

Gen Zers vs. Millennials in the workplace

Data on workplace preferences, work habits, and social media use from America's two youngest working generations.



Original survey data by Zenefits, the HR platform

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Introduction

Millennials aren't the youngest working generation anymore, Gen Zers are the new kids on the block. This group of individuals, born between 1995 and 2019*, already make up 5% of the total U.S. labor force, roughly 9 million people*.

The following was conducted to inform business leaders with insights around the work preferences and habits of our youngest two working generations. This is particularly important to HR, hiring and recruiting staff, and the development of internal company culture as it pertains to generational sensitivity.

While it's too early to *definitively* determine the preferential nuances of Gen Zers, this early data will help decision makers plan ahead.

Methodology

The following data came from a survey commissioned by Zenefits, the HR platform. It includes survey responses from 400 U.S. working individuals between the ages of 18 and 37 years old. Respondents included a 50:50 ratio of Millennials and Gen Zers, coming from across the United States, and represent varied industries in both "blue collar" and "white collar" jobs.

Survey data was collected in September 2019.

Key Takeaways

Top 8 insights from the research

1. Younger workers care more about "pay" and "benefits" than the values or mission of the company.

Both Millennials and Gen Zers rank "pay" and "benefits" as the #1 and #2 most important factors when choosing a job.

2. Gen Zers might not be as "traditionalist" as we thought.

A greater proportion of Millennials (77.5%) report wanting a 9am-5pm work schedule than do Gen Zers (71.5%).

3. Influencers may be losing their sway among younger audiences.

58.8% of Millennials and 60.5% of Gen Zers don't trust brands. But guess who they trust *less*? Influencers. 65.2% of Millennials and 63.5% Gen Zers don't trust influencers. Who do they trust? Find out.

4. Younger workers are happy with their jobs.

80.7% of Millennials and 82.0% of Gen Zers report job satisfaction. This is more than 30 points above the national average of 51%*.

5. If something is critical, Gen Zers prefer to get a text message; Millennials an email.

After being notified in person, 43.0% Gen Zers prefer getting notified by text messages if an issue arises in the workplace. Millennials, in contrast, would prefer an email (38.5%).



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Key Takeaways

Top 8 insights from the research (cont'd)

6. Millennials and Gen Zers are fiscally focused on the future.

91.0% of Gen Zers and 92.0% of Millennials report wanting to save for retirement.

7. "Low pay" is the #1 reason for job dissatisfaction among Millennials and Gen Zers.

Of the roughly 1 in 5 who aren't happy with their jobs, 52.8% of Gen Zers, and 52.8% of Millennials point to "low pay" as the number one reason for dissatisfaction.

8. More than Facebook, TV, podcasts or any other media – Gen Zers get news from "talking with friends."

When asked to rank various news channels, including traditional, digital, and audio, 83.5% of Gen Zers say they "sometimes" or "always" get their news from chatting with buddies. An insight into the importance of the peer to peer networks.



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Younger workers care more about "pay" and "benefits" than the values or mission of the company.

Both Millennials and Gen Zers rank "pay" and "benefits" as the #1 and #2 most important factors when choosing a job, and rank them higher than considerations like the values or mission of the company, or the impact that the company or product has in the world.

This debunks some commonly held stereotypes of Millennials (and maybe Gen Zers) that they only want to work for companies whose values they align to. Instead we see that basic needs like money and health insurance are still the strongest motivators when deciding on, or between, jobs.

What are the most important factors you consider when seeking a job?

Gen Zers		Millennials	
1	Pay	1	Pay
2	Benefits	2	Benefits
3	Job Location	3	Job Location
4	Ability to grow career	4	Values/mission of the company
5	Values/mission of the company	5	Ability to grow career
6	How the product impacts world	6	How the product impacts world



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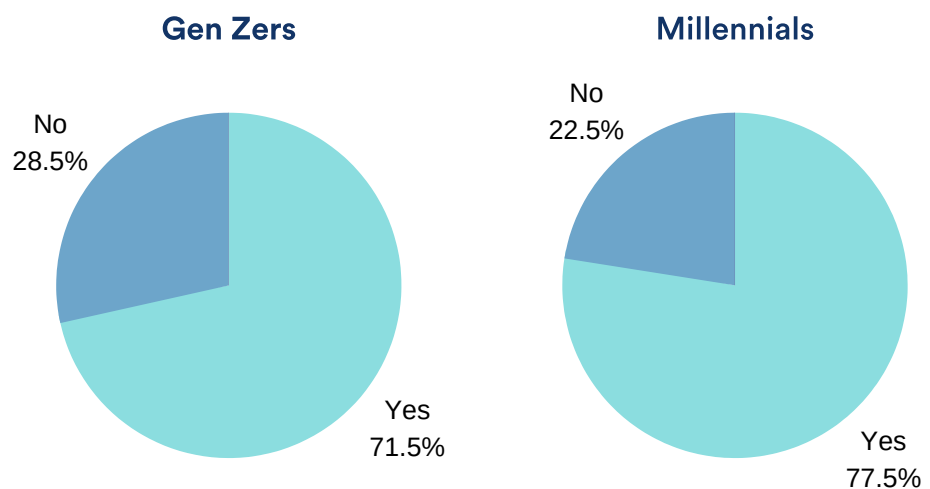
Gen Zers might not be as "traditionalist" as we thought.

A greater proportion of Millennials (77.5%) in the survey reported wanting a 9am-5pm work schedule, as compared to Gen Zers (71.5%). This is interesting on two levels.

First, Gen Zers have already been painted by mass media outlets as preferring more traditional jobs in contrast to their Millennial peers. This data suggests otherwise, and in fact Millennials have a greater propensity for preferring a classic work schedule.

Secondly, as distributed workforces and flexible work weeks continue to rise in popular culture, HR needs to understand how to build work schedules that enable worker productivity. This data suggests perhaps a classic 9am-5pm model isn't completely outdated or undesired.

I like a 9am - 5pm work schedule.





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Influencers may be losing their sway among younger audiences.

64.0% of Millennials and Gen Zers don't trust influencers, 59.3% don't trust brands.

Who do they trust? *Their peers.*

While most corporations don't need influencers to promote their job postings, understanding who young talent trusts may impact how communicate job openings, who to ask for referrals, and ultimately how to grow the business.

The importance of one-to-one relationships, word of mouth connections, and peer reviews for you business is increasing.

Let's talk about trust...

Gen Zers & Millennials combined:

62.3% Don't trust influencers.

57.8% Don't trust brands.



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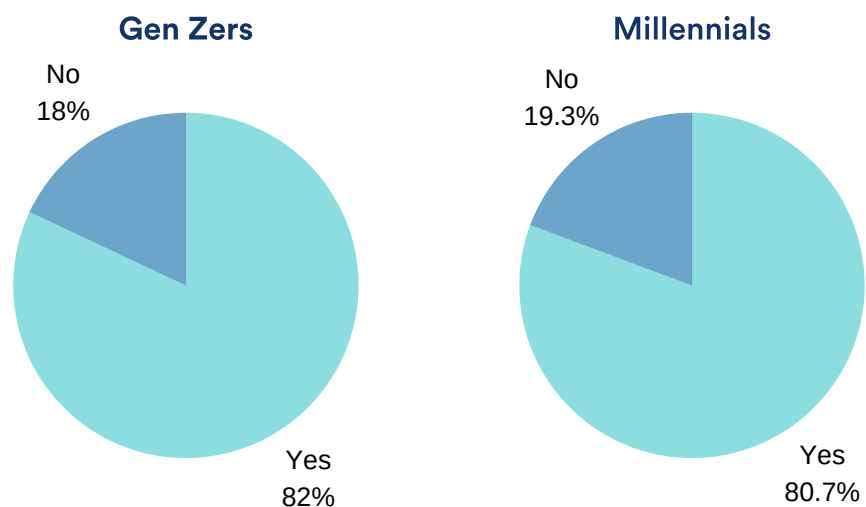
Younger workers are happy with their jobs.

A whopping 80.7% of Millennials and 82.0% of Gen Zers report be happy or satisfied with their jobs. This is more than 30 points above the national average of 51%*, according to a 2018 national survey of 1,500 workers by The Conference Board.

This could also be linked to today's tight job market which often benefits employees, and makes it easy to find a job.

Either way, because job satisfaction is linked to employee engagement, which is linked to employee performance, this finding suggests younger workers are highly engaged and productive in their jobs.

Are you satisfied / happy with your job?





