corporate training to learn from formal education by adopting more structured and in-depth onboarding.

37%

point to engaging or motivating content when asked how their company could improve training, the #1 request.

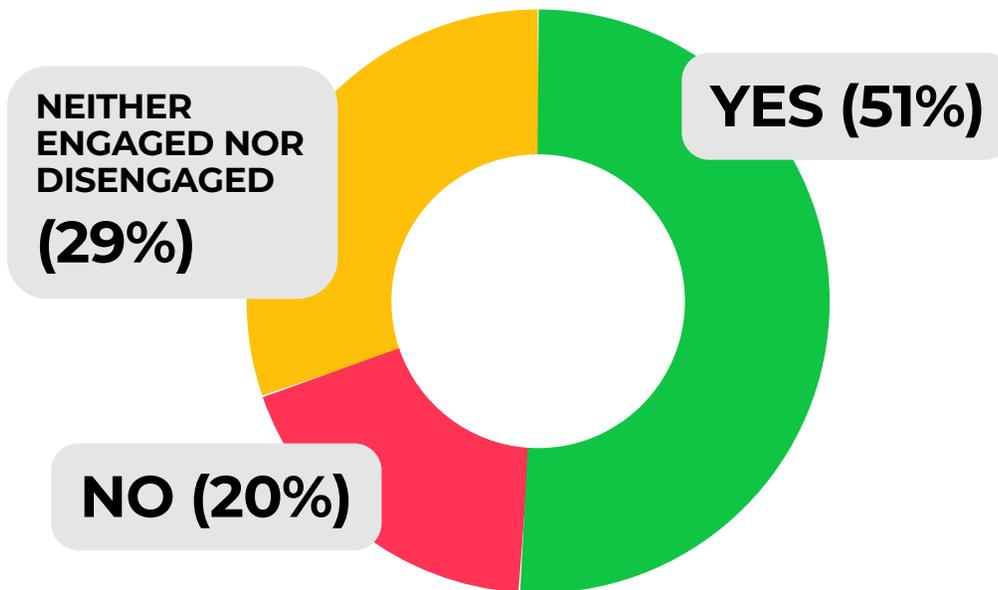
75%

of respondents agreed they are, “more likely to engage with content at work when it’s presented as a game, challenge, or includes a bit of friendly competition.”

Gen Z workplace engagement in Singapore is fragile and uneven, with nearly half feeling ambivalent or actively disengaged

Half of respondents (51%) report feeling engaged at work, indicating a modest majority experiencing a positive emotional connection to their role and organization. However, in addition to the 20% who say they are not engaged at work, nearly one in three employees (29%) describe themselves as neither engaged nor disengaged. This reveals a sizable “middle” group whose connection to work is neutral and potentially fragile. Without active engagement, they lack the enthusiasm and emotional commitment associated with higher performance, learning, and retention. This uneven state of engagement across the younger members of the workforce could potentially hamper organizations’ ability to be both innovative and consistently productive.

Do you feel engaged at work right now?



Key Takeaway: The engagement challenge amongst Gen Z is not mass disengagement, but rather emotional detachment. Organizations, especially small and medium enterprises and multinational corporations need **earlier, more intentional engagement levers** to convert neutrality into commitment. Engagement strategies must address **connection and meaning** early, rather than leaving it to chance and assume it will develop organically over time.

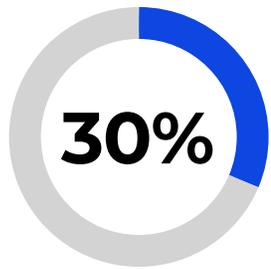
The expectations of fast-paced workplaces deliver the biggest culture shock for new professionals, but it's office politics that drives disengagement

As with any new generation entering the world of work, Gen Z's transition from formal education to a corporate environment often begins abruptly with a challenging period of adjustment. The most common culture shock for new entrants is the "Expected fast pace of work" (30%) and "Politics over merit" (27%). Closely following is seniority-driven decision making (26%), suggesting that informal power structures and hierarchy are prominent cultural shocks for many. Adjusting to the cadence of work tasks typically involves an agreed onboarding period where new joiners can get up to speed. However, office politics can immediately have a significant and long-lasting impact, creating a toxic company culture that leaves new employees demoralized and disengaged.

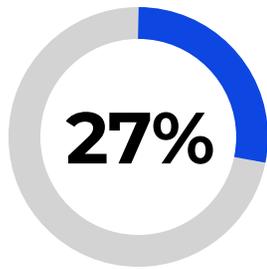
Expectations around constant availability are also notable: nearly a quarter (24%) were surprised by the expectation to respond to emails or messages 24/7, reinforcing the sense of blurred boundaries between work and personal time. This is further contextualised by 22% being surprised by how sedentary the workday is, and 19% by the loneliness or isolation of office life – suggesting a desire for more activity and social connection throughout the workday.



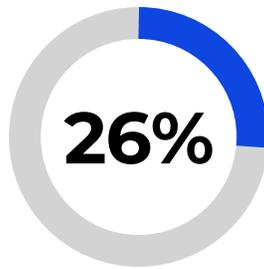
What aspects, if any, of workplace culture felt most unfamiliar or surprising to you when you first started work? [Select up to three]



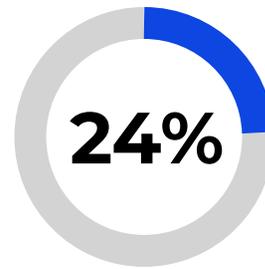
Expected fast pace of work and task completion



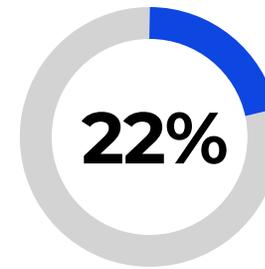
That success depends more on politics than merit



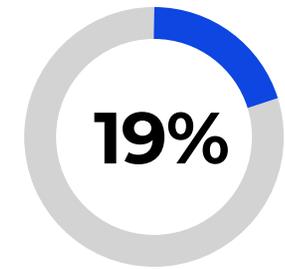
Seniority-driven decision making



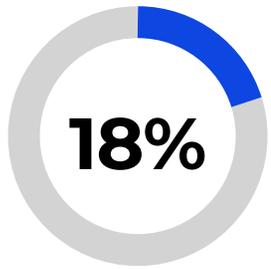
The expectation to be available to answer emails/messages 24/7



