



JSG/ANS OPINION REPORT

THE NEXT GENERATION OF TECH LEADERSHIP AND ITS IMPACT ON THE TECHNOLOGY CHANNEL

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FOREWORD

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My enthusiasm for our fourth research project at ANS on Next-Gen Leaders is palpable. In the ever-evolving landscape of technology, it's crucial to keep an eye on the next generation of leaders. My own personal insights from tradeshow and my personal experience as a millennial in the channel give this project a unique perspective. While it may seem early in our research report debuts, the importance of discussing the opportunities and challenges that come with the younger generations entering the channel cannot be understated. For different generations to work together effectively, there will need to be some adjustments and mutual understanding.

I have no doubt that this report will shed light on these issues and potentially lead to positive changes in the way we approach our daily lives at work in the channel. Keep your eyes peeled as the topic of Next-Gen doesn't just stop at leaders. I'm curious about Next-Gen Partners myself. Keep a look out for future reports. And as always, feel free to contact myself or anyone on my team with questions or research requests.

INTRODUCTION

In our upcoming research report, we explore tech leadership across generations, focusing on the distinct roles of leaders. These early innovators, often called the Channel's architects, played a vital role in introducing technology to companies that had been hesitant to adopt it. They laid the foundation for technology's widespread use, making it available to everyone in the workforce.

In the wake of these leaders, the current generation of emerging leaders, who predominantly lead today, face the significant challenge of shifting from traditional premise-based technology – characterized by project-based cycles and frequent updates – to the cloud era. Technology has evolved into a monthly recurring revenue model, reshaping how IT solutions are delivered. Their notable accomplishment lies in successfully integrating cloud solutions with their services, ensuring seamless functionality for clients, and driving innovation in the cloud services sector.

Looking ahead to the next generation of leaders, we encounter a new horizon for exploration. This marks the era of Generative AI, where leaders are tasked with managing the integration of human talent and artificial intelligence. Their unique challenge centers on finding the right balance between leveraging the productivity and cost-saving benefits offered by Generative AI-driven technologies while preserving the distinctive value and creativity that human expertise brings to the market.

THESIS

The rapid emergence of the next generation of tech leaders, primarily represented by Millennials and Generation Z, is reshaping the information and technology Channel. This report explores the transformative impact of these emerging leaders on the tech industry, focusing on their unique challenges, demands, and expectations. By analyzing the rise of organizations like Nextgen Channel and Channel NX2Z and considering the evolving landscape of technology leadership, this report highlights the need for mentorship, soft skills development, digital adaptability, and diversity and inclusion as critical components for fostering successful next-generation tech leaders. Understanding and responding to the dynamics of this changing leadership landscape is essential for organizations to remain competitive and innovative in the rapidly evolving tech industry.

OVERVIEW OF THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE IN THE TECH INDUSTRY

The technology sector is currently undergoing significant changes due to the continuous advancement of artificial intelligence, the widespread adoption of digitalization, and the increasing presence of younger leaders. Notably, recent research conducted by Forrester has unveiled a significant impending shift – it is anticipated that approximately 40% of previous-generation Channel owners will retire by 2024.[1] What's also noteworthy is the projection that, by the same time, approximately 75% of those in indirect Channel positions will be from the Millennial generation. [1] These statistics highlight the substantial changes happening in the tech industry.

In this evolving landscape, we observe a unique intergenerational dynamic, with five different generations collaboratively influencing the industry's direction, each contributing their distinct perspectives and insights.

By 2024 it is expected that:

40% of previous generation Channel owners will retire



&

75% of indirect Channel positions will be held by Millennials



SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NEXT GENERATION OF TECH LEADERS

The rise of the next generation of technology leaders, mainly composed of Millennials and Gen Z, is significantly changing the landscape of industry dynamics. Their influence goes well beyond holding leadership positions; it deeply impacts decision-making processes, bringing fresh and forward-thinking perspectives to organizations.

What sets this transformation apart is that these emerging generations have grown up in a digital age where technology has been an integral part of their lives from the start. For example, consider the evolution of navigation tools. Baby Boomers used physical maps, Millennials relied on services like MapQuest and early GPS devices that plugged into the car's cigarette lighter, while Gen Z grew up with built-in car GPS systems and GPS on their phones. This progression highlights how technology usage has evolved across generations.