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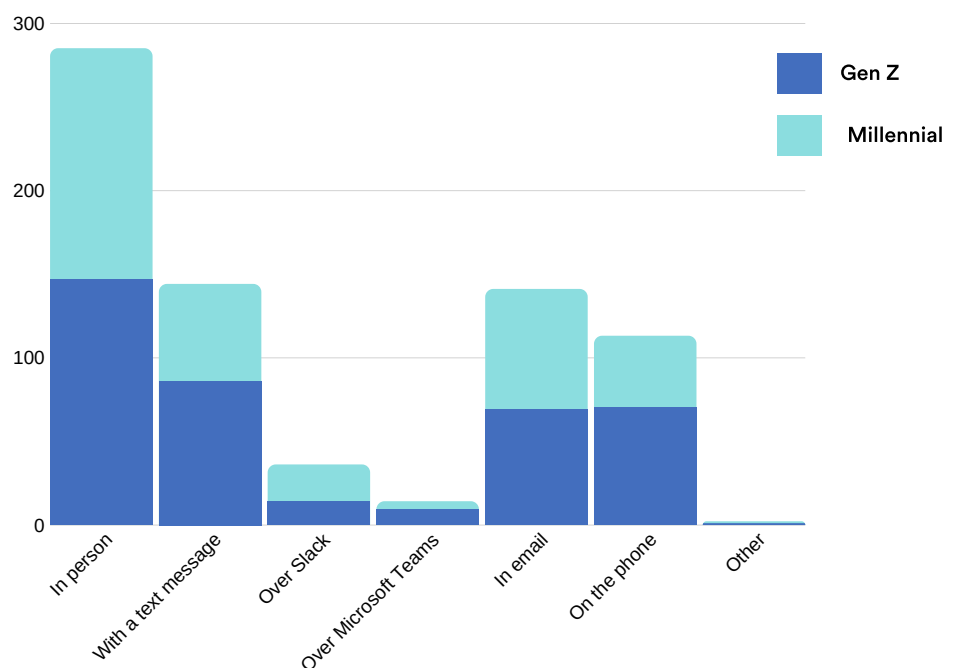
If something is critical, Gen Zers prefer to get a text message; Millennials an email.

We all have our preferred ways of being notified when something needs urgent attention. Both Gen Zers and Millennials prefer being notified in person as the #1 choice for communication, but if that's not available, Gen Zers prefer getting notified by text messages (43.0%) whereas Millennials would prefer an email (38.5%).

This is an important fact, as it arms managers with insights to best communicate with their teams, and understand what's "appropriate."

If you're hiring Gen Z employees, make sure to save their phone numbers.

If an issue comes up at work I prefer to get notified:



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Millennials and Gen Zers are fiscally focused on the future.

More than 9 in 10 working Gen Z and Millennials report they're already planning for retirement, which is great news for employers who offer retirement savings plans like Roth IRAs or 401(k)s when considering how to attract younger talent.

How much these individuals *are actually* contributing, is a different story not expressed in this survey. But some research suggests Americans don't actually contribute to retirement savings until a decade into their working careers.

Nevertheless, knowing it's top of mind for more than 90% of our nations working youth is interesting.

Yes, I want to save for retirement.



91.0% Gen Z



92.0% Millennials



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"Low pay" is the #1 reason for job dissatisfaction among Millennials and Gen Zers.

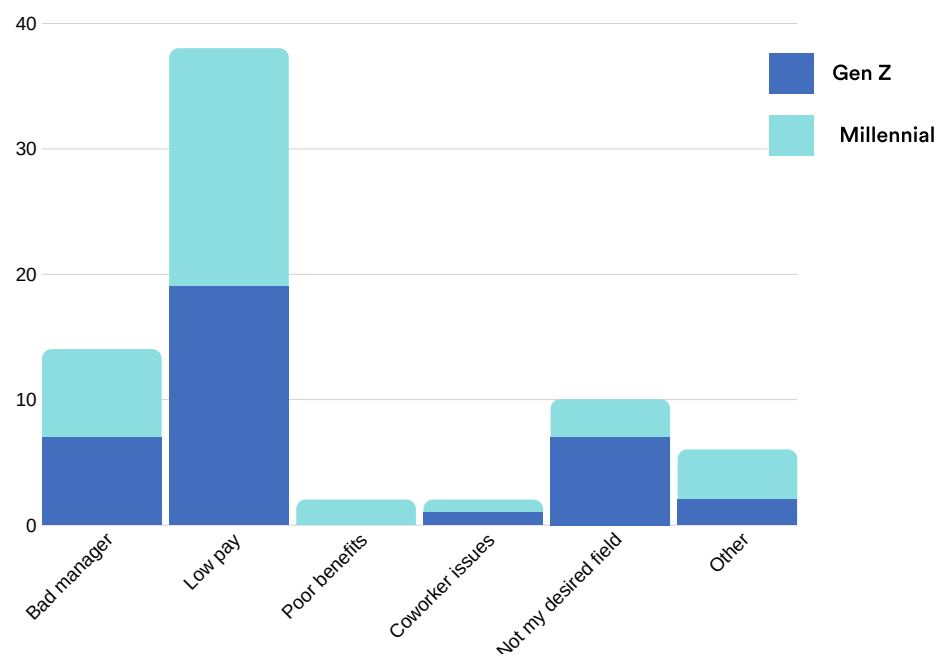
Only 1 in 5 Gen Z workers or Millennials report job dissatisfaction. Of those, most point to "low pay" as the main issue contributing to their dissatisfaction.

This could make sense for younger workers. Younger workers typically have lower entry jobs which is associated with lower pay, which could be a reason why these generations find it to be an issue.

However it is distinct from the general populous.

Most Americans point to people at work, followed by the commute to work, or interest in the job. Pay doesn't even rank in the top five*.

What makes you unhappy at work?



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More than Facebook, TV, podcasts or any other media — Gen Zers get news from "talking with friends."

There are countless ways for people to get information these days but only one that Gen Zers trust. Their peers. It's no wonder this group of individuals turns to their friends for news.

This is important for businesses to understand because reputation and brand credibility are more important than ever. Reviews, word of mouth recommendations, and gossip travel far when constituents trust and turn to their peers for information first.

How often do you use the following media sources for news?

Percent listed is for "always" or "sometimes"

Talking with friends **83.5%**

Facebook News Feed	72.0%
LinkedIn NewsFeed	39.5%
Twitter	60.0%
Apple News	43.0%
Email (Hustle, Morning Brew, etc)	61.5%
Instagram	65.5%
Podcasts	46.5%
TV news	68.5%
Newspapers	50.0%
Talking with Friends	83.5%

Sources

Pew Research:

<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/01/17/where-millennials-end-and-generation-z-begins/>

Wikipedia:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Generation_Z

The Conference Board:

<https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/labor-day-survey-51-of-us-employees-overall-satisfied-with-their-job-300704255.html>

Morning Consult:

<https://www.cfp.net/docs/default-source/news-events--research-facts-figures/cfp-board-morning-consult-survey-2019.pdf>

The Conference Board:

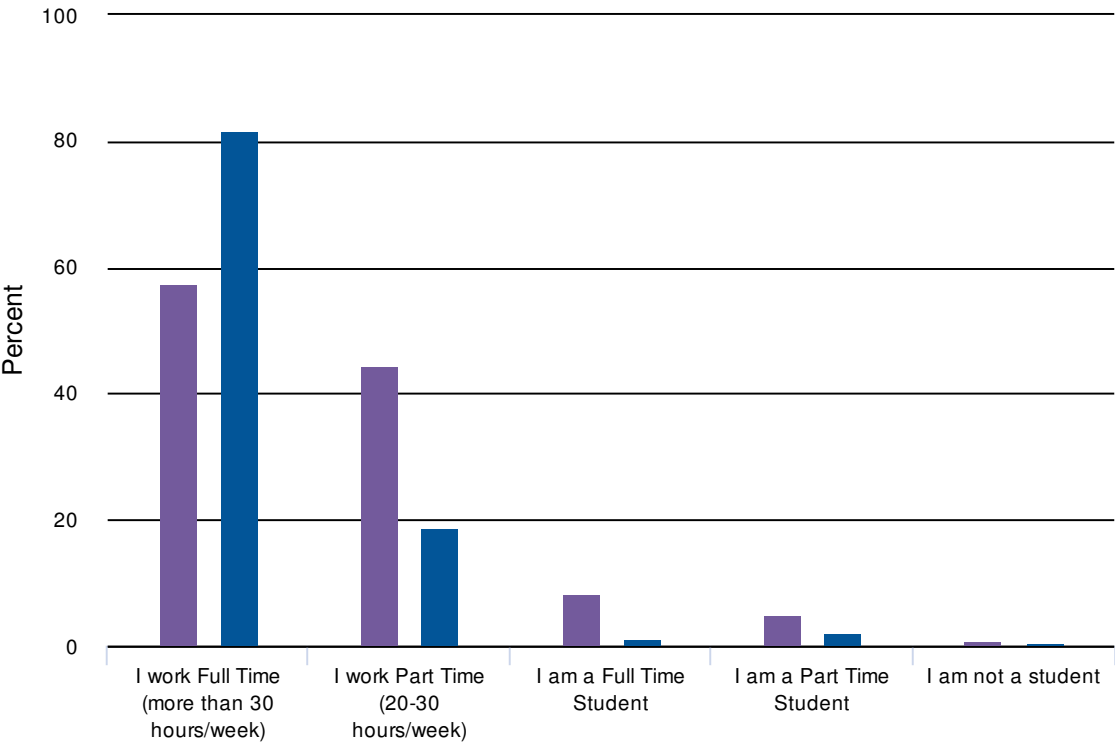
<https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/labor-day-survey-51-of-us-employees-overall-satisfied-with-their-job-300704255.html>



This report is filtered
Only show: Response Submitted between July 1, 2019 and September 19, 2019 (inclusive)

