



A NEW RECRUITMENT STRATEGY **FOR A** **MULTIGENERATIONAL** **WORKFORCE**





The demand for quality talent is expected to far outstrip supply at every organizational level in the near future. Korn Ferry predicts a global talent shortage of more than 85 million workers by 2030.

But recruiting exceptional talent of various age groups can be tricky.

A 20-year-old will have different expectations and needs from their employer than a 40-year-old will, and it'll be different again for a 60-year-old. They may also prefer different hiring processes.

Your challenge? You need to attract top talent from every generation so your company can build a diverse, strong, and innovative workforce.

To hire the best candidates of all ages, tailor your talent acquisition (TA) strategy to meet the characteristics of different generations—both in terms of the recruitment process and the job offering.

But how do you do this? Using data from [Korn Ferry's Workforce 2025 report](#) and our millions of IP data points, our experts show you how to customize your TA strategy to attract exceptional candidates from every generation.

Why Generational Diversity Matters

For the first time in history, many companies today have five generations working alongside each other. That's a good thing.

Generational diversity in your workforce:

- Brings different perspectives and experiences, which is good for growth, profitability, and innovation
- Better meets the needs of a diverse customer base
- Fills your leadership pipeline with tomorrow's managers and leaders
- Helps future-proof your employee value proposition (EVP) so you're prepared to attract the generations of workers to come

But it's not without its challenges, with approaches to many facets of work differing across the generations.

Meet the Five Generations in the Workforce



BORN

1946 to 1964

Baby Boomers



BORN

1965 to 1980

Generation X



BORN

1981 to 1996

Millennials



BORN

1997 to 2010

Generation Z



BORN

2011 to today

Generation Alpha



Baby Boomers

(born 1946 to 1964)

Baby boomer values include work-life balance and health and retirement benefits. They're more likely to prefer working in the office than other generations. However, the majority still want flexible options, like hybrid and remote work.

How to Attract Baby Boomers

- Bring a personal touch. Use phone calls and in-person meetings in recruitment.
- Clearly communicate the role and company expectations.
- Emphasize your company's stability.
- Highlight health and retirement benefits during recruitment.

60%

PREFER FULLY REMOTE
OR HYBRID WORK

40%

ARE EXCITED ABOUT AI

57%

WOULD WORK HARDER FOR
THE SAME SALARY IF ALLOWED
TO WORK A 4-DAY WEEK

56%

AGREE THAT THE VALUES
A COMPANY PROMOTES
ARE EXTREMELY
IMPORTANT TO THEM

Source: Korn Ferry's [Workforce 2025 report](#)

“

Baby boomers and Gen X like to be found, rather than trawl through job ads. A phone call after initial digital communication will set you apart. It's not common to get phone calls anymore, so if you're getting a call from a company that you've shown interest in, then automatically, as a Gen Xer or boomer, your interest is piqued.”

- Nicol Thomson, Korn Ferry

”



Generation X (born 1965 to 1980)

Like baby boomers, Gen X job seekers often care about work-life balance and health and retirement benefits, as well as career advancement. Gen Xers tend to stay in one job longer than those in younger generations.

How to Attract Gen X

- Include a face-to-face call or meeting early in the hiring process.
- Provide clear job descriptions and details about the role.
- Show what career progression looks like.
- Emphasize your company's stability and average work tenures during interviews.
- Share success stories of company employees who maintain work-life balance (either through your website or during recruitment).
- Highlight work-life balance, career growth, and health and retirement benefits during recruitment.

67%

PREFER
FULLY REMOTE OR
HYBRID WORK

51%

ARE EXCITED
ABOUT AI

69%

WOULD WORK HARDER FOR
THE SAME SALARY IF ALLOWED
TO WORK A 4-DAY WEEK

61%

AGREE THAT THE VALUES A
COMPANY PROMOTES ARE
EXTREMELY IMPORTANT TO THEM

Source: Korn Ferry's [Workforce 2025 report](#)

“

We attract people in their 40s and 50s by saying, ‘This is the job that we want you to do, but there’s another two jobs ahead of you that you can be doing in the next five to 10 years.’ For Gen X, it’s extremely important that there’s a mapped future for them.”

– Nicol Thomson, Korn Ferry

”



Millennials

(born 1981 to 1996)

Millennials in the workplace tend to care about flexibility and learning opportunities. Job security and health benefits are also becoming more important for this generation of candidates.

How to Attract Millennials

- Lay out what the recruitment process looks like.
- Highlight learning opportunities and career development during recruitment.
- Follow up quickly and provide feedback throughout the recruitment process.

76%

PREFER FULLY REMOTE OR
HYBRID WORK

69%

ARE EXCITED
ABOUT AI

79%

WOULD WORK HARDER FOR
THE SAME SALARY IF ALLOWED
TO WORK A 4-DAY WEEK

70%

AGREE THAT THE VALUES
A COMPANY PROMOTES
ARE EXTREMELY
IMPORTANT TO THEM

Source: Korn Ferry's [Workforce 2025 report](#)

“

For millennials, learning at work is as important as their career prospects. They realize the workplace is changing so radically that if learning doesn't come as part of the overall package, they're going to be left behind. They won't move to a new job if it doesn't bring these opportunities.