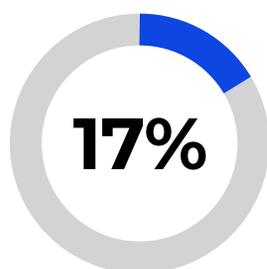
How sedentary the workday is



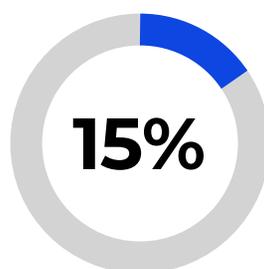
The loneliness or isolation of office life



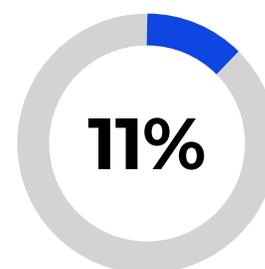
Outdated technology



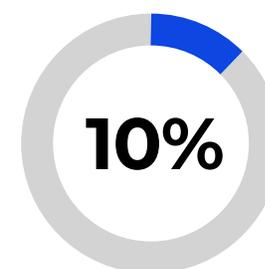
The lack of performance feedback



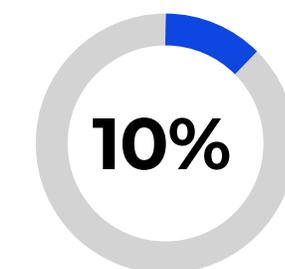
The number of meetings



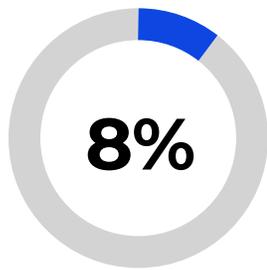
Working in a multicultural environment



Being expected to give presentations



That colleagues eat lunch at their desks



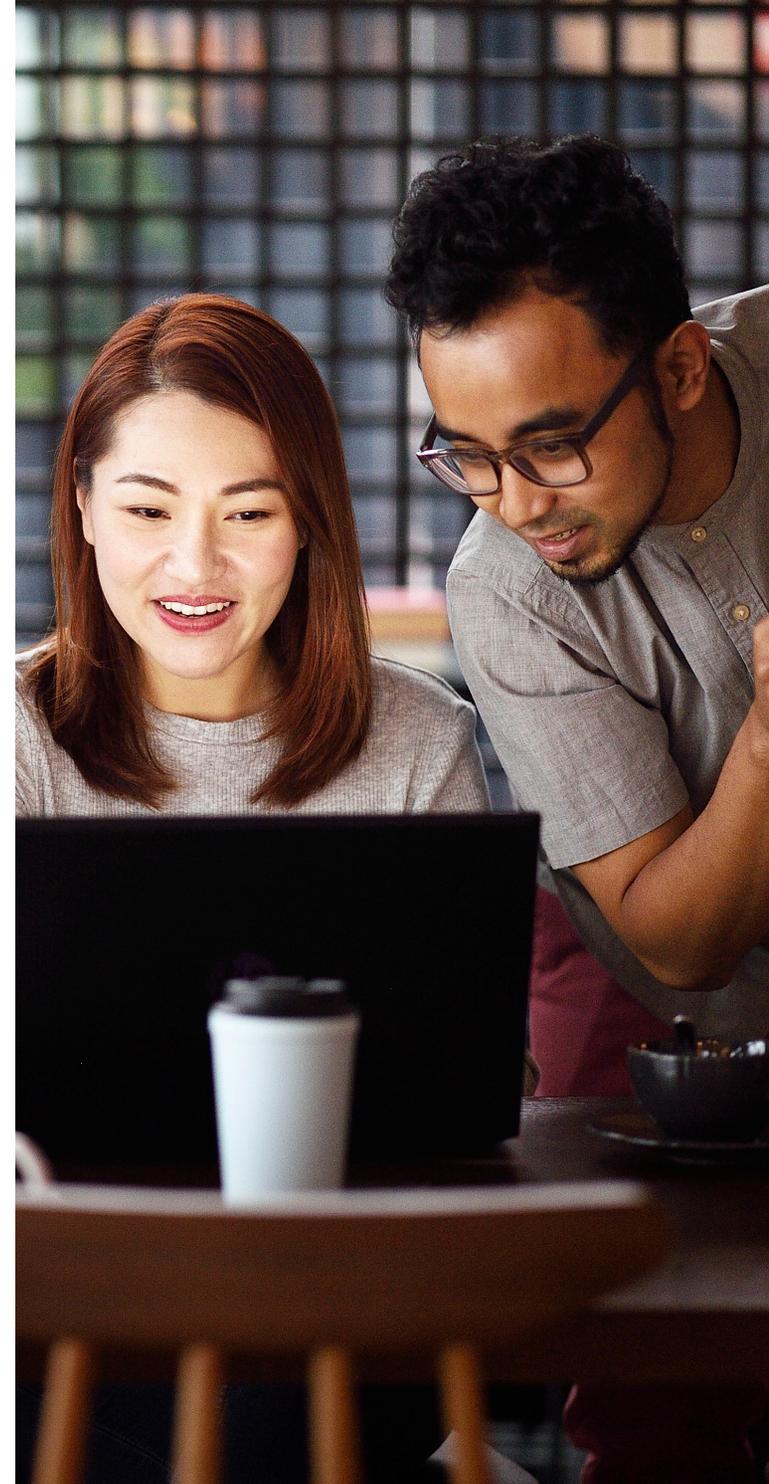
Nothing about workplace culture felt unfamiliar or surprising

Key Takeaway: Early-career employees are encountering structural and workplace culture realities that differ markedly from their expectations, which can create frustration, uncertainty, and disengagement. To address this, companies should explicitly **communicate expectations about availability, reduce unnecessary meetings, introduce transparent decision-making, and foster social connection early in onboarding.**