IMPORTANCE OF UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT ON THE INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY CHANNEL

In today's ever-changing technology landscape, organizations need to understand the significant impact that the next generation of leaders has on the information and technology Channel. The Channel, which serves as a crucial conduit for technology distribution and services, plays a vital role in the industry's overall operation. It's essential to grasp how these emerging leaders influence the Channel, not just to stay relevant but as a strategic imperative to remain competitive and foster innovation in a fast-paced technological era.

By gaining a deep understanding of the evolving dynamics driven by these next-generation leaders, organizations can tap into their fresh perspectives, digital expertise, and innovative thinking to navigate the complexities of the technology ecosystem effectively.

The next generation is full of people that “are more willing to ‘give it a go’ and be experimental, without being affected by rose-tinted glasses.”[2]

This approach ensures long-term success and growth.

THE RISE OF NEXTGEN LEADERSHIP

MILLENNIAL-LED ADVISORY COUNCILS AND COMMUNITIES

NEXTGEN CHANNEL'S MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

Nextgen Channel is a forward-thinking group of emerging technology leaders with a mission to create a collaborative environment where knowledge sharing and innovation flourish among early-career professionals. This initiative goes beyond the typical advisory council and serves as a carefully designed platform to empower the next generation of Channel leaders in solution provider and supplier enterprises.

One of the key goals of this advisory group is to address the noticeable lack of Millennials in the indirect Channel. This demographic group has faced economic challenges, including heavy student debt and the lingering effects of the 2008 financial crisis, which have sometimes discouraged them from pursuing careers in sales or entering solution-provider enterprises.

As well as a lack of notoriety when entering the Channel as the hardest part is, “making a name for yourself in a large pond as a small fish.”[3]

Recognizing these significant challenges, Nextgen Channel aims to offer important support through the creation of strategic initiatives. These initiatives involve working together with distributors and master agencies to support Millennial-led solution provider organizations. This includes providing them with customized financing programs and dedicated sales resources. The goal of this strategic effort is to empower these emerging professionals, helping them strengthen their businesses, overcome financial challenges, and achieve sustainable growth, including generating substantial residual income.

The main goal of Nextgen Channel is to create a vibrant and long-lasting community that nurtures future Channel leaders. This initiative envisions a future where collaboration and innovation thrive over the next decade or two, leading to the establishment of a distinguished forum dedicated to building lasting partnerships with business associates.

CHANNEL NX2Z'S ROLE IN SUPPORTING YOUNG TECHNOLOGY PROFESSIONALS

Channel NX2Z, a not-for-profit and vendor-neutral community, stands out as a significant source of support for young professionals in IT, digital services, and telecommunications sales Channels. It prioritizes nurturing talent under the age of 35 and involving mentors who are enthusiastic about discussing the ever-evolving business landscape. Channel NX2Z plays a crucial role in influencing the industry's future direction.

This respected organization recently hosted its "Workforce of the Future" symposium at the Channel Partners Evolution event in Philadelphia. This symposium, known for its insightful discussions and strategic insights, provided an invaluable platform for young technology professionals. It allowed them to build important connections, gain knowledge, and prepare for successful careers in the dynamic technology industry.

The symposium brought together a notable panel of industry experts, including representatives from Salesforce, TPx Communications, eFolder, and RingCentral. These experienced leaders shared their career journeys and provided valuable insights into the future of the Channel. In an era marked by generational shifts, organizations like Channel NX2Z play a more significant role.

Millennials, who make up a significant portion of today's workforce and hold influence in important purchasing decisions, find in Channel NX2Z a valuable partner that bridges the generational gap effectively. This partnership provides them with essential resources to succeed in the rapidly changing business environment. Established in 2018, this organization has organized a series of carefully planned events and workshops, offering valuable guidance and support to young professionals and entrepreneurial minds as they navigate the complex industry landscape.