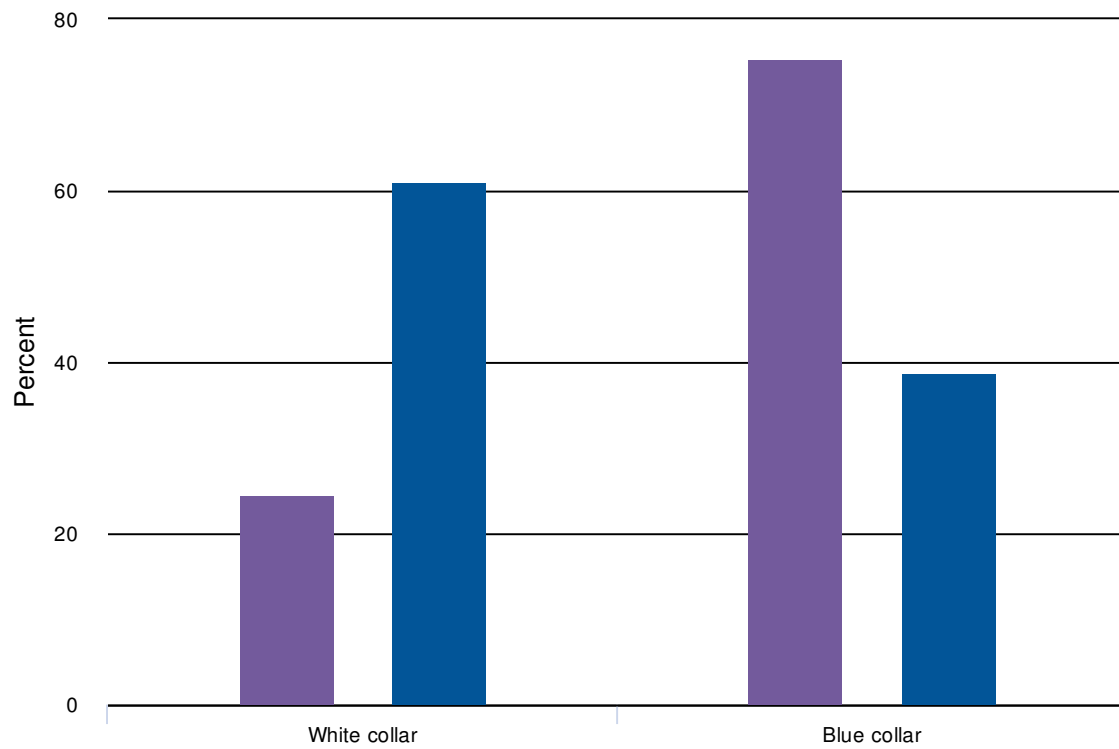
Millennials vs. Gen Zers in the Workplace

1. Which of the following describes you:



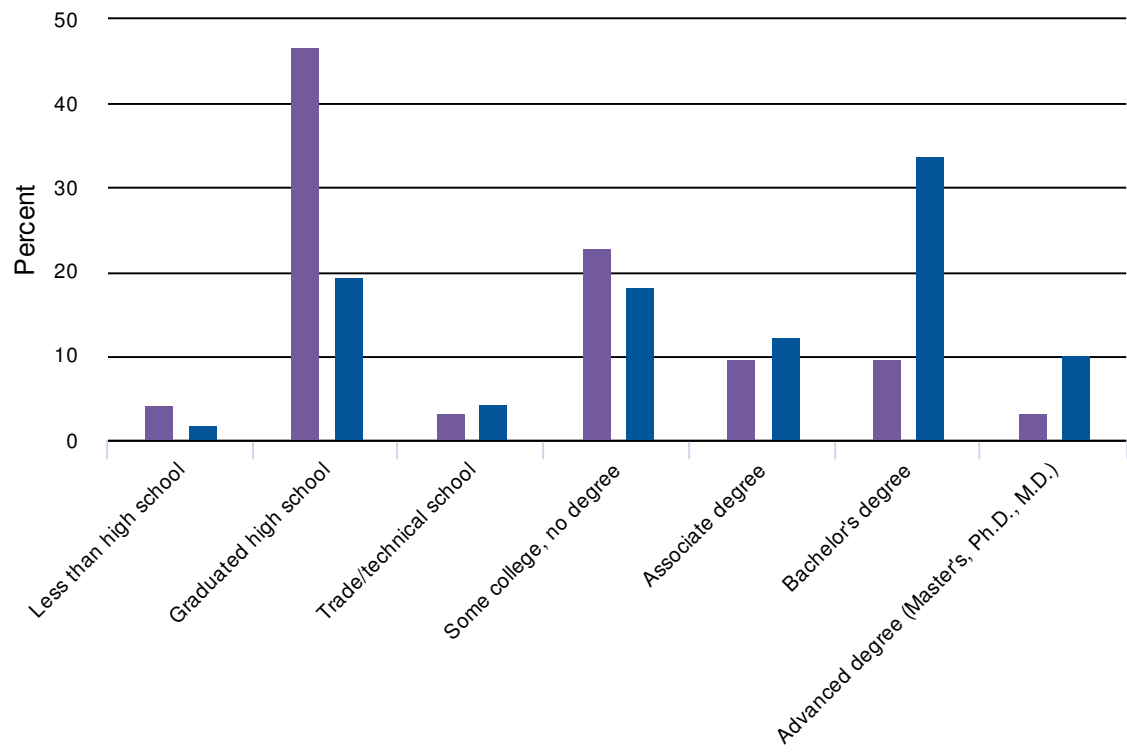
Segment	Value	Percent	% of Total	Responses
■ Gen Z	I work Full Time (more than 30 hours/week)	57.4%	17.5%	70
	I work Part Time (20-30 hours/week)	44.3%	13.5%	54
	I am a Full Time Student	8.2%	2.5%	10
	I am a Part Time Student	4.9%	1.5%	6
	I am not a student	0.8%	0.3%	1
	Total Responses		35.3%	122
■ Millennial	I work Full Time (more than 30 hours/week)	81.7%	56.8%	227
	I work Part Time (20-30 hours/week)	18.7%	13%	52
	I am a Full Time Student	1.1%	0.8%	3
	I am a Part Time Student	2.2%	1.5%	6
	I am not a student	0.7%	0.5%	2
	Total Responses		72.6%	278

2. Would you consider your work white collar or blue collar?



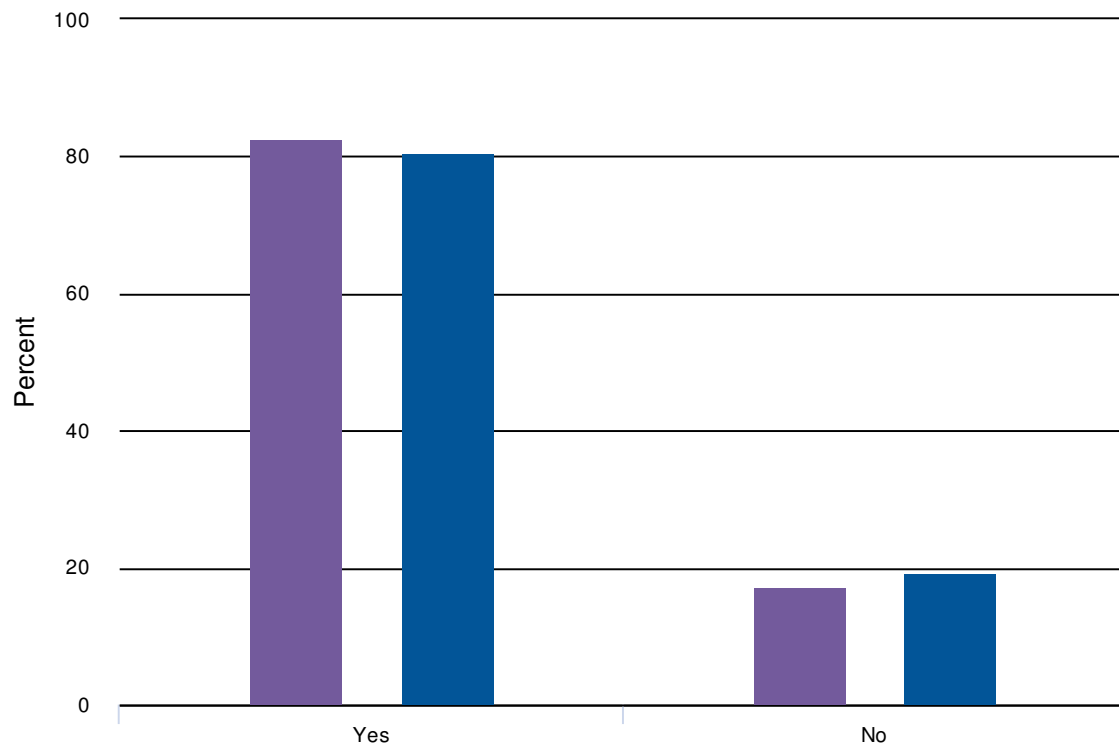
Segment	Value	Percent	% of Total	Responses
Gen Z	White collar	24.6%	7.5%	30
	Blue collar	75.4%	23%	92
	Total Responses		30.5%	122
Millennial	White collar	61.2%	42.5%	170
	Blue collar	38.8%	27%	108
	Total Responses		69.5%	278