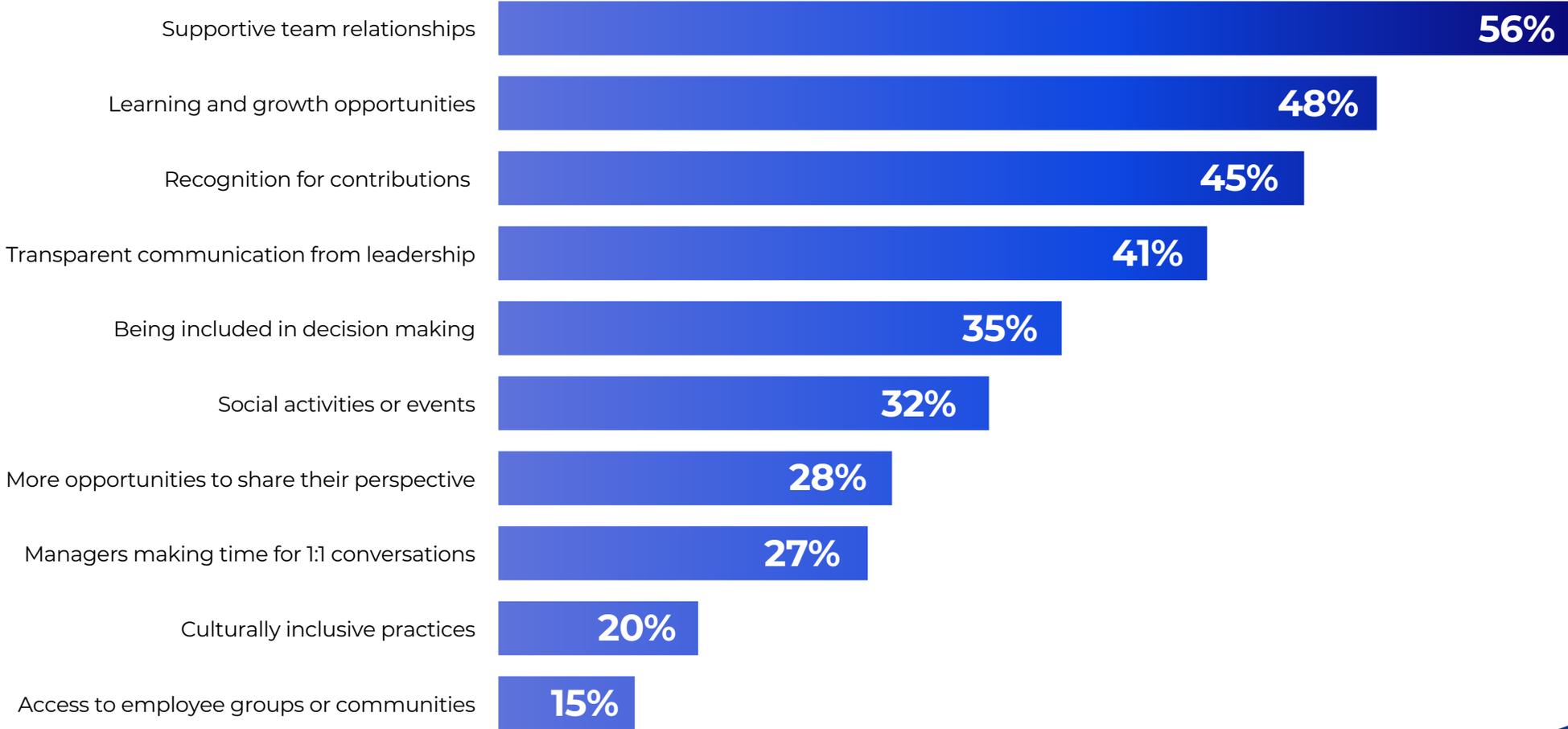
Gen Z workers most want supportive team relationships and learning opportunities to feel a sense of belonging at work

Helping new employees feel welcome and connected is always important, but it is even more critical for Gen Z employees who are also new entrants to the corporate world. How can organizations help younger employees integrate into the company culture while also adapting to a professional environment? According to Gen Z workers, supportive team relationships are the top factor (56%), showing that encouraging person-to-person connection is essential. This is followed by learning and growth opportunities (48%) and recognition for contributions (45%), indicating that belonging is closely tied to employees feeling supported in their development and valued for their work.

Leadership behaviours also play a significant role. Transparent communication from leadership (41%) and being included in decision making (35%) suggest that belonging extends beyond team-level dynamics to organizational trust and having your voice heard. Meanwhile, social activities or events (32%) and opportunities to share perspectives (28%) point to the value of inclusive participation rather than purely formal structures.



**Which, if any, of the following would help you feel a sense of belonging at work?
Please select all that apply.**



Key Takeaway: Employees are less influenced by structured groups or social events, emphasizing that everyday interpersonal and professional relationships are key drivers of motivation and retention. Efforts to strengthen belonging should prioritise team dynamics, recognition systems, and manager capability over one-off cultural initiatives or social infrastructure alone.

Competitive salary and work-life balance the non-negotiables for satisfaction among Gen Z

For Gen Z workers, job satisfaction is driven by both financial rewards and lifestyle choices. Competitive salary and benefits emerge as the top contributor (43%), underscoring the continued importance of financial compensation. However, younger professionals declare a healthy work-life balance to be nearly just as important (41%), showing how highly Gen Z also values positive and sustainable working conditions.

Secondary drivers include job security or stability (25%), a supportive manager (24%), and respect for personal time (23%), reinforcing the role of managerial behaviour and predictability in sustaining satisfaction. These are followed by more intrinsic motivators such as meaningful work (21%) and flexibility through hybrid or remote work (18%).



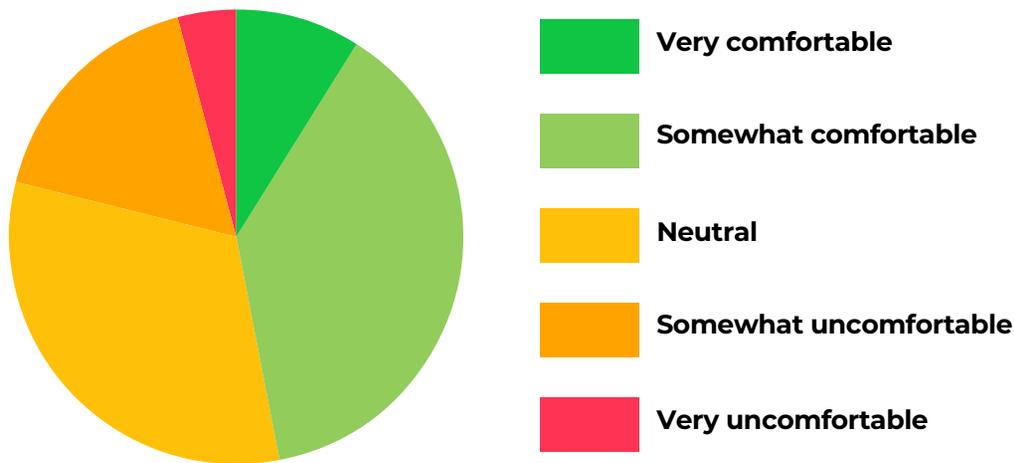
Only 9% of Gen Z workers feel very comfortable giving feedback to managers or seniors, potentially stifling innovation and improvement

As the first generation of true digital natives, Gen Z are entering the workforce with new perspectives, skills, ideas, and needs. The question is: do they feel confident to share their feedback with managers and other senior coworkers?