ADDRESSING GENERATIONAL SHIFTS IN THE WORKFORCE

FORRESTER RESEARCH ON RETIREMENT AND MILLENNIAL REPRESENTATION

Recent research conducted by Forrester reveals a significant upcoming shift that will have a noteworthy impact on the technology sector in the coming years. According to their meticulously gathered data, a strategic transition towards retirement is being orchestrated by 40% of Channel proprietors, a strategic maneuver scheduled for execution by 2024. [4] What's even more remarkable is the projection that, within the same timeframe, a remarkable 75% of individuals in the indirect Channel will be Millennials.

These statistics provide a clear signal of the upcoming generational shift within the industry. Experienced leaders, who have led for many years, are getting ready to hand over their responsibilities to a group of tech-savvy Millennials. These Millennials are determined to reshape the industry with their unique perspectives and strong technological skills. This impending generational transition calls on organizations to adapt quickly, harness their potential, and navigate the challenges presented by this emerging era of tech leadership.

CHALLENGES MILLENNIALS FACE IN JOINING THE TECH WORKFORCE

Despite their growing presence in the Channel industry, Millennials often face stereotypes and preconceived assumptions related to their age. Over time, this generation has had to deal with the challenge of disproving prevailing notions held by their more senior industry peers regarding their work ethic, commitment, and level of expertise. There is almost a sense of proving yourself as the next generation working with the previous generation as,

“you’re going to have to work with them for years before they give you the love you deserve.”[5]

As the Channel industry gradually attracts a younger demographic, it's important to recognize that this transformation is progressing more slowly compared to the broader tech sector. This can be attributed to differences in recruitment strategies and a need for more active engagement with younger generations. The industry's ongoing shift toward a more diverse and youthful workforce represents a long-term journey that requires determined and collaborative efforts to break down stereotypes and create an inclusive environment that fully utilizes the potential within the Millennial talent pool.

CHALLENGES MILLENNIALS FACE IN JOINING THE TECH WORKFORCE (CON'T)

Guiding and leading Generation Z, a group known for its natural digital fluency and unique characteristics, poses a set of complex challenges that require careful consideration. The top priority is to adapt to their preferred digital communication channels, as they are accustomed to quick, text-based interactions and the seamless use of online collaboration tools in their work processes.

Additionally, dealing with their shorter attention spans, which are strongly affected by the constant flow of information in the Digital Era, requires the use of creative engagement strategies that can capture their brief attention. It's also important to acknowledge that Gen Z values autonomy in the workplace and seeks a balance between structure and independence. Therefore, forward-thinking leaders should work to create an environment that supports self-direction and independent decision-making.

In addition to this, today's leaders should also demonstrate respect and support for their younger employees, particularly during live trade shows. Based on our personal experiences and interviews conducted for this project, it has become evident that the treatment of younger individuals at these events, especially young women, often lacks proper decorum and appears outdated,

***"it isn't discrimination, but it is unacceptable and unwarranted behavior."*[6]**

Many younger employees feel like they are left without adequate guidance regarding what to expect at these shows and how to conduct themselves.

The key takeaway is that the next generation is not here to replace or forget about the current generation, as there is a need for collaboration and knowledge sharing between both groups.



SHAPING THE NEXT GENERATION OF TECH LEADERS

THE ROLE OF MENTORSHIP

CHANNEL NX2Z'S APPROACH

In the dynamic and continuously changing field of technology and IT leadership, innovation is a key driver of progress. Aspiring IT leaders, especially those on the verge of taking on influential roles, should recognize the importance of expanding beyond the usual confines of traditional IT departments. To achieve excellence, they should seek inspiration from the successes of visionary entrepreneurs leading innovative startups.

These startups, often leading the way in pioneering technological advancements, can offer valuable insights and serve as mentors for emerging IT leaders. It's worth mentioning that organizations like NX2Z and NextGen Channel are actively working to bridge the generational gap. They achieve this through carefully planned mentorship programs and by facilitating connections that allow aspiring leaders to interact with experienced industry experts.

The creation of mentorship programs that bridge the gap between established institutions and startups is a significant catalyst for transformation. These thoughtfully designed programs provide IT professionals with valuable learning experiences and play a vital role in preparing a resilient pathway for the future.

