

CULTURE HACKER
REPROGRAMMING THE EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE™

The Culture Report 2023: Las Vegas



The Great Reshuffle Is Still Happening

As we start 2023, many employees are still looking for the best position, role, or company to work for, even though they may be satisfied in their current job. Unless they want to be left struggling to keep their staff around, owners, executives, and managers must understand why their people may leave and what they can do to retain them now.

Shane Green and his team of employee experience experts at SGEi partnered with Stickybeak, survey and research specialists, to collect data from 544 Las Vegas workers across all industries on their behaviors and attitudes toward their job satisfaction and what they want from their current or future employers. Respondents included four generations: baby boomer (66), gen X (176), millennial (182), and gen Z (120), and a good representative sample across genders (male (248) and female (296)).

As a result of this information, companies can start to think about where to invest their time and resources this year to create the type of environment workers in the Las Vegas valley want. As part of this research, SGEi looked at what specific generations of workers, women, and hospitality employees are looking for now.

Some of Your Best People, Who Are Currently Happy, Are Still Considering Leaving You in 2023



52%

of Las Vegas
workers are satisfied
with their current
job, but...

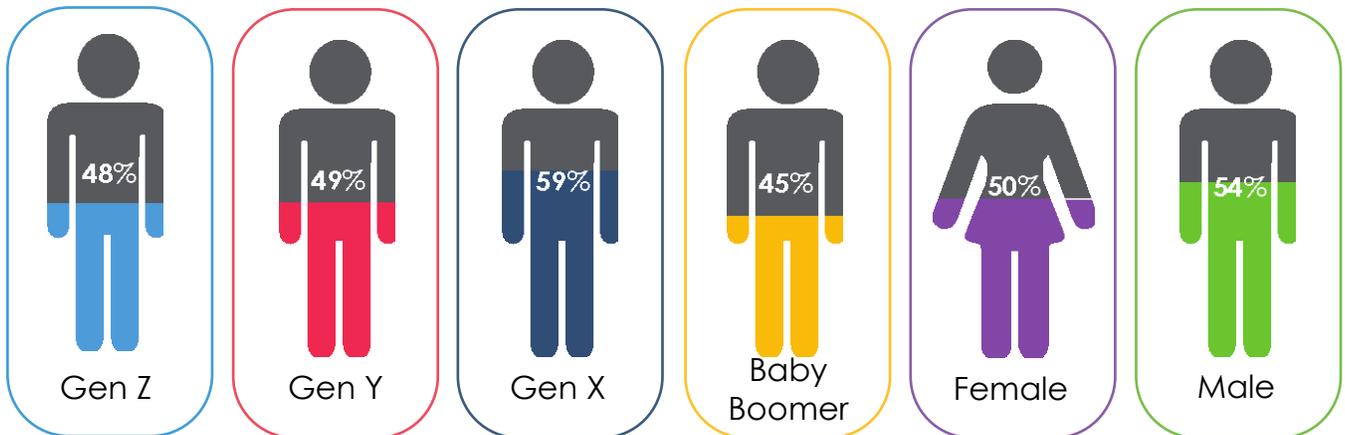
64%

are looking for (or
thinking about
looking for) a new
job in 2023.