3. What is your highest level of education?



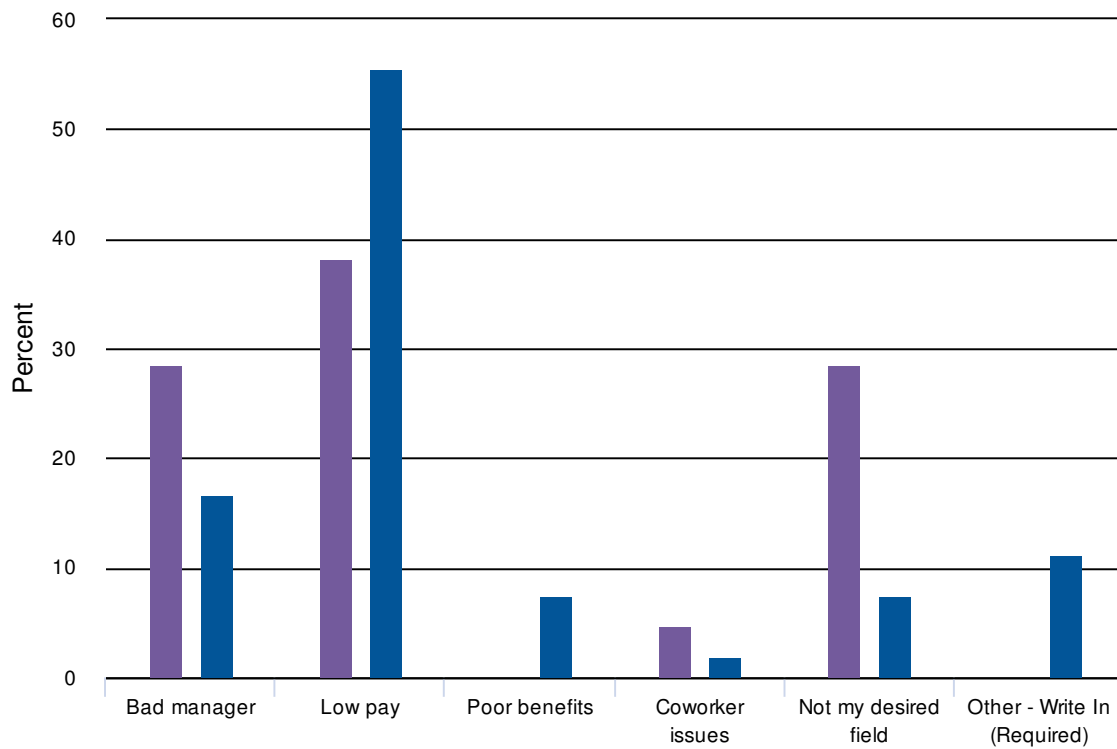
Segment	Value	Percent	% of Total	Responses
■ Gen Z	Less than high school	4.1%	1.3%	5
	Graduated high school	46.7%	14.3%	57
	Trade/technical school	3.3%	1%	4
	Some college, no degree	23%	7%	28
	Associate degree	9.8%	3%	12
	Bachelor's degree	9.8%	3%	12
	Advanced degree (Master's, Ph.D., M.D.)	3.3%	1%	4
	Total Responses		30.6%	122
■ Millennial	Less than high school	1.8%	1.3%	5
	Graduated high school	19.4%	13.5%	54
	Trade/technical school	4.3%	3%	12
	Some college, no degree	18.3%	12.8%	51
	Associate degree	12.2%	8.5%	34
	Bachelor's degree	33.8%	23.5%	94
	Advanced degree (Master's, Ph.D., M.D.)	10.1%	7%	28
Total Responses			69.6%	278

4. Are you satisfied / happy with your job?



Segment	Value	Percent	% of Total	Responses
Gen Z	Yes	82.8%	25.3%	101
	No	17.2%	5.3%	21
Total Responses			30.6%	122
Millennial	Yes	80.6%	56%	224
	No	19.4%	13.5%	54
Total Responses			69.5%	278

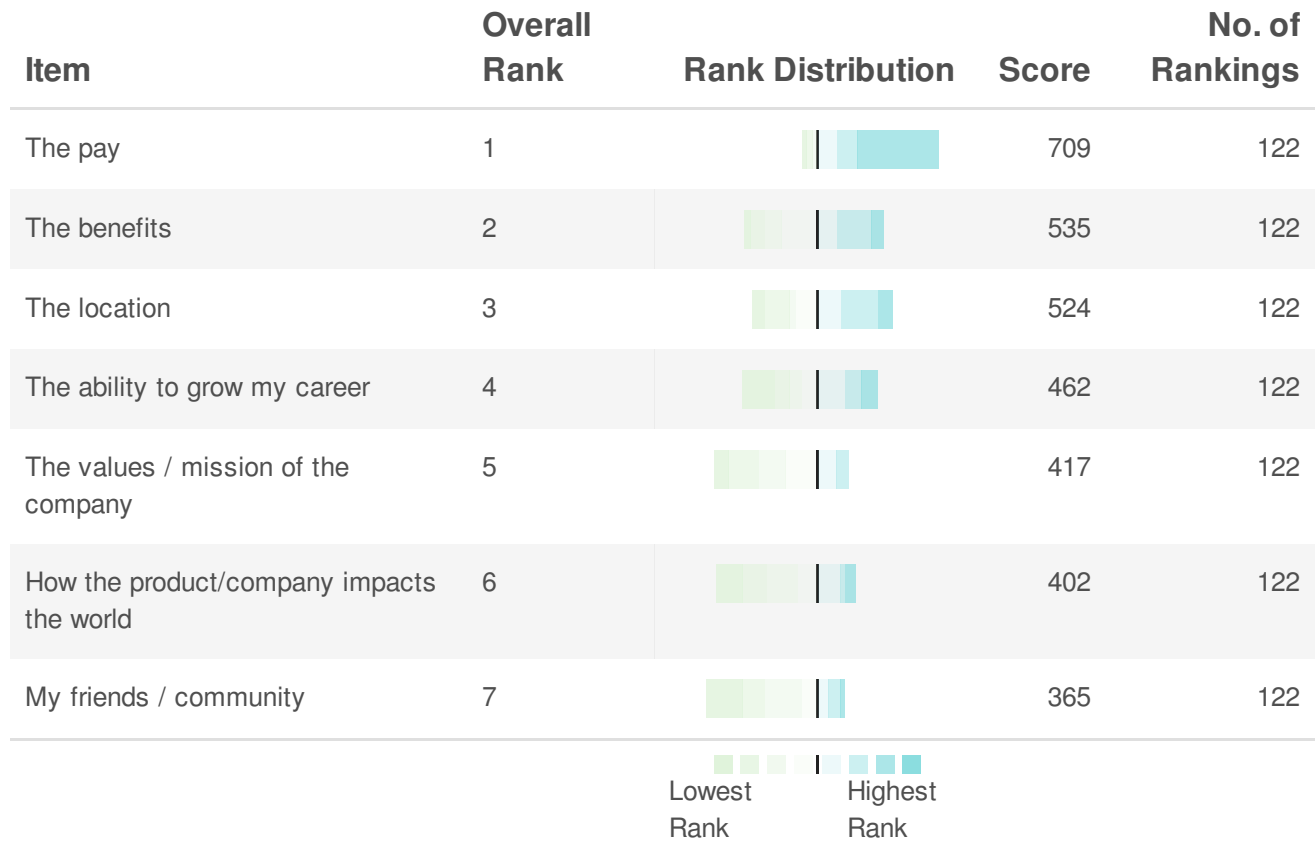
5. What makes you unhappy at work?



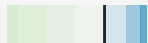
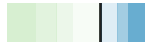
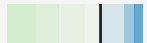
Segment	Value	Percent	% of Total	Responses
■ Gen Z	Bad manager	28.6%	8.7%	6
	Low pay	38.1%	11.6%	8
	Poor benefits	0%	0%	0
	Coworker issues	4.8%	1.4%	1
	Not my desired field	28.6%	8.7%	6
	Other - Write In (Required)	0%	0%	0
	Total Responses		30.4%	21
■ Millennial	Bad manager	16.7%	13%	9
	Low pay	55.6%	43.5%	30
	Poor benefits	7.4%	5.8%	4
	Coworker issues	1.9%	1.4%	1
	Not my desired field	7.4%	5.8%	4
	Other - Write In (Required)	11.1%	8.7%	6
	Total Responses		78.2%	54

6. What are the most important factors you consider when seeking a job? (Please rank 1= highest, 7 = lowest)

■ Gen Z



■ Millennial

Item	Overall Rank	Rank Distribution	Score	No. of Rankings
The pay	1		1,478	278
The benefits	2		1,256	278
The location	3		1,137	278
The values / mission of the company	4		1,019	278
The ability to grow my career	5		1,009	278
How the product/company impacts the world	6		941	278
My friends / community	7		941	278
		 Lowest Rank Highest Rank		

7. Please indicate how you feel about the following statements regarding your management / boss.

	Yes	No	Responses
I consider my boss a friend.			
Gen Z Count Row %	79 64.8%	43 35.2%	122
Millennial Count Row %	164 59.0%	114 41.0%	278
Totals Total Responses			
I consider my boss my mentor.			
Gen Z Count Row %	81 66.4%	41 33.6%	122

	Yes	No	Responses
■ Millennial Count Row %	176 63.3%	102 36.7%	278
Totals			
Total Responses			

I think I could do a better job than my boss at his/her/their job.