- Nicol Thomson, Korn Ferry

”



Generation Z

(born 1997 to 2010)

Like millennials, Generation Z values workplace flexibility, learning opportunities, and purpose. Job security and benefits are also becoming more important to these job seekers. The rising cost of living may be driving this shift.

How to Attract Gen Z

- Be transparent. Write clear job descriptions and lay out what the hiring process looks like.
- Be digitally present. Engage people through your website and social media.
- Use technology to streamline the recruitment process.
- During recruitment, highlight workplace flexibility, work-based education opportunities, and company values and impact.

76%

PREFER FULLY REMOTE OR
HYBRID WORK

67%

ARE EXCITED
ABOUT AI

77%

WOULD WORK HARDER FOR
THE SAME SALARY IF ALLOWED
TO WORK A 4-DAY WEEK

68%

AGREE THAT THE VALUES
A COMPANY PROMOTES
ARE EXTREMELY
IMPORTANT TO THEM

Source: Korn Ferry's [Workforce 2025 report](#)

“

Based on my experience with clients, I find that younger people are more likely to use online sources in their job search. For example, they're a lot more likely to say, 'I looked at TikToks about this employer.'

— [Maria Amato, Korn Ferry](#)

”



Generation Alpha (born 2011 to today)

Experts predict 65% of Gen Alpha will work in jobs that don't exist yet. But forward-thinking talent acquisition leaders will be thinking about how to attract this cohort of future employees, the eldest of whom will soon be going into their first jobs.

How to Attract Gen Alpha

- Use chatbots and AI to drive Gen Alpha through the recruitment process. They want the process to be fast and interactive.
- Be digitally present—engage talent through mobile-friendly apps and social media.
- Highlight technology, workplace flexibility, and continuous learning during the recruitment process.



65%

ARE PREDICTED TO WORK IN
JOBS THAT DON'T EXIST YET

Digital Recruitment in Action

Case Study: The QR Code

For one Korn Ferry retail client, the job application starts with a QR code.

- 1 When a customer goes to the cash register, a QR code invites them to apply for a job.
- 2 Interested customers scan the code with their phone and answer a chatbot's questions.
- 3 If they pass that screening, they're automatically scheduled for an interview with a hiring manager.

This process can take place while the customer-turned-candidate is paying for their purchase.

A Digital-First Approach

For some online retailers that work with Korn Ferry, [technology does the heavy lifting](#). Candidates go through a digital recruitment process until the final stage, where they join others for an in-person group interview.



For a number of organizations that we're working with, we're using AI to drive the younger generations through the recruitment process quickly, so that they can do it whenever they want. They can apply on their phone, while they're on the bus, or in the middle of the night. Their interaction with the recruitment process is entirely different than older generations. They've got no fear of the technology whatsoever.

- Nicol Thomson, Korn Ferry



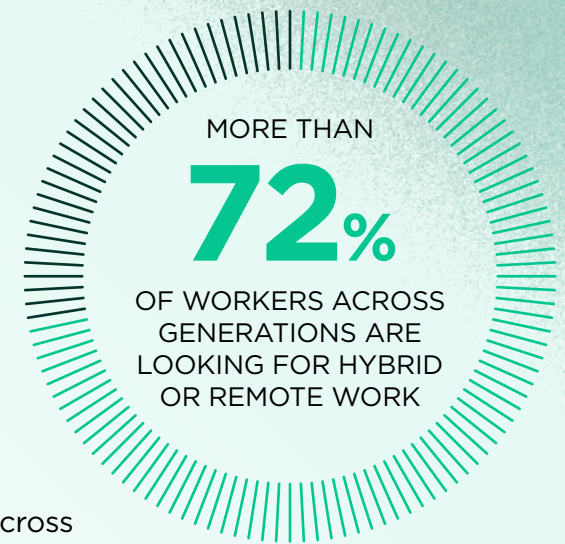
What Everyone Wants

Each generation prioritizes different elements in the job hunt, but some issues are table stakes.

Job seekers' top three deciding factors are:

- 1 Pay and compensation
- 2 Job security
- 3 The work itself

Source: Korn Ferry's Workforce 2025 report



Purpose is also gaining traction across generations. We often assume that younger people are idealistic, but research shows [older generations](#) care about company values and meaningful work, too.

Workplace flexibility matters as well. While generations have varying opinions about in-office work, more than 72% of workers across generations are looking for hybrid or remote work.

Because these things matter to most people, TA leaders should try to include these universal priorities in their EVP and [total employee benefits and rewards](#) strategy.

Your recruitment process should also be inclusive, flexible, and respectful, so that it's a positive experience for all candidates, no matter their age.

An EVP That Speaks to a Multigenerational Talent Pool

Your employee value proposition (EVP) should feature common priorities like pay and job security, but how do you change it to attract candidates of a particular generation?