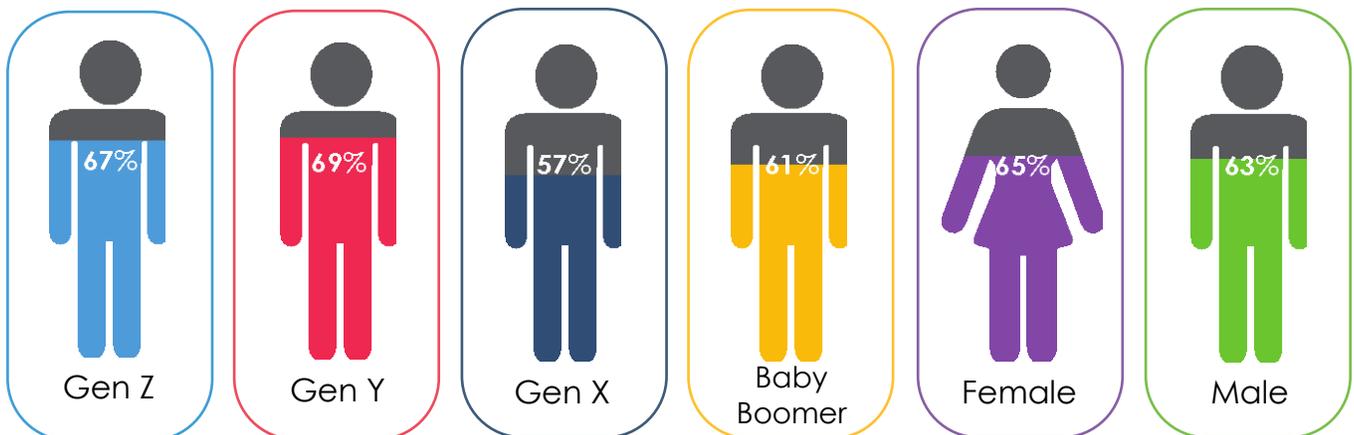


The bottom line is that even though workers may be satisfied with their jobs, it does not preclude them from looking for better opportunities elsewhere. Therefore, we are still experiencing a “Great Reshuffle,” where people are actively seeking a work situation that better suits their wants and needs.