IMPORTANCE OF EXPERIENCED LEADERS

Effectively leading Generation Z, a tech-savvy and digitally native group, requires adopting a versatile leadership approach. Leaders should wholeheartedly embrace technology and incorporate it into their leadership style to align with the preferences and expectations of Gen Z.

At the same time, being a supportive mentor becomes crucial, as the development and support of the talents of this generation are essential for both personal and collective growth, fostering a strong sense of loyalty. Another important aspect of enhancing the leader-Gen Z employee relationship is the cultivation of empathy and compassion, highlighting the importance of personal well-being in the workplace.

From an organizational standpoint, nurturing the next generation of IT leaders requires a strategic dedication to internal training programs, fostering forward-thinking perspectives on enterprise IT, and conscientiously raising awareness. Organizations can start this transformative process by developing a group of digital executives prepared to lead the business into the future.

SOFT SKILLS AND LEADERSHIP QUALITIES FOR SUCCESS

THE EVOLVING ROLE OF TECH LEADERS IN THE CHANGING INDUSTRY

In the rapidly changing landscape of IT leadership, CIOs are giving significant importance to developing certain soft skills that they consider crucial for their talent pool. These include creativity, cognitive flexibility, and emotional intelligence, which are now seen as essential attributes for IT professionals. The increasing demand for these soft skills reflects the evolving nature of technology leadership, where innovation and adaptability have become pivotal roles.

Moreover, there is a growing emphasis on the significant value found in diverse backgrounds and perspectives, which serve as a strong foundation for building high-performing IT teams and driving innovation to new levels. This shift in perspective is reinforced by the ongoing transition to cloud-based technologies, where the combination of softer skills like effective communication and collaboration seamlessly intertwines with deep technological expertise.

For companies operating within the Channel, it's essential to be agile and forward-thinking. This requires a proactive approach to embracing change, a deep understanding of their diverse customer base, and a strong commitment to creating flexible work structures that can adapt to the ever-changing needs and expectations of the modern workforce. This strategy is crucial for attracting and retaining the next generation of tech talent that will play a key role in shaping the industry's future as the perspective many of the next generation hold is that it's about,

“change for the benefit of all, not just for the few.”[7]



DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AS ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS OF EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

Leadership in today's world should wholeheartedly commit to the principles of diversity and inclusion, recognizing them as crucial elements for unleashing the full range of potential within their workforce and fostering a culture rooted in innovation.

The concept of diversity, equity and inclusion is something that falls in line more-so with the next generation as a notable difference between the previous and the next generation is, “the respect and attitude towards women and people of color.”[8]

Organizations that genuinely appreciate and actively promote diversity benefit from a rich pool of perspectives, experiences, and talents. This diverse mix sparks creativity and effective problem-solving. Teams with diverse backgrounds, capable of approaching challenges from various angles, drive the development of innovative solutions that go beyond traditional boundaries.

Furthermore, creating an inclusive environment where every employee is valued, listened to, and encouraged to share their unique insights fosters a powerful dynamic. This dynamic not only boosts morale but also cultivates a strong sense of belonging, a critical factor in retaining top-tier talent within the Channel.

By placing great importance on both diversity and inclusion, leadership nurtures an organizational environment where individuals are motivated to reach their full potential, collaboration thrives, and the fertile ground for innovation is established. This propels the organization to unprecedented levels of success in the constantly changing global landscape.

Additionally, this dedication to diversity and inclusion plays a vital role in shaping the next-generation leaders. It equips them with the ability to recognize and advocate for the transformative power of diversity within the complex landscape of the Channel space.

EMBRACING A DIGITAL MINDSET AND HARNESSING TECHNOLOGY

INTEGRATION OF TECHNOLOGY IN THE WORKPLACE AND LEADERSHIP

Tech leaders must integrate cutting-edge technology to remain competitive and meet evolving customer expectations.

In the tech industry, staying competitive and meeting customer expectations requires tech leaders to integrate cutting-edge technology into their strategies. This means adopting innovations like AI, machine learning, and data analytics to enhance efficiency and deliver tailored solutions that align with evolving customer needs. This proactive approach is crucial in a fast-paced and ever-changing industry.