Among those surveyed, only 9% report feeling very comfortable giving feedback. Most feel either somewhat comfortable (38%) or neutral (32%), though 21% feel either somewhat or very uncomfortable. This reveals that full psychological safety at work is a rarity for Gen Z workers, with caution around openness and communication as the norm.

This pattern reflects the traditional hierarchical norms common in many Asian workplaces, where respect for seniority can make open feedback less instinctive. While few people feel strongly uncomfortable, there's still a clear opportunity to build greater psychological safety and encourage more open dialogue across all levels.

How comfortable are you giving feedback to your manager or someone more senior?



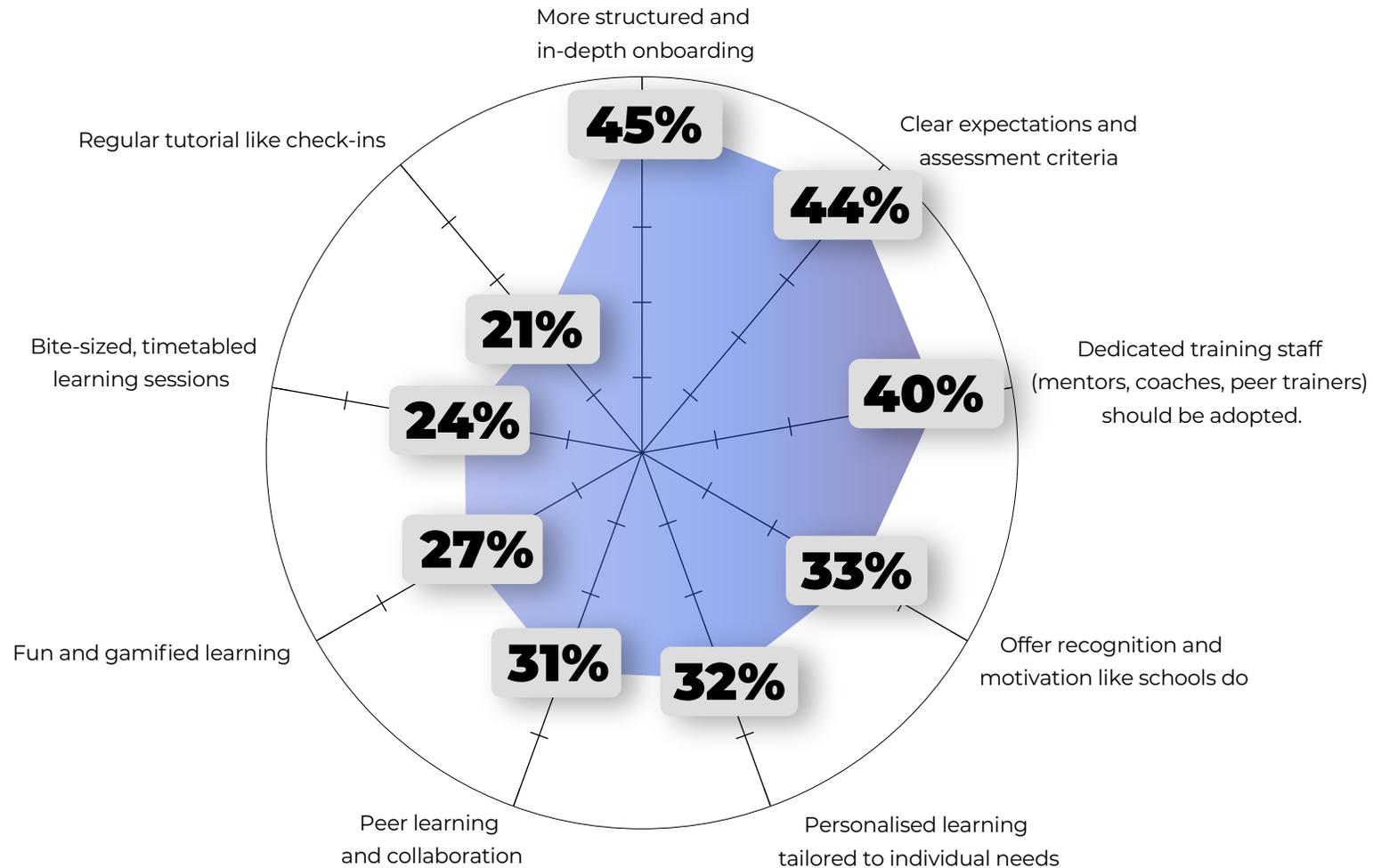
Gen Z professionals are primarily learning through trial and error, implying a lack of structured support

As new members of the workforce, effective and efficient learning support is vital for Gen Z to understand and develop the organization's specific processes, tools and skills needed for their roles. However, more than half of respondents (54%) say that they have grown professionally mainly by learning from mistakes, while only 21% say formal training. One-third (34%) of respondents chose 'watching senior colleagues handle challenges' and 'peer support or learning from colleagues of a similar age' as top professional development drivers.

While 'learning by watching and doing' can be a powerful skill building strategy, this reliance on informal, inconsistent and unstructured support also suggests a lack of sufficient onboarding and training. This may not only cause unnecessary stress for younger employees; it may also cause disruptions for the company. While some mistakes can always be expected, certain missteps can be costly, making it worthwhile to invest time upfront for the necessary training.



**What could employers learn from schools and universities in terms of training and skill building?
Please select all that apply.**



Key Takeaway: Gen Z employees want training that mirrors educational systems, where goals, assessment, and coaching are clear and consistent. Employers should **redesign onboarding and training to include defined milestones, measurable expectations, and ongoing mentorship to accelerate competency and confidence.** This structured support enhances confidence, skill acquisition, and a sense of progression among employees.