Levels of Satisfaction at Work



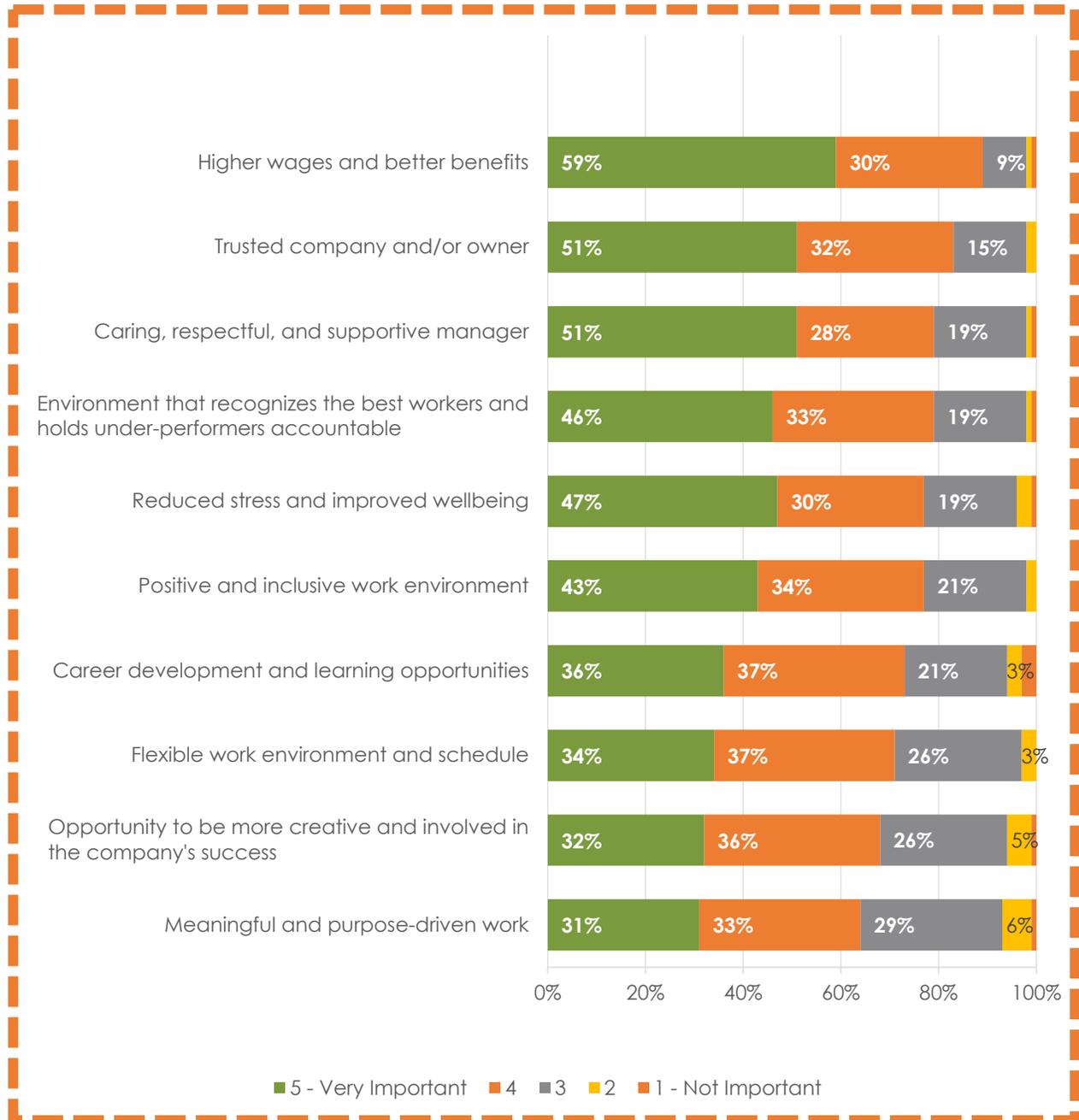
Looking for Jobs in 2023



To summarize, the most satisfied generation of workers in our survey is gen X at 59%, while baby boomers are the least satisfied at 45%. Gen Xers are least likely to look for a new job in the next twelve months, while millennials and gen Zers are most likely to look for a new job at 69% and 67%, respectively. Male employees are slightly more satisfied (54%) than females (50%). However, females are slightly more likely to leave (65%) than males (63%).

What Do Las Vegas Workers Find Important in 2023?

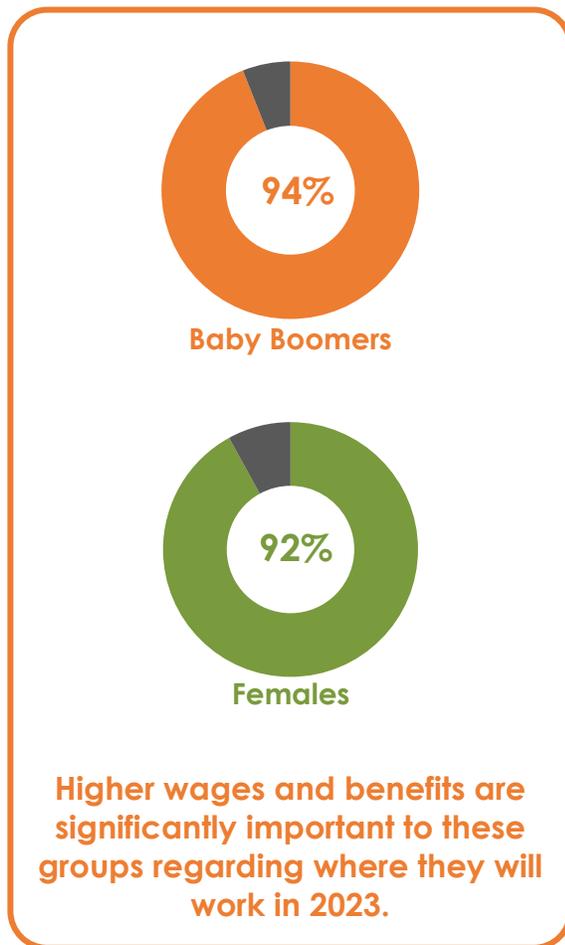
We asked survey respondents to rank the importance of ten different factors in their ability to keep them at their current job. The table below shows the results across the entire survey response group.



1. Wages and Benefits Are Top of Mind Right Now

Across all generations, the number one factor in determining whether someone will remain in their job or look for a new one is higher wages and better benefits. (Please note that we conducted this survey the week before interest rates increased in December and after significant media coverage on the likely recession in 2023.)