The next generation can be accused of having “shiny object syndrome,” but this lends to having a better grasp on the ever-evolving landscape of technology as the next generation is, “quick to move, as technology improves so does the next-gen as they are exceptionally agile.”[9]

ADAPTING TO GEN Z'S EXPECTATIONS FOR DIGITAL EXPERIENCES

The incoming Gen Z leaders have high expectations for seamless digital experiences, which will drive innovation and transformation.

Gen Z leaders have strong expectations for seamless digital experiences, driving innovation and organizational transformation. Growing up in a digital age, they prioritize user-friendly, tech-driven solutions across work and life, reshaping business operations and compelling organizations to adapt and innovate.



CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE NEXT-GEN

STEREOTYPES AND ASSUMPTIONS FOR NEXT-GEN LEADERS

Overcoming stereotypes and assumptions is paramount to fostering equity and diversity in tech leadership. In the world of the Channel industry, where perceptions of Millennials and Gen Z can be rife with misconceptions, challenging these preconceived notions is indeed imperative. Let's dissect these stereotypes:

Short Attention Span: *While it's true that technology has made information more accessible and that Gen Z often thrives on quick, bite-sized content, this doesn't necessarily translate to a short attention span. In fact, their ability to process and filter information rapidly can be a strength. It's about harnessing this agility for focused productive tasks.*

Multitasking Skills: *Gen Z's knack for multitasking can be an asset in today's fast-paced tech environment. However, it's crucial to emphasize the importance of prioritization and deep work. Gen Z can excel when they learn how to balance their multitasking abilities with the need for in-depth analysis and concentration.*

Lack of Face-to-Face Interactions: *The digital-native Gen Z may prefer virtual communication, but this doesn't mean they lack the ability to engage in face-to-face interactions. Encouraging opportunities for in-person collaboration can help bridge any perceived gap.*

In essence, these perceived "negative" stereotypes often have positive aspects that can be harnessed to benefit the tech industry. It's about recognizing these traits as strengths and helping Gen Z professionals develop the skills needed to excel in a tech leadership role. Diversity and inclusion efforts in the tech world must include challenging these stereotypes to create a more equitable and dynamic industry.

TURNING WEAKNESS IN TO STRENGTH

Now, let's dive into how these traits can be harnessed to help the next generation of tech leaders thrive:

Short Attention Span for Effective Communication: Gen Z's ability to communicate concisely can be a game-changer in the workplace. In a world inundated with information, being able to cut through the noise and convey ideas clearly and succinctly is a valuable skill. It's not easy to be a newcomer as, "anyone can put up a website and do all the work, but you have to be able to stand out against the competition."^[10] It streamlines decision-making processes and ensures that crucial information is not buried in lengthy discussions.

Multitasking Proficiency for Enhanced Productivity: Gen Z's aptitude for multitasking, even in the digital cacophony of today's world, can be a significant asset. They can seamlessly juggle tasks, from work-related responsibilities to social media, which might seem overwhelming to older generations. This ability to split their focus efficiently can lead to increased productivity across various domains.

Emphasis on Genuine Relationships: Constant online communication has made Gen Z and Millennials highly attuned to the value of authentic relationships. In a tech-driven landscape, where virtual interactions are commonplace, their appreciation for genuine connections can foster better collaboration, trust, and teamwork. This emphasis on meaningful relationships can strengthen partnerships within the tech and communications Channel.

In essence, these characteristics provide the next generation of leaders with unique tools to excel in the tech industry. Their concise communication, multitasking prowess, and emphasis on authentic relationships can drive innovation and efficiency while challenging conventional workplace norms. Embracing and nurturing these traits can be the key to their success as tech leaders.

THE IMPORTANCE OF INNOVATION AND ADAPTABILITY

In today's whirlwind of constant technological and business evolution, the importance of innovation and adaptability cannot be overstated. Tech leaders find themselves at the vanguard of this ever-changing landscape, and their prowess in navigating these shifts is paramount.

Here is the high-level breakdown:

The Need for Innovation: Tech leaders must embrace innovation as their guiding principle. This means being open to new technologies, methodologies, and ideas. It's about staying at the cutting edge, harnessing emerging trends, and ensuring that their organizations remain not just relevant but competitive.