■ Gen Z Count Row %	45 36.9%	77 63.1%	122
■ Millennial Count Row %	109 39.2%	169 60.8%	278
Totals			
Total Responses			

I respect my boss.

■ Gen Z Count Row %	114 93.4%	8 6.6%	122
■ Millennial Count Row %	241 86.7%	37 13.3%	278
Totals			
Total Responses			

8. Please indicate how you feel about the following statements regarding your work environment and habits.

	Yes	No	Responses
I prefer to work silently (versus with others, music playing, etc)			
■ Gen Z Count Row %	67 54.9%	55 45.1%	122

	Yes	No	Responses
■ Millennial Count Row %	155 55.8%	123 44.2%	278
Totals			
Total Responses			

When considering office environments, I would prefer to work in an open office plan (versus independent desks / offices / suites)

■ Gen Z Count Row %	67 54.9%	55 45.1%	122
■ Millennial Count Row %	157 56.5%	121 43.5%	278
Totals			
Total Responses			

It's important that companies recycle.

■ Gen Z Count Row %	102 83.6%	20 16.4%	122
■ Millennial Count Row %	226 81.3%	52 18.7%	278
Totals			
Total Responses			

I like a 9am-5pm work schedule.

■ Gen Z Count Row %	88 72.1%	34 27.9%	122
■ Millennial Count Row %	211 75.9%	67 24.1%	278
Totals			
Total Responses			

I want the ability to work from home.

	Yes	No	Responses
Gen Z Count Row %	84 68.9%	38 31.1%	122
Millennial Count Row %	231 83.1%	47 16.9%	278
Totals			
Total Responses			

I feel like I can do most of my work from my mobile phone.

Gen Z Count Row %	58 47.5%	64 52.5%	122
Millennial Count Row %	130 46.8%	148 53.2%	278
Totals			
Total Responses			

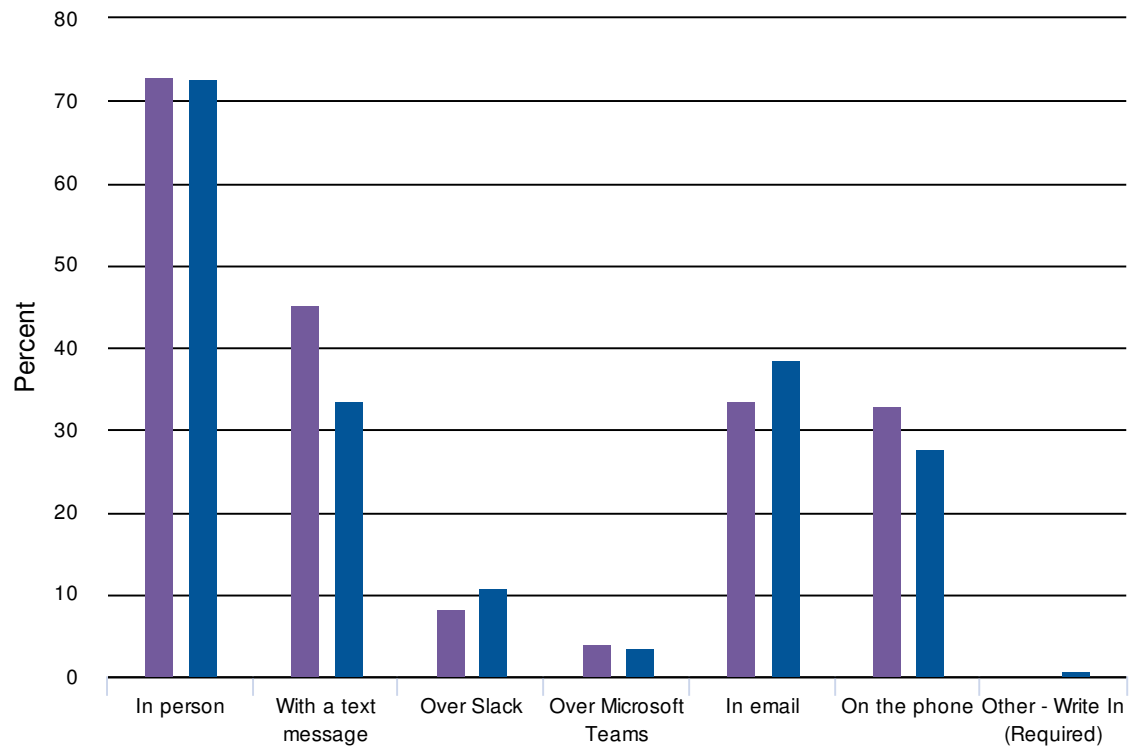
Work / life balance is important.

Gen Z Count Row %	116 95.1%	6 4.9%	122
Millennial Count Row %	262 94.2%	16 5.8%	278
Totals			
Total Responses			

I want to save for retirement.

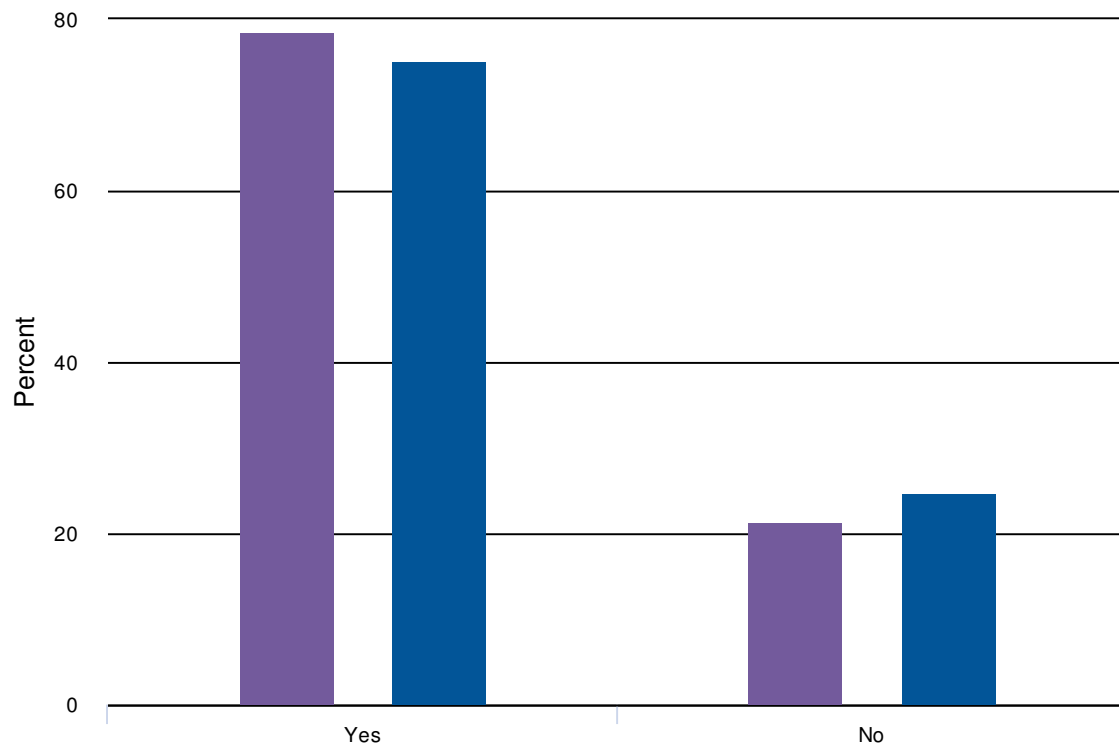
Gen Z Count Row %	112 91.8%	10 8.2%	122
Millennial Count Row %	254 91.4%	24 8.6%	278
Totals			
Total Responses			