While higher wages and better benefits are the most important factor for all generations, 94% of baby boomers indicated that it was the most important factor in determining whether they would stay or leave their job in 2023. This factor was 11% more important than the second highest-rated factor of working for a trusted company and/or owner.



Research Implications: Companies need to address the proverbial elephant in the room and ensure their wages are competitive and their benefits package is relevant. Many companies complete a wage analysis every year. However, under the current economic conditions, this is proving to be not enough. We recommend companies conduct wage analyses at least twice a year—possibly every quarter. Companies must remain aware of what a competitive wage for a position, location, and level of experience is at any given time.

Companies must also be completely transparent about this process with their staff and managers. When companies are not transparent, their people will naturally believe they could earn higher wages elsewhere, even if they cannot. As a result, a lack of transparency around wages may cause your current team members to look elsewhere or believe the grass is greener at another company.

Benefits must be relevant, meaning they can help an individual or family *today*. Both millennials and gen Zers see health benefits as the bare minimum, so there is no advantage in promoting it to prospective employees. While gen Zers are highly interested in saving for retirement, they are likely to sign up for a retirement plan only voluntarily when more pressing issues, like paying off college tuition, are front of mind. Millennials (assuming they have young families) are more likely to be interested in workplace and schedule flexibility. Our survey results support this assumption, as millennial respondents placed more importance on work environment and schedule flexibility than any other generation.

2. Trust Is Still Essential to Workers in 2023

82% of all respondents ranked working for a trusted company and/or owner as the second most important factor.

When employees trust their managers, the company, and owners, they are more likely to be creative, productive, and less resistant to change. Workers perform better when they feel they work for a company and manager they can trust. All generations of workers feel that trust is integral in their decision to remain in a role or look elsewhere.

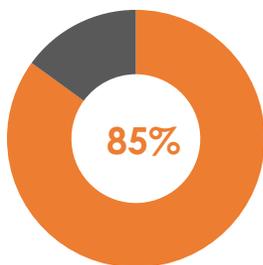
Research Implications: Companies and managers need to do more to develop trust with their staff. Begin by being more transparent about the company objectives, plans, and results. Owners, executives, and managers talk a lot about achieving goals and objectives. Yet, we often wonder how they expect to achieve those objectives when 90% of the company—your employees—do not know what they are. Companies and managers must tell their teams *why* things are happening, especially if it involves changes to people's work and roles.

Managers also need to stop micromanaging and empower their people to have some control over how they do work and make decisions. Managers can also build trust by being honest about when they make mistakes, are unsure what to do, or need help. This level of transparency can go a long way in staff feeling that they can trust their manager.

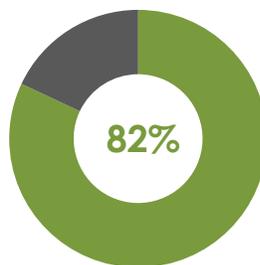
3. Employees Don't Leave Jobs, They Leave Managers

Survey respondents ranked a more caring, respectful, and supportive manager as the third most important factor. When employees believe their managers care for and respect them, they are likelier to want to perform their best and do what their manager expects.

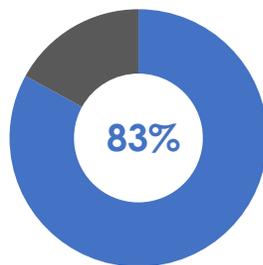
In our research, 82% of females ranked the importance of having a caring, respectful, and supportive manager higher than their male counterparts (76%). This finding aligns with [McKinsey's Women in Workplace 2022 study](#), which found that managers play an essential role in shaping women's work experiences.



Baby Boomers



Females



Hospitality Staff

A caring, respectful, and supportive manager is significantly important to these groups regarding where they work in 2023.

While employees of all ages indicated that managers are important, millennials feel that managers who care, respect, and support them are significantly more important (85%) to their work experience than other generations. After over ten years of researching what employees want in a manager, we can sum up millennial workers best with this insight: Millennials do not care what their manager knows until they know how much their manager cares. Millennials need their managers to respect them as people, help them grow through feedback, and recognize them for a job well done.