Adaptability as a Core Skill: Adaptability is the backbone of leadership in the tech industry. Being able to pivot, adjust, and thrive in the face of rapid change is essential. Tech leaders who are agile and quick to adapt can steer their teams through tumultuous times with confidence.

Gen Z's Desire for Innovation: It's worth noting that the next generation of tech professionals, like Gen Z, have a strong appetite for innovation. They aspire to work with groundbreaking technologies like AI. Moreover, they consider an employer's level of innovation when making career decisions. This underscores the importance of fostering a culture of innovation within tech organizations.

In essence, innovation and adaptability are the cornerstones of success for tech leaders in our dynamic world. They not only keep organizations at the forefront but also attract and retain the best talent, especially from a generation that values innovation so highly. This is a potent formula for staying ahead in the tech game.

THE IMPORTANCE OF INNOVATION AND ADAPTABILITY (CON'T)

Now, let us instill the importance of encouraging entrepreneurial thinking among tech leaders:

Fostering an Entrepreneurial Mindset: *It's crucial to instill an entrepreneurial mindset in tech leaders. This means equipping them with the drive to explore uncharted territories, take uncalculated risks, and seek out new opportunities. Such thinking can transform them into proactive problem solvers and visionaries.*

Empowering Innovation and Growth: *When tech leaders embrace an entrepreneurial mindset, they become catalysts for innovation and growth within their organizations. They're more likely to identify emerging trends, disruptive technologies, and untapped markets, driving their companies forward in an ever-evolving landscape.*

Navigating Constant Change: *In a world where change is relentless, tech leaders who champion innovation, adaptability, and entrepreneurship are best positioned to navigate these shifts effectively. They not only respond to change but actively seek ways to harness it for the benefit of their organizations.*

In summary, encouraging entrepreneurial thinking among tech leaders is pivotal for staying ahead in this fast-paced industry. It empowers them to be proactive, seize opportunities, and lead their organizations toward sustained success and relevance, even in the face of constant change.



RESPONDING TO THE NEXTGEN LEADERSHIP DEMANDS

ALIGNING VALUES AND PURPOSE

Now let us examine the critical importance of aligning values and purpose in the tech industry, especially considering the preferences of Gen Z and Millennials.

The Rise of Purpose-Driven Work: Gen Z and Millennials have ushered in a new era in the tech industry, emphasizing the significance of purpose-driven work. They don't view their careers solely as a paycheck, they seek alignment with a company's mission and values. This shift reflects a desire for meaningful, fulfilling work that goes beyond financial compensation. The next generation has embraced tipping the scales of the work-life balance in an effort to battle against the every-encroaching burnout, "taking breaks is important, as a Channel Manager it's hard to take those breaks."^[11]

Embracing a Flexible Work Environment: A flexible work environment is a cornerstone of attracting and retaining younger talent. It accommodates their desire for work-life balance and aligns with their values of personal autonomy and well-being.

Ethics and Social Awareness: Gen Z and Millennials place a premium on ethics and social responsibility. They expect tech companies to operate with integrity and contribute positively to society. Organizations that champion ethical practices and social causes can better resonate with these generations.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI): A heightened focus on DEI is crucial for retaining Gen Z and Millennial talent. These generations value diversity and inclusivity, and they actively seek workplaces that foster equality and provide opportunities for all. Tech companies that prioritize DEI not only attract top talent but also benefit from diverse perspectives that drive innovation.

In summary, aligning values and purpose is no longer a mere trend but a fundamental strategy for success in the tech industry. Gen Z and Millennials demand purpose-driven work, flexible environments, ethical practices, and a commitment to diversity and inclusion. Adapting to these preferences is essential for attracting and retaining the talent that will shape the future of the industry.

EMBRACING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVITY

Now let us emphasize the significance of embracing diversity and inclusivity in the tech industry:

Moral Imperative and Strategic Advantage: Diversity and inclusivity aren't just buzzwords; they represent both a moral imperative and a strategic advantage in the tech sector. Fostering inclusive workplaces is essential not only for ethical reasons but also for long-term success.