Younger employees call for the 'syllabus' approach: more structured onboarding and clearer expectations in training

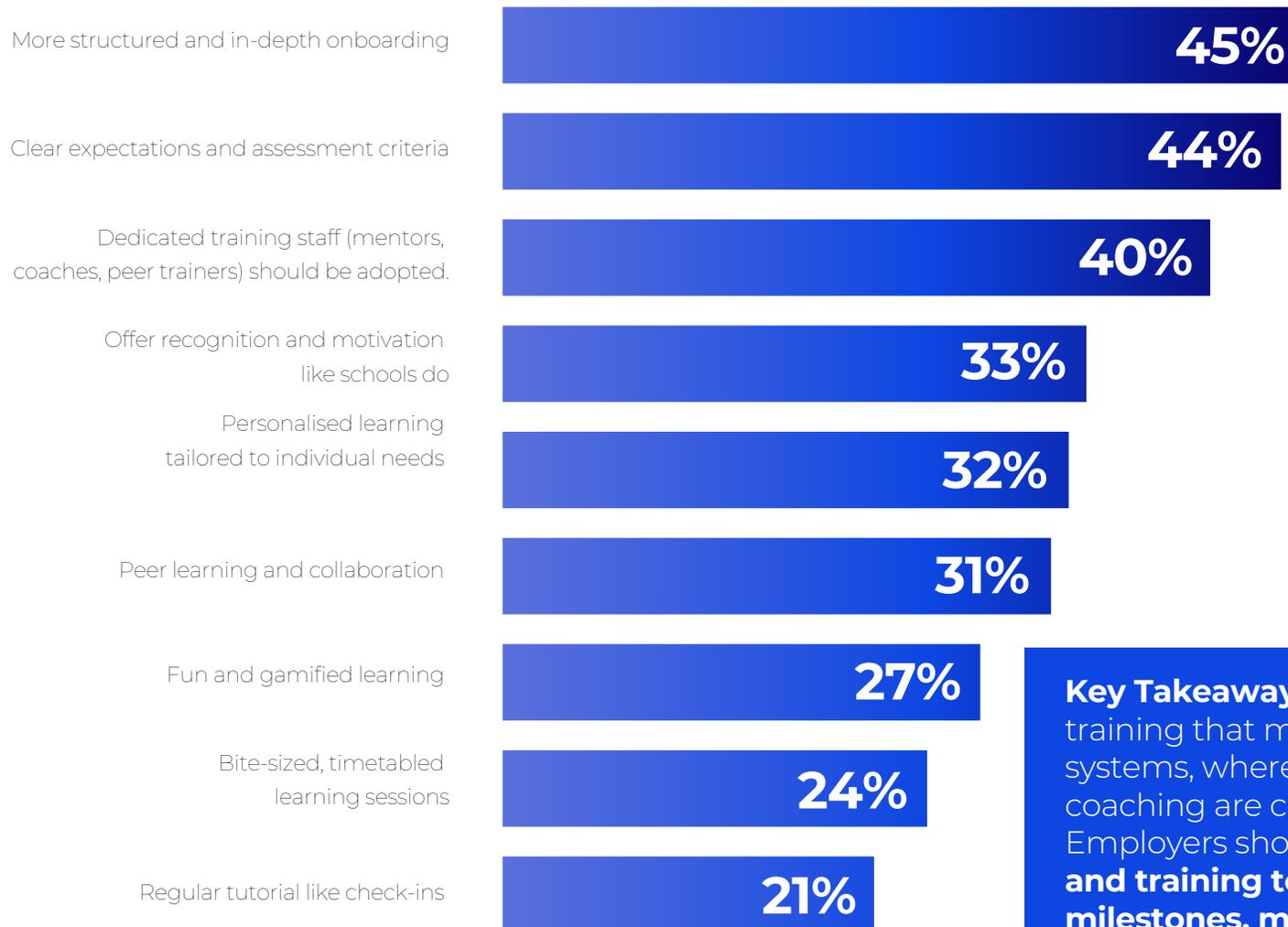
As recent graduates, Gen Z workers bring a unique perspective to corporate training. Gen Z's fresh experience of both formal education and albeit often limited workplace training, can help organizations optimize their learning support, by drawing from the most effective strategies of schools and universities.

In this survey, Gen Z most strongly highlight the need for more structured and in-depth onboarding (45%) and clear expectations and assessment criteria in training (44%), indicating a desire for clarity, structure, and progression benchmarks similar to academic environments. The importance of dedicated training staff such as mentors, coaches, or peer trainers (40%) further reinforces the value placed on guided learning.

Personalisation also emerges as an important element: with personalised learning tailored to individual needs noted by 32% of respondents and peer learning and collaboration (31%) This suggests that one-size-fits-all training is clearly insufficient. Gen Z workers also call for motivational elements such as recognition (33%) and fun or gamified learning (27%) to be applied in the workplace.



What could employers learn from schools and universities in terms of training and skill building? Please select all that apply.



Key Takeaway: Gen Z employees want training that mirrors educational systems, where goals, assessment, and coaching are clear and consistent. Employers should **redesign onboarding and training to include defined milestones, measurable expectations, and ongoing mentorship to accelerate competency and confidence.** This structured support enhances confidence, skill acquisition, and a sense of progression among employees.

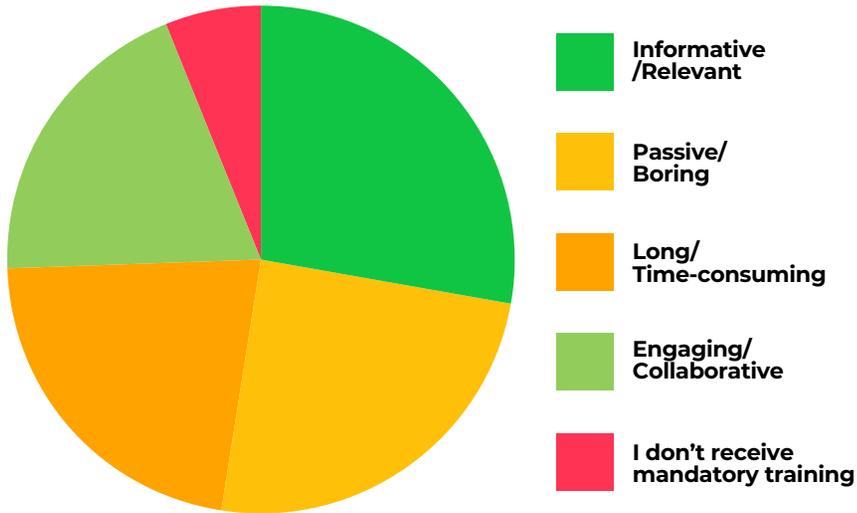
Mandatory workplace training is viewed as informative but often boring

Successfully delivering essential training for compliance, safety, or simply necessary skills and knowledge is often a challenge for many organizations. Comprehension and learning retention are critical, yet truly engaging Gen Z participants can seem impossible when the topics aren't considered 'fun'. However, these survey findings suggest that the key may in fact be in how training is delivered. Only 29% describe mandatory training as engaging or collaborative, indicating that interactive experiences are not the norm.