Research Implications: Companies need to invest more in leadership development: those skills that are more focused on inspiring and supporting people, as opposed to only focusing on management skills, which are about getting work done. These skills must go hand-in-hand, but companies continue to emphasize getting work done, ultimately leaving workers disappointed and frustrated.

Companies must also reward managers who excel in their leadership responsibilities while holding accountable those who do not. Too many

managers who do not care, are not respectful, and do not support their staff are allowed to remain employed, especially in Las Vegas' hospitality industry. We have opened, transformed, or consulted most hotels in Las Vegas and have found bad managers to be the single most significant source of frustration for workers. Building a strong culture and work environment for their people needs to be included in manager KPIs as equally as financial and customer metrics.

Managers also need to let their employees get to know them more and, in return, understand each of their team member's passions and priorities.

4. Performance Matters

Las Vegas workers ranked an environment that recognizes its best workers and holds accountable those who cannot complete the work or work well with others fourth in terms of overall importance. People want to be seen and recognized for doing things well. If you don't recognize your best people, they will look elsewhere.

Gen X and millennial workers believe it's vital to work for a company that recognizes its best people and holds accountable those who cannot complete the work or work well with others.



Research Implications: Every manager needs to focus on elevating performance, which requires skills around informal and formal feedback. If you do not give your people feedback, they will not maximize their talents and perform their best. The everyday, casual conversations that provide employees insight into what they are doing well and how they can improve are the foundation of coaching and high-performing cultures. Informal feedback should be specific, explain why, ask questions rather than make statements, and be delivered in the moment. From our study on some of the best coaches in sports, we found that the best coaches get a person thinking by asking questions like, "What is the impact of your actions?" and "How are you going to improve?" A coach of a very successful high school basketball program said, "Coaching is about getting people to think about their actions and behaviors."

Recognition is a form of informal feedback, while rewards are formal. Rewards should be given when a person achieves a pre-determined level of achievement or performance. Recognition is the everyday opportunity to reinforce that a person is doing something well. Remember that there is no one-size-fits-all way to recognize a person, so managers must ensure their recognition

is meaningful. While some people like to be thanked in a group, others will want appreciation to be delivered one-on-one, and others still prefer a thank-you note. Kinesthetic learners need to touch their recognition—receiving food or a beverage is best for them. Companies must support and expect their managers to recognize staff frequently and provide a reward system for the best performers to earn more because of their efforts.

Accountability is about evaluating a person on something they are responsible for. When a worker cannot perform a core task or work together with others based on something they are responsible for, it is fair to ask them to accept responsibility for their actions. It is also appropriate to require performance improvements and apply consequences if necessary. Managers must have tough conversations with people who do not meet expectations to ensure the business' success and out of respect for those who consistently meet expectations.

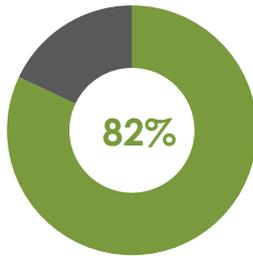
5. Well-Being Is Important Now and in the Future

Respondents indicated that reducing stress and improving well-being are important factors in deciding where to work in 2023. We cannot eliminate stress at work; however, companies must do more to reduce stress and help people recover when necessary.

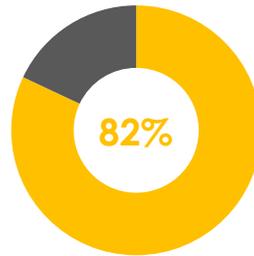
In our research, women placed significantly higher importance (82%) on reducing stress and improving well-being when compared to men (72%). This finding is unsurprising, especially since McKinsey's [Women in the Workplace 2022](#) study highlighted that women were more burned out in 2022, with one in three women considering leaving the workforce or downgrading their careers.