Nurturing Tech Leaders: Inclusive environments are the bedrock for attracting and nurturing a diverse pool of tech leaders. When individuals from various background, cultures, and perspectives are not only welcomed but also valued, it creates a fertile ground for innovation and the flourishing of creativity.

Gen Z's Emphasis on DEI: Gen Z, the next generation of tech professionals, places significant importance on DEI. A substantial majority, 83% actively consider and employer's DEI efforts when deciding where to work. Furthermore, 75% indicate they're willing to seek new employment if their current company's DEI efforts fall short of their expectations.[12]

Essentially, embracing diversity and inclusivity isn't just a checkbox for tech companies; it's a fundamental driver of success. It creates an environment where diverse perspectives foster innovation, and it aligns with the values and expectations of the emerging generation of tech leaders. For tech organizations, DEI is not just nice-to-have; it's a must-have for staying competitive and relevant.



LOOKING AHEAD: BUILDING A RESILIENT NEXT-GEN LEADERSHIP

PREPARING FOR THE DOMINANCE OF GEN Z

Here is a high-level overview of why preparing for the rise of Gen Z in the workforce is not just advisable but strategically sound:

Strategic Imperative: *As Gen Z prepares to dominate the workforce, organizations must recognize it as a strategic imperative. Projections indicate that they will make up a significant portion of the workforce, necessitating a deep understanding and adaptation to their unique leadership style and expectations.*

Fresh Perspectives and Approaches: *Gen Z leaders will bring fresh perspective and approaches to the table. They place a strong emphasis on sustainability, technology-driven solutions and a deep commitment to social and environmental causes. Organizations that embrace these values will be better poised for success.*

Encouraging Innovation: *To harness the potential of Gen Z leaders, organizations should foster environments that encourage innovation. Gen Z is tech savvy and thrives on creativity. Providing opportunities for growth and aligning with their values will be key to attracting and retaining this emerging talent.*

Adaptation for Success: *By recognizing the potential of Gen Z leaders and proactively adapting to their preferences and priorities, businesses can unlock their full potential. This generation's unique qualities can be leveraged to drive future success and relevance in the ever-evolving landscape of work.*

Essentially, preparing for Gen Z's ascendancy in the workforce is not just about staying ahead; it's about survival and thriving. Their distinct leadership style and values will shape the future of work, and organizations that proactively adapt will be better positioned to navigate and succeed in this new era.

COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS FOR A THRIVING TECH ECOSYSTEM

Here is a high-level perspective on the importance of collaborative efforts in nurturing a thriving tech ecosystem:

Partnerships Driving Innovation: Collaborative partnerships, particularly between established organizations and startups, are pivotal in driving innovation within the tech ecosystem. Established tech giants can offer startups valuable resources, expertise, and market access, while startups inject fresh ideas, agility, and disruptive solutions into the mix. These symbiotic relationships lead to increased innovation in products and services, ultimately creating a more efficient tech Channel.

Mentorship and Shared Experiences: In addition to formal partnerships, leveraging mentorship and shared experiences among tech leaders is crucial for fostering innovation. Learning from the success and failures of experienced professionals accelerates the growth of emerging tech leaders and helps them navigate the complexities of the industry.

In essence, collaboration is the cornerstone of a thriving ecosystem. It's the interplay between established players and startups. As well as the exchange of knowledge and experiences among tech leaders, that fuels innovation, drives efficiency, and propels the tech industry forward.



COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS FOR A THRIVING TECH ECOSYSTEM (CON'T)

Here is a high-level perspective on the significance of mentorship programs in the tech industry:

Accelerating Growth and Learning: *Mentorship programs enable seasoned professionals to share their wealth of knowledge and guidance with the next generation of tech leaders. This accelerates the growth of young talent and instills a culture of continuous learning and improvement within the industry.*

Showcasing Mentorship's Value: *To emphasize the importance of mentorship to younger generations, it's worth noting that while 56% of adults over the age of 40 have had a mentor, a higher percentage, 66%, of those under the age of 40 have experienced mentorship.[13] This underscores the growing recognition of mentorship's value among younger tech professionals.*

In summary, mentorship programs are instrumental in nurturing talent and fostering a culture of learning and growth in the tech industry. By promoting these collaborative efforts, the tech ecosystem can thrive, driving innovation and progress in the ever-evolving digital landscape.