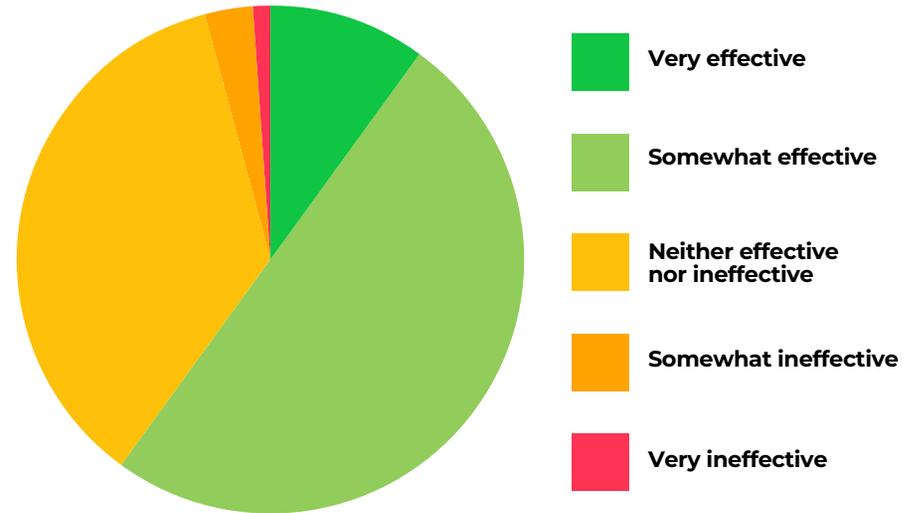
This 'boredom barrier' may also be limiting the impact of the training. While 42% describe their company's mandatory training as informative, half of respondents (50%) also say it is only somewhat effective, and a further 36% as neither effective nor ineffective. These results indicate that while training often meets basic requirements, it may not be making a strong and lasting impact on behaviour.



Which word best describes your experience with mandatory workplace training?

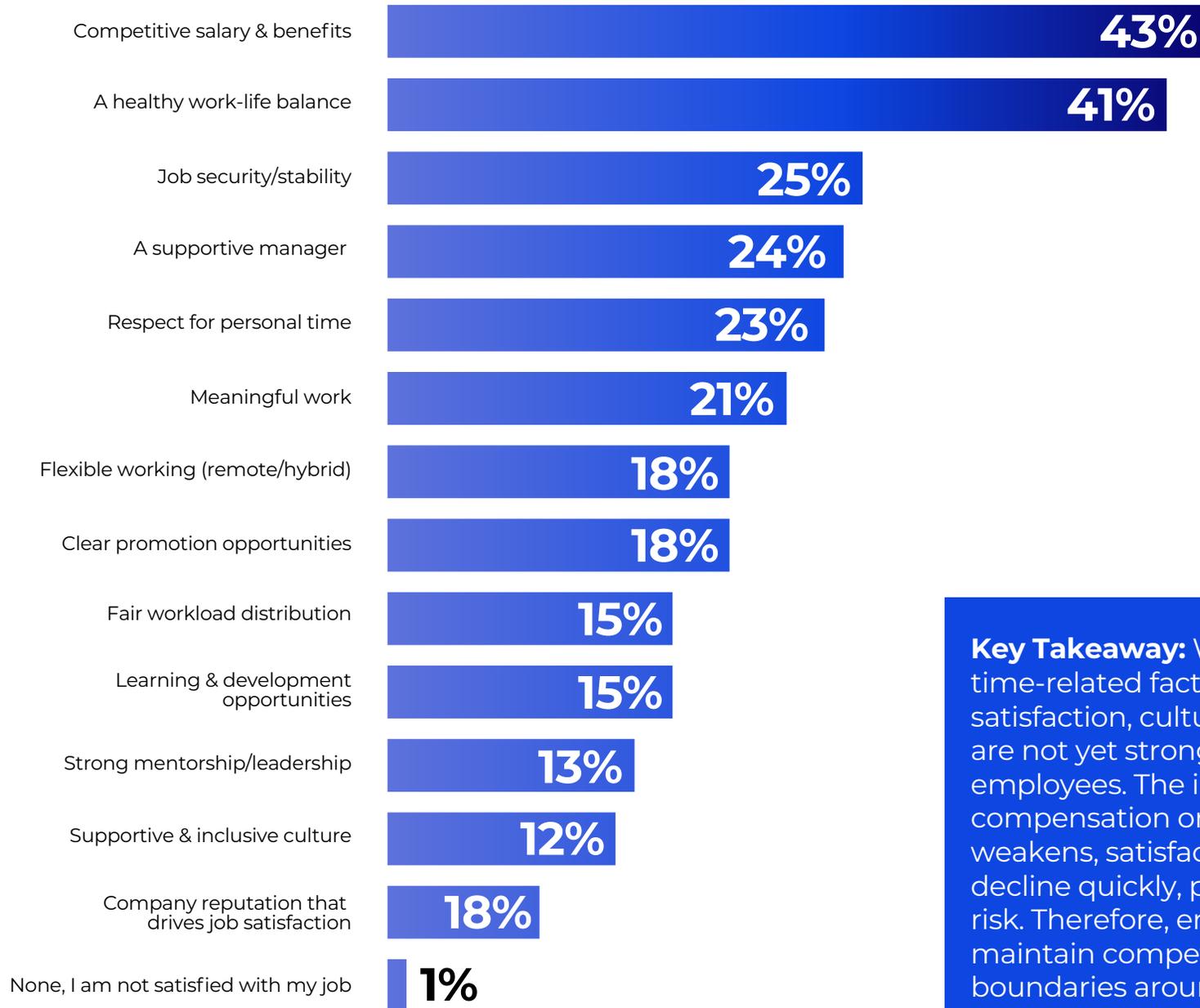


After the mandatory workplace training, how effective has the session been?



Key Takeaway: While many teams struggle to find the right tools to deliver mandatory training in a way that truly connects with employees, **thoughtful learning design can transform it into a meaningfully engaging and impactful experience.** Leverage intrinsic motivators including friendly competition, curiosity, collaboration, and interactivity to boost engagement and help learning stick.