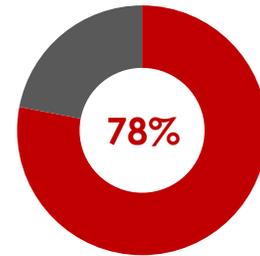
Both millennials (82%) and gen Zers (78%) rated reduced stress and improved well-being as important. This finding is also unsurprising, especially for gen Zers, whom [research has found](#) are more likely to report that their mental health is fair or poor in comparison to other generations. The same research also found that gen Zers are more likely to see work as the cause of their stress than any other generation.



Females



Millennials



Gen Zers

These groups rated reduced stress and improved well-being as important in helping them decide where to work in 2023.

Research Implications: Companies have been doing more to support an employee's physical health in recent years. The science is simple: When people are physically healthy, they are more productive, call off sick less often, and have less stress. However, just focusing on physical health to deal with stress is not enough, and companies must now be more proactive in reducing stress at the source, or, at least, helping their people deal with it. The good news is, because of the pandemic, companies have become more considerate of the impact of mental health on workers, though there is still a long way to go, especially to support women.

We must acknowledge the presence of stress in all people's lives, and that the workplace is often a cause of that stress for several different reasons. The most prevalent reason is a person's direct manager. How a manager interacts with their people each day is more important than any benefit or perk you can offer. Managers affect an employee's heart, mind, and energy level more than any other thing at work. So, before considering specific health and well-being programs and offerings, start by understanding how your managers treat their teams. An inconsiderate, disrespectful, overly critical, or commanding manager can cause more stress than any other factor in the workplace.

Businesses are not expected to be experts in mental health and well-being. Still, they are expected to have information about mental health services and be willing to give people the necessary time off if they need it. Companies are even partnering with healthcare experts to ensure their employees can access the help and support they need. But providing younger people with more purpose, passion, and positive reinforcement to help them feel better about their job and role ultimately makes even more of a difference.

6. Diversity Is a Given, Inclusion Is Not

A more positive and inclusive work environment is another factor that impacts where people want to work. While there is a lot of focus on diversity and inclusion, the reality is that diversity is a given at this point. Diversity refers to your workforce including workers from all backgrounds, ethnicities, orientations, and preferences, so your business is most likely already diverse. But has your company adopted inclusive work practices recognizing all the diversity that now earns a living with it? The chances are unlikely. And yet, inclusive practices are important. An [inclusion pulse survey by Deloitte in 2017](#) found that 80% of its respondents reported that inclusion is an important factor when choosing an employer.

In our survey, millennials cited a positive and inclusive work environment as more important than other generations in influencing where they work in the next year.

Research Implications: Companies must consider evolving their business practices to be more considerate and inclusive of their workforce. In our experience, this must begin with a focus on the recruitment process, where manager bias has inadvertently seen like-minded people having an advantage over those with diverse backgrounds and orientations. Utilizing AI pre-screening software, group interviews, and activity-based interviews are steps to being more inclusive during the recruitment process, as well as offering documents in multiple languages. Another opportunity to be more inclusive is around communication and celebration. We recommend recognizing important dates and celebrations for various ethnic or employee groups.

Inclusive environments foster considerate, respectful, and open-minded workers. A great way to create inclusivity is by emphasizing learning and development. When people are learning, they tend to be more open, collaborative, and less resistant to change. [An HBR article by J. Yo Jud Cheng and Boris Groysberg](#) found that “what’s interesting about learning cultures is that they differentiated the diverse and inclusive organizations from those that were not.”

Another element we see in inclusive workplace cultures is that managers and employees tend to support and help each other more often. [Amabile, Fisher, and Pillemer \(HBR, 2015\)](#) wrote that organizations where managers and employees support and help one another do their best work seem to outperform companies that do not, are more adaptive to change, and, most importantly, create a more positive and healthy work environment for their employees.

7. Younger Workers Want Careers, Too

Unsurprisingly, gen Zers and millennials rated learning opportunities and a focus on career highly when considering where they would work in 2023.