9. If an issue comes up at work I prefer to get notified:



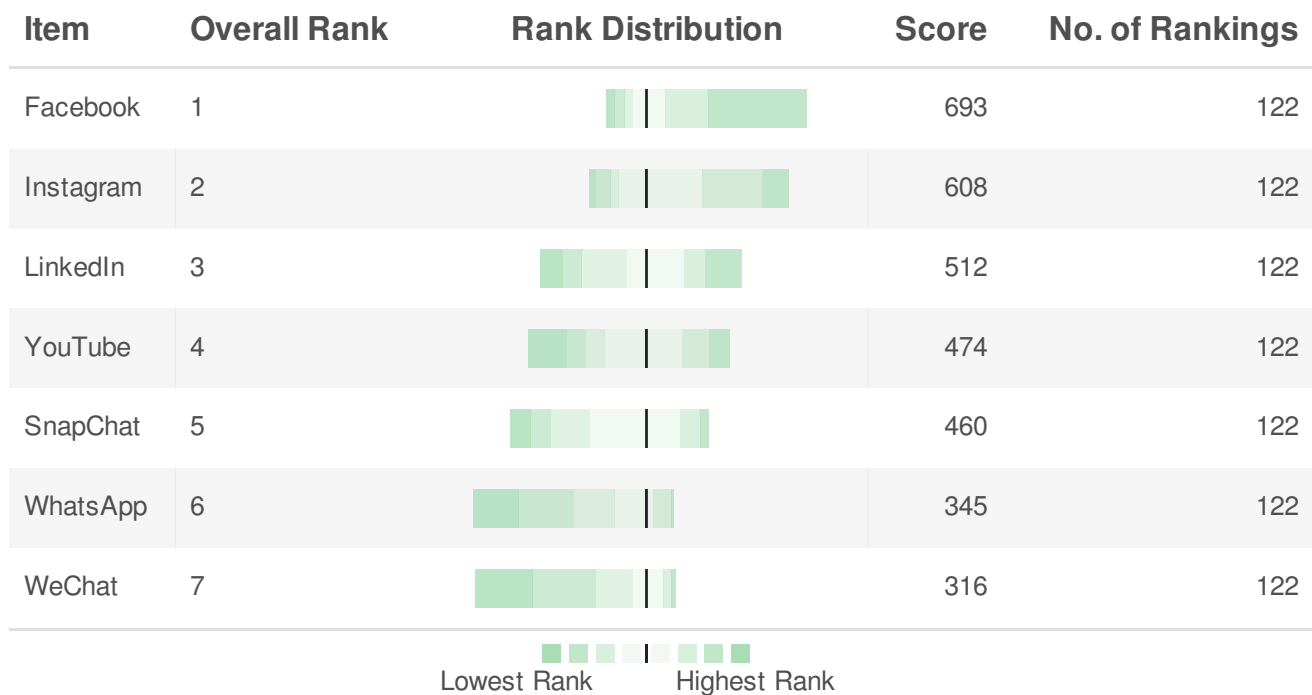
Segment	Value	Percent	% of Total	Responses
■ Gen Z	In person	73%	22.3%	89
	With a text message	45.1%	13.8%	55
	Over Slack	8.2%	2.5%	10
	Over Microsoft Teams	4.1%	1.3%	5
	In email	33.6%	10.3%	41
	On the phone	32.8%	10%	40
	Other - Write In (Required)	0%	0%	0
	Total Responses		60.2%	122
■ Millennial	In person	72.7%	50.5%	202
	With a text message	33.5%	23.3%	93
	Over Slack	10.8%	7.5%	30
	Over Microsoft Teams	3.6%	2.5%	10
	In email	38.5%	26.8%	107
	On the phone	27.7%	19.3%	77
	Other - Write In (Required)	0.7%	0.5%	2
	Total Responses		130.4%	278

10. I think social media is an important part of business.

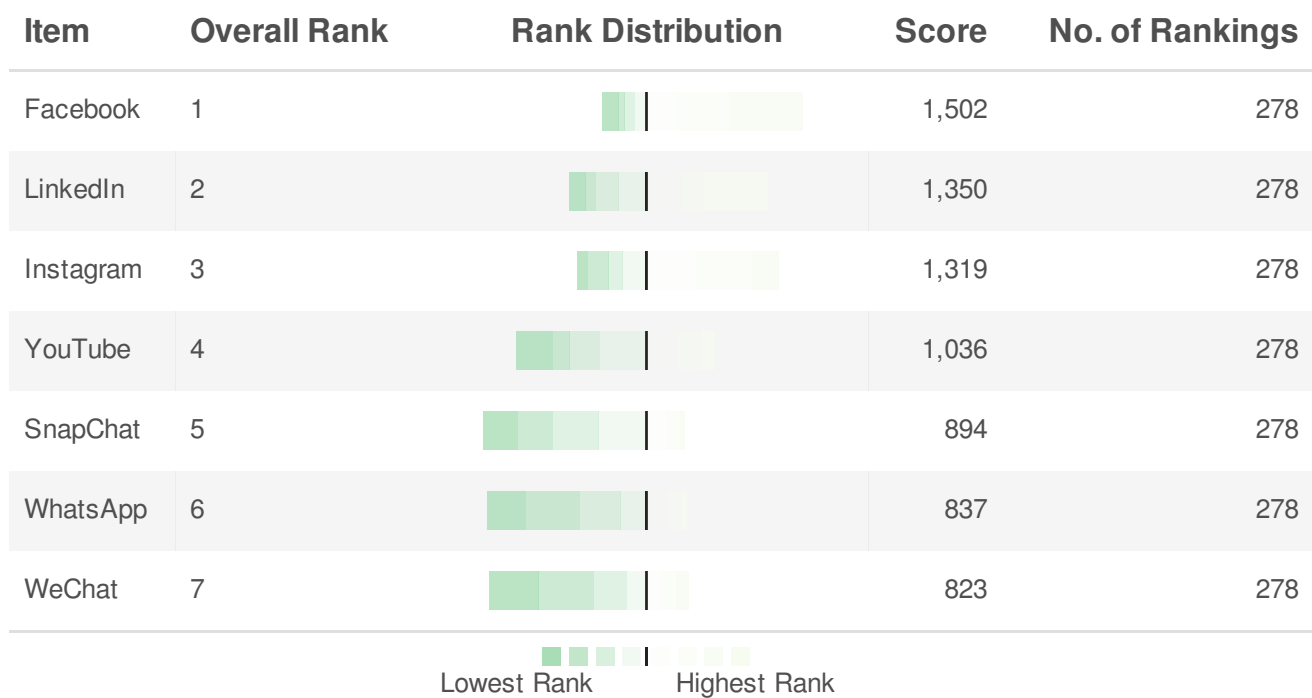


11. Rank the social media platforms you think are most important for businesses to be active on. (1 = highest, 7 = lowest)