The short answer: you don't.

Your EVP's overarching message has to match your company's mission and values, but you can emphasize different aspects and communicate it in ways that attract job seekers of various ages.

Savvy job applicants are going to the company website to evaluate opportunities. So, infuse every generation's priorities into your EVP and make sure your website reflects this.

– Agnes Talavera, Korn Ferry

What to Emphasize in Your EVP



Baby Boomer

Company stability, job security, work-life balance, employee recognition



Generation X

Company stability and long-term vision, job security, work-life balance, career advancement



Millennials

Work-life balance, meaningful work, company mission and values, learning opportunities



Gen Z

Workplace flexibility, company values, continuous learning



Gen Alpha

Technology, flexible work options, continuous learning

Be Flexible and Creative

Your EVP strategy isn't set in stone. As workforce demographics and expectations change, it should evolve to keep up. To make sure your EVP is hitting the mark, proactively review it.

What to Do When Your EVP Doesn't Include a Top Priority

Does your company want everyone in the office five days a week? Your EVP is never going to please everyone, but you can offset perceived negatives with positives.

In these situations, you can:

- **Lead with what appeals to a candidate**

A Gen Z job seeker may not like the lack of workplace flexibility, but you could win them over by highlighting the company's learning opportunities.

- **Find middle ground**

See if you can strike a balance between the company's rules and the candidate's preferences. For example, you could negotiate flexible hours to offset on-site requirements.



“

Many organizations are thinking about how to future-proof their employee value proposition. If you build your EVP just for the employees you have today, that's fundamentally too limiting. Be sure you're designing something both for the current generations in your workforce and those generations you hope to attract in the near future.

— Maria Amato, Korn Ferry

”

Multigenerational Workforce Challenges

As you shape and evolve your TA strategy, you'll face your share of obstacles. Knowing what to watch for can help you pivot quickly.

The Recruitment Rut

Does your recruitment feel like it's not working anymore? If you spot these red flags, it may be time to make adjustments:

- **Low applicant volume**
The job posting may not be reaching the right audience, or the EVP is not appealing.
- **High drop-off rate during recruitment process**
The recruitment process is too complicated or lengthy.
- **Poor applicant quality**
The job description or EVP isn't right.
- **Lengthy time to fill roles**
There may be a bottleneck in the recruitment process.
- **Many rejected offers**
The EVP is not attractive.

Beware Stereotypes

Don't ...

... assume that all job seekers of a similar age care about the same things. Generational motivations can guide your TA strategy, but they shouldn't be prescriptive. People are complex and don't always fit neatly into a category.

Do ...

... ask questions. As you speak with candidates, find out what motivates them. You might be surprised. Choose what job aspects to focus on accordingly.



Say you're trying to motivate a younger person to join. Don't just think of them as a younger person. Ask questions. If they're motivated by social justice, for example, perhaps they're going to be interested in policies that benefit workers, like parental leave, even if they might not have plans to use it themselves.

— Maria Amato, Korn Ferry



Up Your Game in the War for Talent

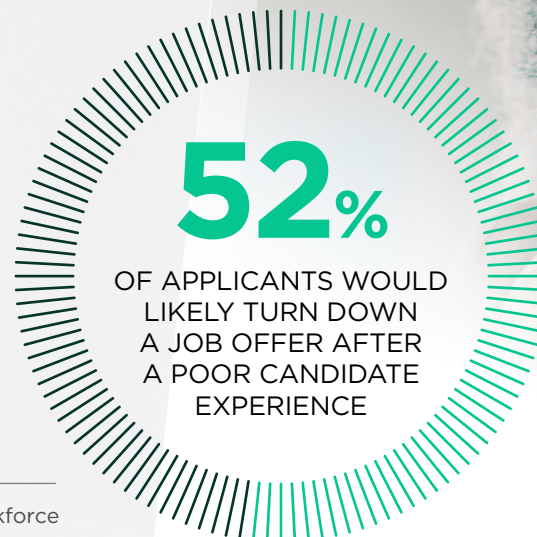
Talent acquisition is complicated. When multigenerational job seekers have different priorities, recruitment can feel like a moving target.

But it pays to get recruitment right. Our research shows 52% of applicants would likely turn down a job offer after a poor candidate experience.

The good news? You don't have to do it alone.

A recruitment process outsourcing (RPO) provider can work with you to build the right TA strategy—one that grows your candidate pool, creates a positive applicant experience, and lands top talent.

At Korn Ferry, we've been partnering with clients around the world to build recruitment solutions for more than 20 years. We know what makes talent tick.





READY TO RECRUIT THE BEST TALENT?

Read, **The Ultimate Guide to Recruitment
Process Outsourcing**

GET THE GUIDE

Korn Ferry is a global organizational consulting firm. We work with our clients to design optimal organization structures, roles, and responsibilities. We help them hire the right people and advise them on how to reward and motivate their workforce while developing professionals as they navigate and advance their careers.

**Business advisors.
Career makers.**