This was gen Z's second-highest-rated factor, affirming that companies must invest in their people's development beyond job tasks, have clear career paths, and commit to promoting from within. This is aligned with [LinkedIn research](#) that found 76% of gen Zers believe learning is critical to their success.

Research Implications: An effective learning culture provides opportunities for people to develop a range of behaviors and skills that will allow them to be more flexible, get promoted, earn more, and, most importantly, develop their careers. While learning and development are often seen as formal training opportunities, we have found in our research that employees feel the most important element in a learning culture is managers who are willing to share their expertise and experience. Opportunities to work on projects or with different teams, cross-train, and receive mentoring are all cost-efficient and -effective methods to develop various skills.

Our research also found that managers must be willing to engage in regular and meaningful career conversations, even if the employee does not plan to be with a company long-term. Young people want to work for a manager interested in helping them develop their careers and a company that prioritizes development and careers.

8. Flexibility at Work Is Nice, But Not as Valued as We Thought



We have heard a lot about how everyone wants more flexibility in their work environment and schedule. However, based on our research, those in Las Vegas do not see it as critical to their decision of where to work in 2023.

Unsurprisingly, we see that women and millennials view it as an important priority—assuming that both demographics are likely to have family responsibilities focused on younger children. This finding supports McKinsey's [Women in the Workplace 2022](#) research that found “only one in ten women wants to work mostly on-site, and many women point to remote- and hybrid-work options as one of their top reasons for joining or staying with an organization.”

Research Implications: The simple message regarding flexibility is that if work can be done from home, then create opportunities and guidelines for people to do so. However, it's also important to create opportunities at work for staff to collaborate, connect, celebrate, and learn. Be intentional about time in the office and what can be achieved when everyone is together.

In addition, if staff is engaging in some form of hybrid work practice, managers need to be trained on how to lead this group effectively and without bias toward those who choose to work from home more often.

9. What Happened to Work Needing to Be Meaningful?

For the past few years, we have heard that people want more meaningful and purpose-driven work, yet our research suggests that this is not as important as we may have thought—at least in looking ahead to the next twelve months. People seemingly have more pressing priorities of what they are looking for from work and their employer in the next year.

Research Implications: Staff still need a sense of purpose and opportunities to be creative—these are still important; however, other areas of the work



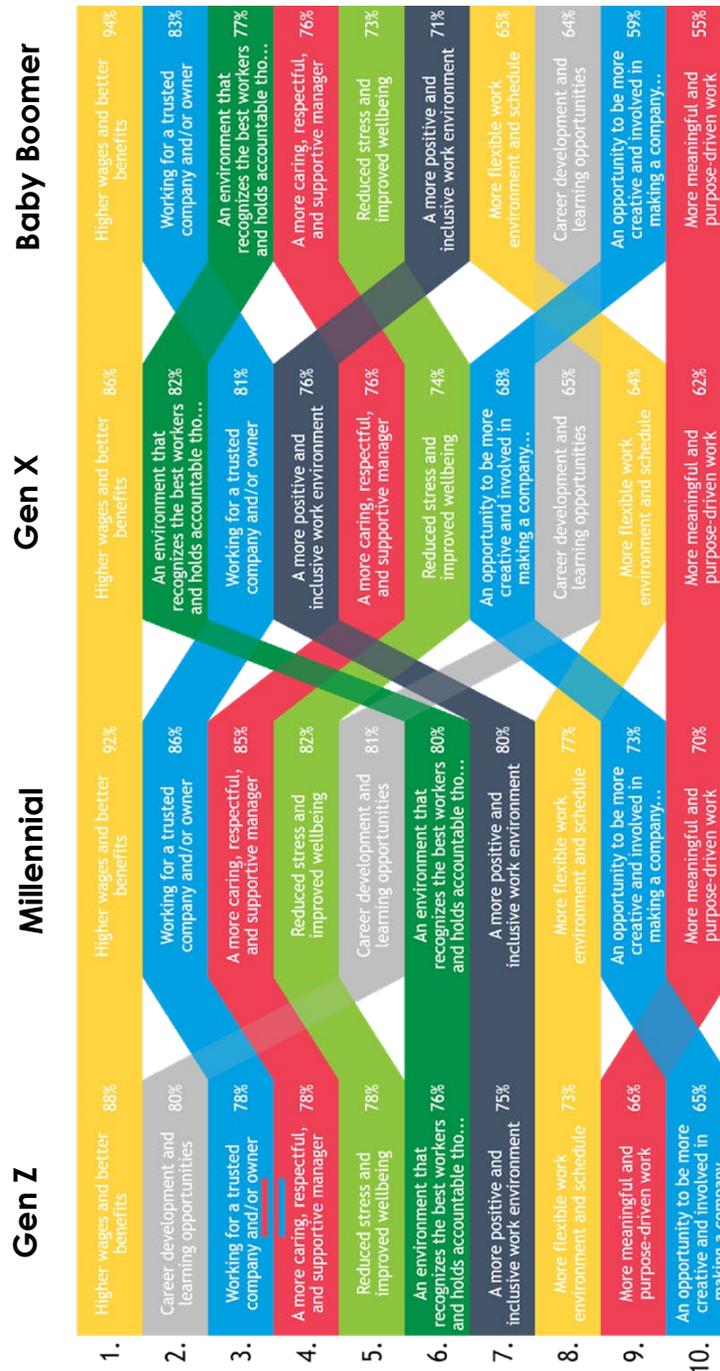
environment should be focused on more heavily when attracting and retaining your best people. But, since employees still want to know that their work can make a positive difference to others, managers should prioritize reinforcing this message each week, sharing good customer feedback, and encouraging employees to think and talk about how they can help each other.