■ Gen Z

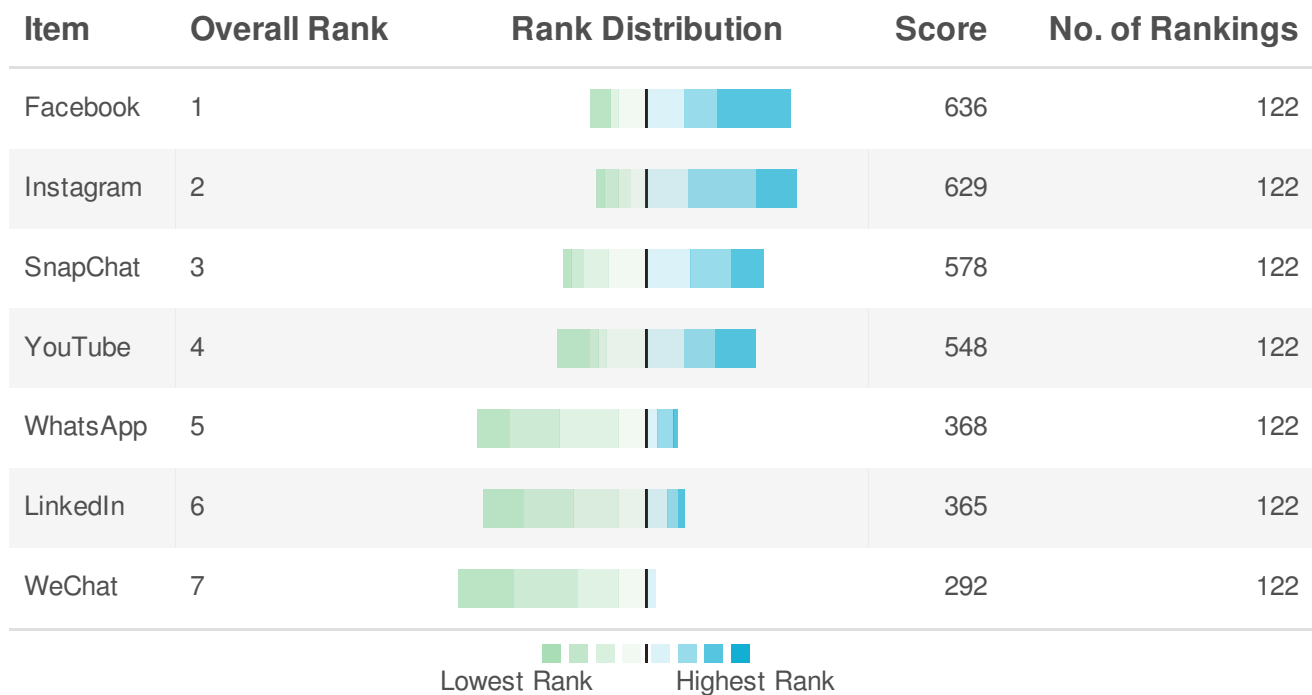


Millennial

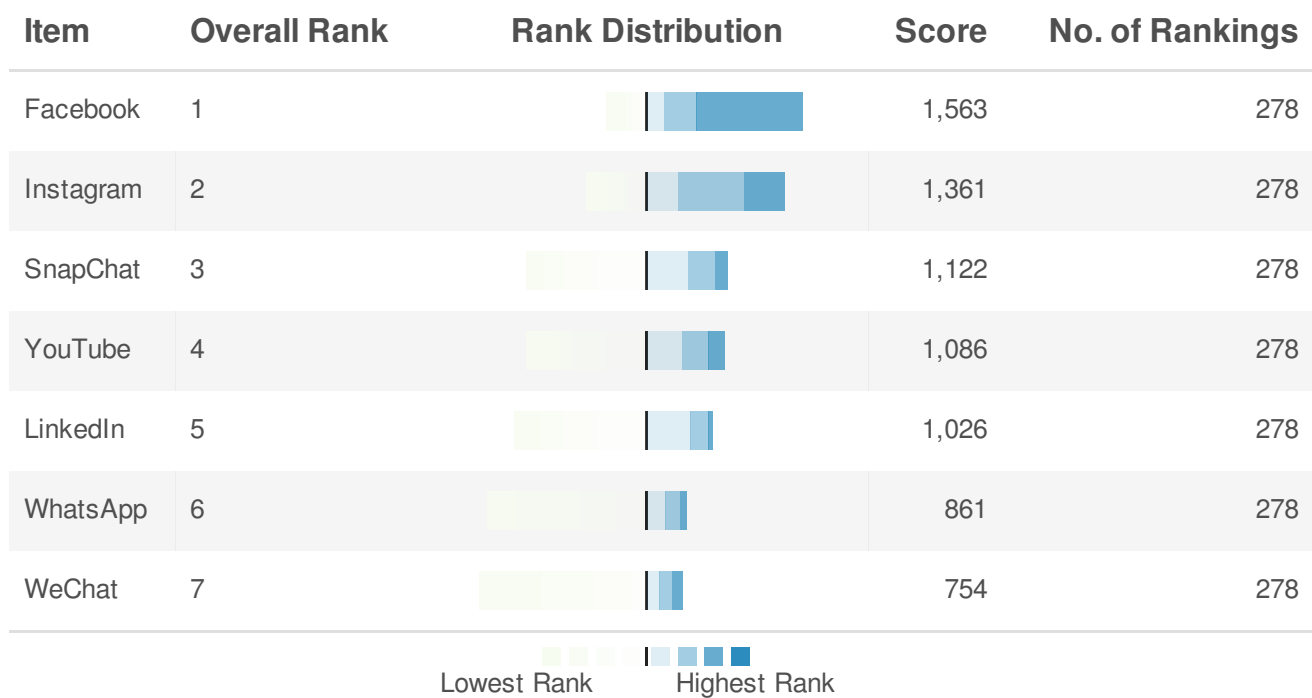


12. Rank the social media platforms you use most for personal use. (1 = highest, 7 = lowest)

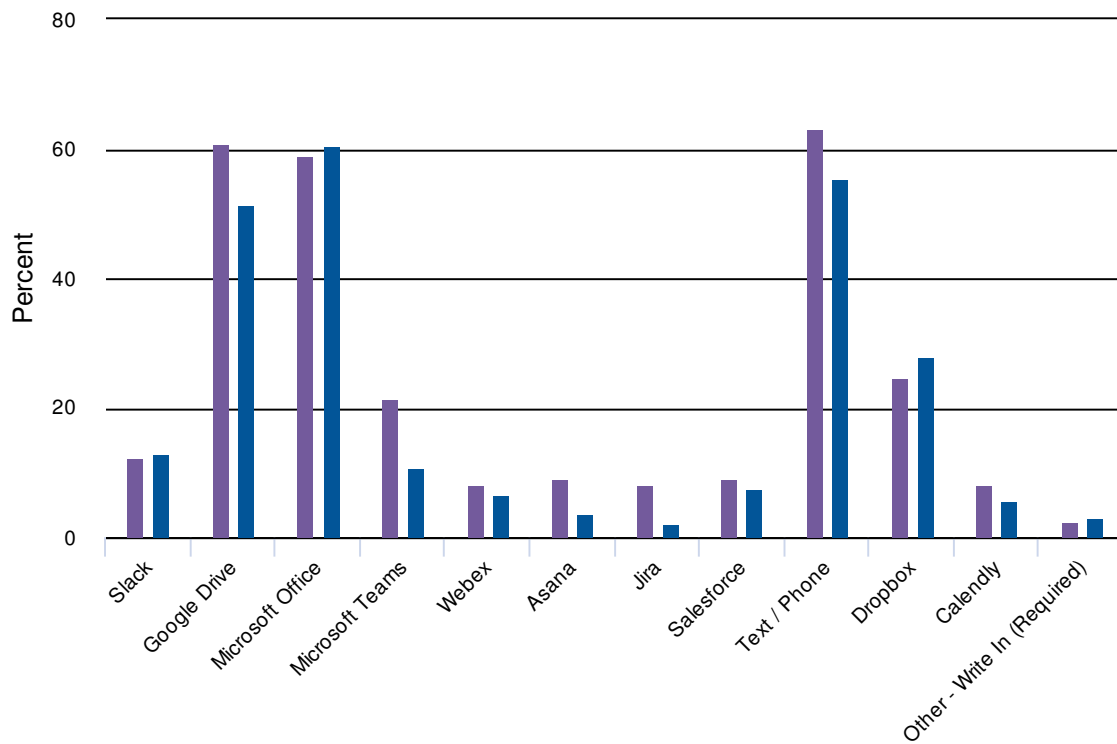
Gen Z



Millennial



13. Which business tools can you "not live without"?



Segment	Value	Percent	% of Total	Responses
Gen Z	Slack	12.3%	3.8%	15
	Google Drive	60.7%	18.5%	74
	Microsoft Office	59%	18%	72
	Microsoft Teams	21.3%	6.5%	26
	Webex	8.2%	2.5%	10
	Asana	9%	2.8%	11
	Jira	8.2%	2.5%	10
	Salesforce	9%	2.8%	11
	Text / Phone	63.1%	19.3%	77
	Dropbox	24.6%	7.5%	30
	Calendly	8.2%	2.5%	10
	Other - Write In (Required)	2.5%	0.8%	3
	Other - Write In (Required)	0%	0%	0
	Total Responses		87.5%	122

Segment	Value	Percent	% of Total	Responses
■ Millennial	Slack	12.9%	9%	36
	Google Drive	51.4%	35.8%	143
	Microsoft Office	60.4%	42%	168
	Microsoft Teams	10.8%	7.5%	30
	Webex	6.5%	4.5%	18
	Asana	3.6%	2.5%	10
	Jira	2.2%	1.5%	6
	Salesforce	7.6%	5.3%	21
	Text / Phone	55.4%	38.5%	154
	Dropbox	28.1%	19.5%	78
	Calendly	5.8%	4%	16
	Other - Write In (Required)	2.9%	2%	8
	Other - Write In (Required)	0.7%	0.5%	2
Total Responses			172.6%	278

14. How often do you use the following media sources for news?

	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Responses
Facebook Newsfeed					
■ Gen Z Count Row %	33 27.0%	52 42.6%	14 11.5%	23 18.9%	122
■ Millennial Count Row %	131 47.1%	87 31.3%	26 9.4%	34 12.2%	278
Totals Total Responses					

	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Responses
LinkedIn Newsfeed					
Gen Z Count Row %	19 15.6%	21 17.2%	22 18.0%	60 49.2%	122
Millennial Count Row %	52 18.7%	82 29.5%	49 17.6%	95 34.2%	278
Totals					
Total Responses					

Twitter					
Gen Z Count Row %	40 32.8%	32 26.2%	17 13.9%	33 27.0%	122
Millennial Count Row %	70 25.2%	77 27.7%	53 19.1%	78 28.1%	278
Totals					
Total Responses					

Apple News					
Gen Z Count Row %	25 20.5%	24 19.7%	28 23.0%	45 36.9%	122
Millennial Count Row %	61 21.9%	60 21.6%	51 18.3%	106 38.1%	278
Totals					
Total Responses					

Email (Hustle, Morning Brew, The Daily Skimm, etc)					
Gen Z Count Row %	36 29.5%	35 28.7%	20 16.4%	31 25.4%	122
Millennial Count Row %	80 28.8%	95 34.2%	51 18.3%	52 18.7%	278

	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Responses
Totals					
Total Responses					

Instagram

■ Gen Z Count Row %	45 36.9%	37 30.3%	18 14.8%	22 18.0%	122
■ Millennial Count Row %	78 28.1%	93 33.5%	55 19.8%	52 18.7%	278
Totals					
Total Responses					

Podcasts

■ Gen Z Count Row %	22 18.0%	28 23.0%	31 25.4%	41 33.6%	122
■ Millennial Count Row %	44 15.8%	95 34.2%	49 17.6%	90 32.4%	278
Totals					
Total Responses					

TV news

■ Gen Z Count Row %	35 28.7%	46 37.7%	25 20.5%	16 13.1%	122
■ Millennial Count Row %	104 37.4%	102 36.7%	45 16.2%	27 9.7%	278
Totals					
Total Responses					