CONCLUSION

The rapid emergence of the next generation of tech leaders, primarily represented by Millennials and Generation Z, is ushering in a transformative era for the information and technology Channel. This report has delved into the pivotal role played by these emerging leaders in reshaping the channel industry, emphasizing their distinctive challenges, demands, and expectations. The key takeaways from our exploration highlight the critical components necessary for fostering successful next-generation tech leaders.

It is fascinating to see how the landscape of the technology and communications Channel is evolving with the rise of Millennials and Generation Z leaders. These emerging generations are indeed bringing a fresh perspective and energy to the industry. Let's break down the key takeaways from this insightful report:

Transformational Era: *The rapid emergence of Millennial and Gen Z tech leaders signals a pivotal moment in the Channel industry. Their digital native status and unique insights are driving substantial changes.*

Distinctive Challenges: *These new leaders face challenges distinct from their predecessors. Their ability to adapt to rapidly evolving technology is crucial, and they often demand more agility and innovation in Channel strategies.*

Demands and Expectations: *Millennials and Gen Z leaders have high expectations. They seek partnerships that align with their values, emphasizing sustainability, diversity, and ethical practices. Channel programs must reflect these values.*

Fostering Success: *To succeed in this era, channel organizations need to create an environment that nurtures these emerging leaders. This involves providing mentorship, fostering a culture of continuous learning, and encouraging experimentation.*

Collaboration and Innovation: *Next-gen leaders thrive in collaborative environments. Channel programs should promote open communication, cross-functional collaboration, and a willingness to embrace new technologies.*

CONCLUSION (CON'T)

Adaptability: *The ability to pivot quickly in response to market changes is crucial. Next-gen leaders are often at the forefront of innovation, and channel strategies must adapt accordingly.*

Data-Driven Insights: *In this data-driven world, leveraging analytics is essential. Next-gen leaders are comfortable making decisions based on data, and Channel partners should provide the necessary tools and insights.*

Thought Leadership: *Encouraging these emerging leaders to become thought leaders themselves can become a powerful strategy. It not only elevates their profile but also positions channel programs as forward-thinking and dynamic.*

Customer-Centric Approach: *The focus should always be on delivering value to end-users. Next-gen leaders often prioritize customer experience and expect Channel partners to do the same.*

Global Perspective: *Given the interconnected nature of today's tech industry, having a global outlook is vital. Millennial and Gen Z leaders often have a more international mindset and Channel strategies should reflect this.*

In summary, the rise of Millennials and Gen Z leaders in the technology and communications Channel is reshaping the industry. To harness their potential, organizations must adapt, foster a culture of innovation, and align with their values. This transformation era offers exciting opportunities for those willing to embrace change and collaborate with the next generation of leaders.

CONCLUSION (CON'T)

Firstly, mentorship emerges as a fundamental aspect of nurturing these emerging leaders. Their unique challenges and rapid technological change demand guidance and support from experienced mentors who can provide valuable insights and wisdom.

Secondly, soft skills development is essential in a tech landscape increasingly reliant on collaboration, communication, and adaptability. The next-generation of tech leaders must possess the interpersonal and leadership skills to navigate complex teams and diverse work environments effectively.

Thirdly, digital adaptability is non-negotiable. These leaders must be agile in their approach to technology, embracing continuous learning and staying ahead of industry trends to drive innovation and maintain a competitive edge.

Lastly, diversity, equity, and inclusion must be at the forefront of efforts to shape the tech leadership of the future. Embracing a diverse range of voices and perspectives is a moral imperative and a strategic advantage, as it fosters creativity and drives innovation.

In conclusion, for organizations seeking to stay competitive and innovative in the fast-paced tech industry, it is crucial to grasp and adapt to the evolving leadership landscape. The upcoming generation of tech leaders plays a pivotal role in enabling a future where human expertise and artificial intelligence co-exist seamlessly. Their success will be instrumental in shaping the future of technology and information Channels.



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