What factors contribute most to your job satisfaction? You may select up to 3 answers.



Key Takeaway: While financial and time-related factors dominate satisfaction, culture and mentorship are not yet strong drivers for most employees. The implication is that if compensation or work-life balance weakens, satisfaction will likely decline quickly, putting retention at risk. Therefore, employers must maintain competitive pay and clear boundaries around personal time.

Gen Z employees desire training that is more engaging, applied, and relevant to their roles, with clear structure and pathways

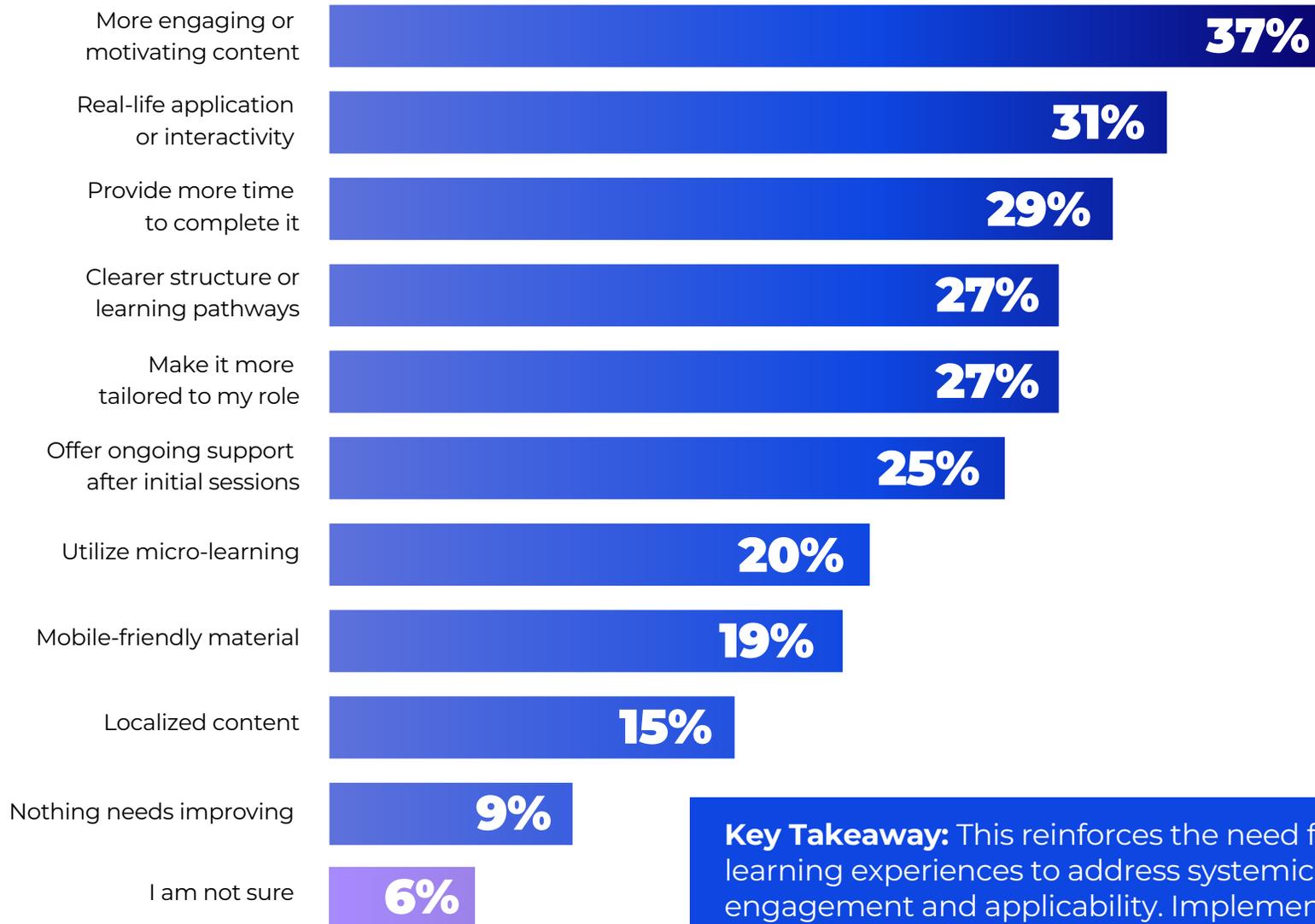
Gen Z workers clearly see the shortcomings of workplace training, but what kind of changes do they want to see for an improved learning experience? Their strongest call for improvement is more engaging or motivating content (37%), directly aligning with earlier critiques of training being passive or boring. Real-life application or interactivity (31%) further underscores the need to bridge theory and practice and enable active participation.

Structural improvements are also prominent: providing more time to complete training (29%), clearer structure or learning pathways (27%), and training tailored to specific roles (27%) suggest that both pacing and relevance are key gaps. Ongoing reinforcement is also valued, with 25% calling for support after initial sessions.

A majority of respondents (54%) also prefer a mix of group-based and independent learning, far exceeding those who prefer learning exclusively in a group (23%) or alone (16%). This suggests Gen Z employees value the complementary benefits of collaboration (shared insights, discussion, and social reinforcement) alongside autonomy (self-pacing, reflection, and focus).



What could your company improve about the existing training process?



Key Takeaway: This reinforces the need for redesigning learning experiences to address systemic issues in engagement and applicability. Implementing **micro-learning modules, mobile-friendly platforms, and ongoing support post-training** can increase participation and skill retention, ensuring that learning contributes directly to professional growth and job satisfaction.