Newspapers

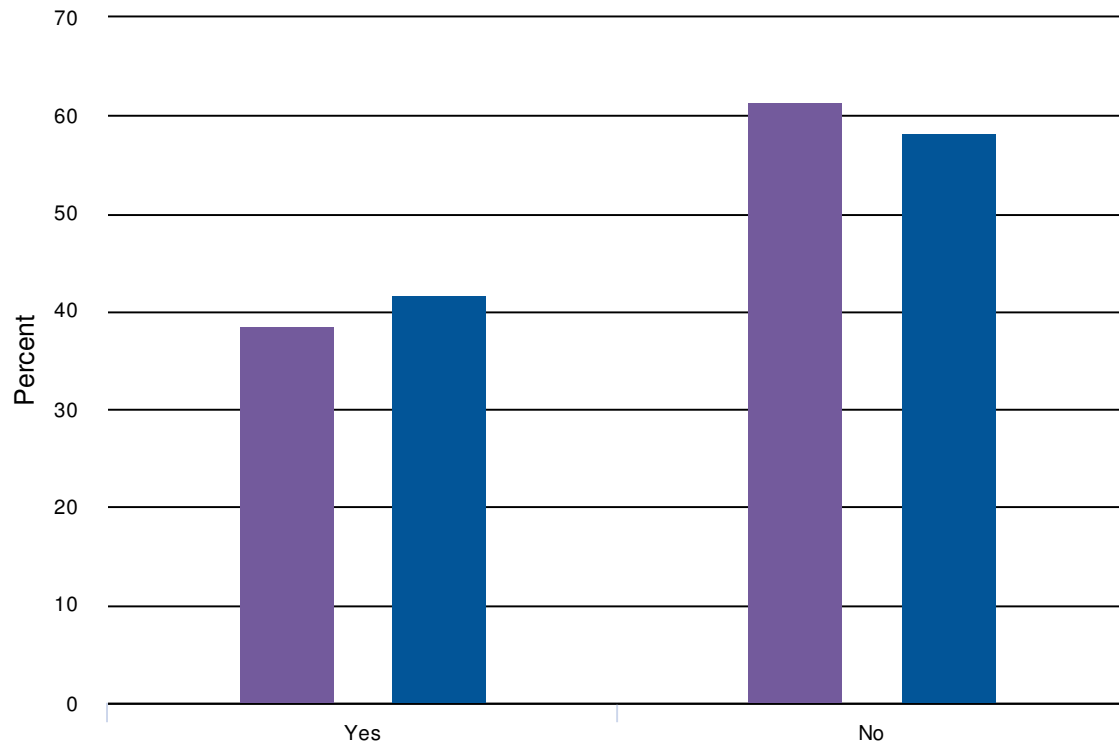
■ Gen Z Count Row %	29 23.8%	30 24.6%	35 28.7%	28 23.0%	122
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	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Responses
Millennial Count Row %	64 23.0%	105 37.8%	55 19.8%	54 19.4%	278
Totals					
Total Responses					

Talking with friends

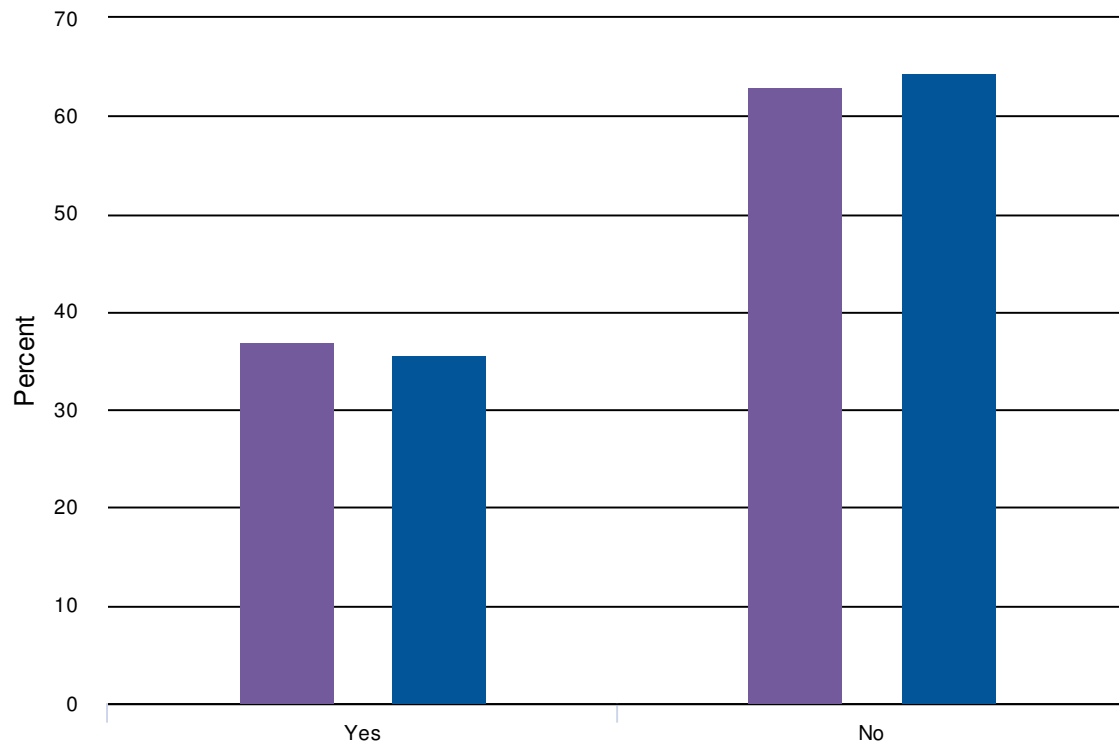
Gen Z Count Row %	58 47.5%	46 37.7%	16 13.1%	2 1.6%	122
Millennial Count Row %	92 33.1%	140 50.4%	35 12.6%	11 4.0%	278
Totals					
Total Responses					

15. I trust brands more than my peers.



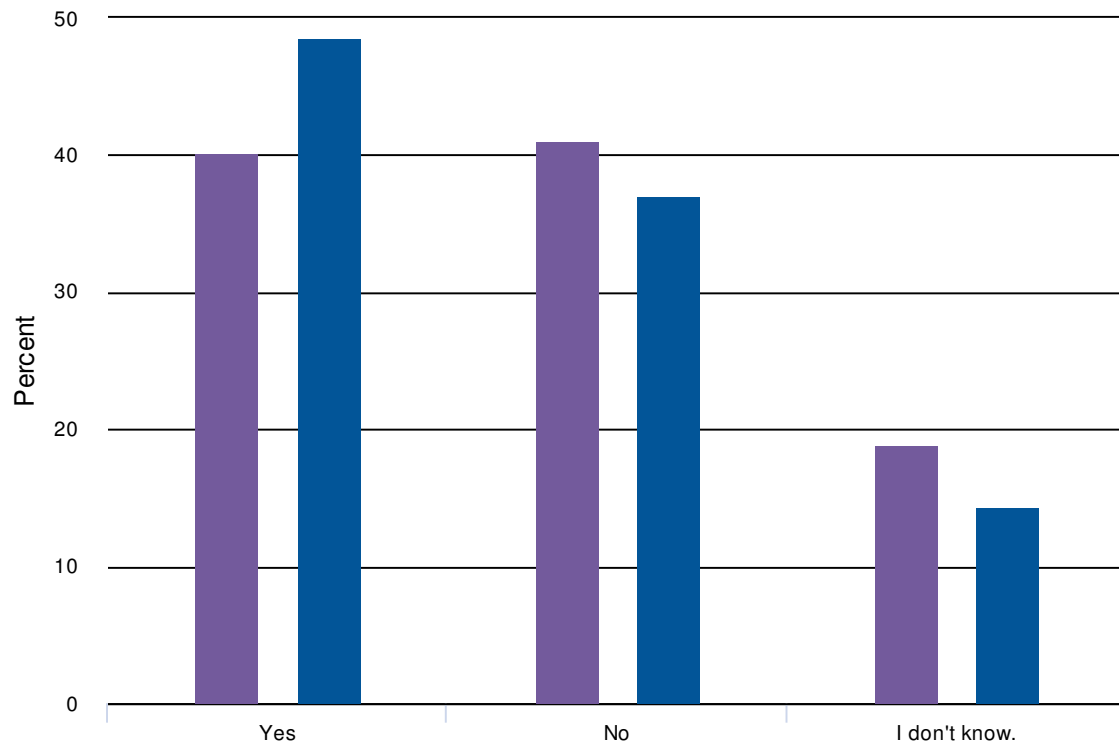
Segment	Value	Percent	% of Total	Responses
Gen Z	Yes	38.5%	11.8%	47
	No	61.5%	18.8%	75
	Total Responses		30.6%	122
Millennial	Yes	41.7%	29%	116
	No	58.3%	40.5%	162
	Total Responses		69.5%	278

16. I trust "influencers" more than my peers.



Segment	Value	Percent	% of Total	Responses
Gen Z	Yes	36.9%	11.3%	45
	No	63.1%	19.3%	77
	Total Responses		30.6%	122
Millennial	Yes	35.6%	24.8%	99
	No	64.4%	44.8%	179
	Total Responses		69.6%	278

17. I think the stereotypes that fit my generation are largely accurate.



Segment	Value	Percent	% of Total	Responses
■ Gen Z	Yes	40.2%	12.3%	49
	No	41%	12.5%	50
	I don't know.	18.9%	5.8%	23
	Total Responses		30.6%	122
■ Millennial	Yes	48.6%	33.8%	135
	No	37.1%	25.8%	103
	I don't know.	14.4%	10%	40
	Total Responses		69.6%	278



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Zenefits customers are able to keep staff informed, connected, and invested in with automated performance management milestones, easy access to org charts, and connected colleague contact information—this is what your employees want.

In addition, Zenefits enables businesses to have:

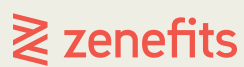
- Easy access to PTO requests and approvals
- Integration with reimbursement software for quick employee expense payback
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