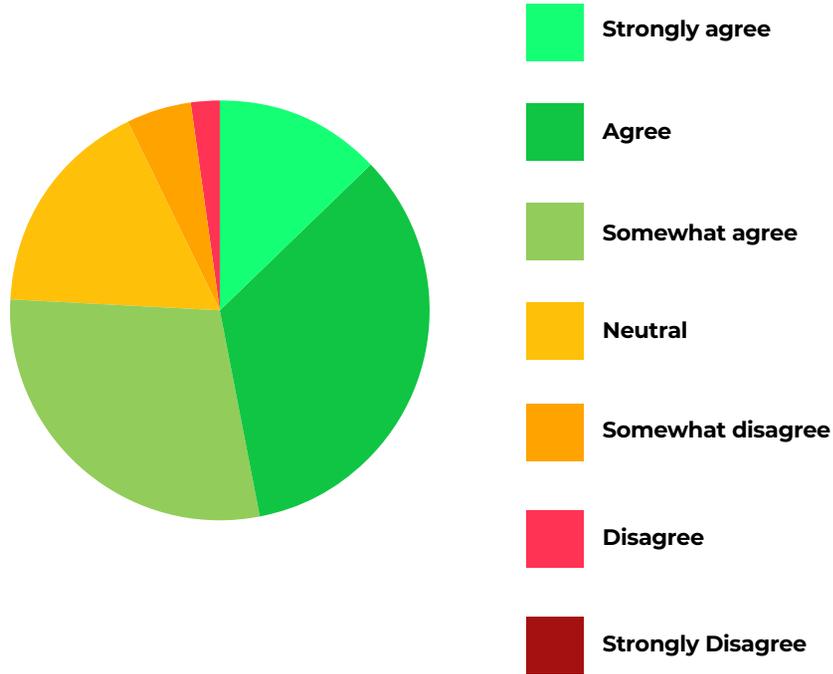
Most Gen Z workers are more likely to feel engaged with gamified content

In optimizing training and internal communication for engagement, gamification represents a clear, underutilized lever. Nearly half (47%) agree that they are more likely to engage with content presented as a game, challenge, or friendly competition. Only 9% disagree to any extent, indicating minimal resistance to a gamified approach.

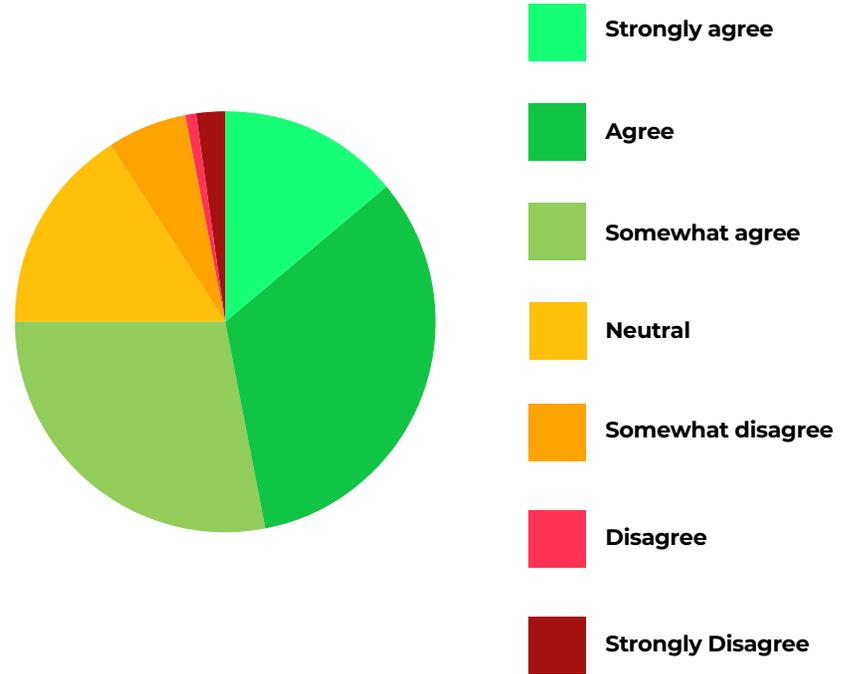
Gen Z employees' views of their company's training and internal communication technologies are also broadly positive, though with room for improvement. Only 13% strongly agree that they feel modern and intuitive, though most agree (34%) or somewhat agree (29%). However, it should be noted that the presence of modern and user-friendly technology does not necessarily guarantee either engagement or learning impact. So, it is critical that when choosing training and communication solutions, organizations look for tools specifically designed and proven to deliver on both.



“The technology and software used for internal communication and training at my workplace feels modern and intuitive.”



“I’m more likely to engage with content at work when it’s presented as a game, challenge, or includes a bit of friendly competition.”



Key Takeaway: Gen Z workers’ positivity towards gamified content shows that it could be a particularly effective approach for creating engaging learning experiences for younger professionals. Experiment with tools that are modern and intuitive, as Gen Z workers expect, but **choose platforms specifically designed for interactivity and engagement.**



The Gen Z Workforce – Transition, Tension, and Talent Retention

Providing valuable insights into Gen Z's workplace reality in Singapore, this report points to a number of critical challenges and solutions for engaging, retaining, and developing future workforce leaders.

As these findings show, Gen Z attrition risk is driven less by overt dissatisfaction and more by weak emotional attachment, unmet expectations, and structural friction in day-to-day work. Fragile engagement is additionally impacted by early workplace “culture shock,” including fast-paced work expectations, politics over merit, and seniority-driven decision-making.

This emotional disconnect and perceived misalignment between workplace expectations and reality underscores the need for more effective engagement, communication, and learning support to help Gen Z adapt and indeed thrive at work.

These findings clearly show that for Gen Z their motivation is anchored in human connection, growth, and recognition, complemented by fair rewards and manageable work conditions. Gen Z professionals are calling for consistent support from team relationships, learning, and recognition to give them a genuine sense of belonging, while of course also valuing a balance of financial security and work-life balance.

Early-career professionals expect their workplace to function as a development platform, not just a place of employment. To retain, engage, and empower Gen Z, organizations must offer clear pathways for learning and growth from onboarding to upskilling, delivered through modern, engaging learning experiences. This can not only elevate younger employees' motivation, but boost productivity and performance across the organization.

Explore further workplace insights and learn more about relevant engagement solutions on Kahoot!

Methodology



Data was collected through an online survey administered via Milieu's proprietary survey community, enabling access to a diverse pool of young working professionals across Singapore. The total sample size for this study is n=265, comprising a mix of male and female respondents to ensure that insights reflect a broad range of perspectives within the Gen Z workforce.

The target respondents are office workers who have graduated from university and have been in a corporate environment for between 12 and 36 months. By focusing on this early-career window, the study aims to capture authentic perceptions formed after initial onboarding, once employees have been exposed to real workplace norms, expectations, and organizational practices.

Respondents selected the following industry or profession as best describing their line of work.

- Accountancy, banking and finance - 16%
- Healthcare, science and pharmaceuticals - 12%
- Information technology - 12%
- Engineering and manufacturing - 11%
- Business, consulting and management - 6%
- Teaching and education - 5%
- Public services and administration - 5%
- Transport and logistics - 4%
- Marketing, advertising and PR - 3%
- Property and construction - 3%
- Others - 20%

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