“Companies must invest in an employee experience that attracts, engages, and retains their best people. Having relevant data on how to build the right strategy for your business is essential. We are excited to provide Las Vegas employers with insights and ideas to help them improve their company culture, elevate the performance of their people, and be an employer of choice.”

—Shane Green, founder and president of SGEi

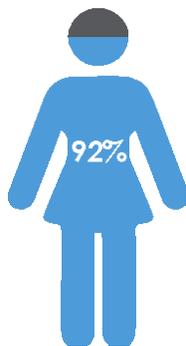
Work Experience Priorities by Generation

While each of the elements we studied is considered an important part of the employee experience, by understanding the order of priority and some of the differences between genders and generations, you can begin to develop an employee experience (EX) strategy that fits your individual workforce's needs.



What Women Want

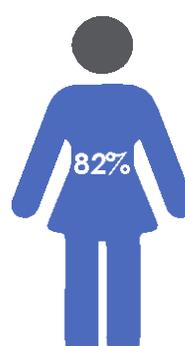
Part of our research aimed to understand the type of environment and priorities women in the workforce want over the next year. The research was clear: Women are looking for higher wages and better benefits in 2023. They also prioritized reduced stress, improved well-being, and greater flexibility than their male counterparts.



Higher Wages



A Trusted Company



A Caring Manager



Improved Well-Being

While higher wages and improved benefits are important for all workers, it is significantly more important for females (92%) compared to males (86%). According to a [March 2021 Wall Street Journal article](#), wage growth for American women is increasing at a faster rate than for men. However, there is still a significant pay gap with the median weekly earnings in 2021 for full-time female workers: only 83.1% of men's earnings. Companies can make an impact by clarifying how they establish wage rates and showing no disparity or differences based on gender. When it comes to benefits, McKinsey's [Women in the Workplace 2022](#) research showed that mental healthcare, childcare services, extended leave for caregivers, and parental leave are all key practices companies can implement to try to attract and retain women.

McKinsey's report asserts, "women are ambitious and hardworking. They are more inclusive and empathetic leaders." The bottom line is that having a more gender-diverse workforce is important and advantageous in today's business world. If companies want to take advantage of this underutilized and underappreciated talent, they must have a strategy in place to attract, engage, and retain them.

What Do Las Vegas Hospitality Workers Find Important in 2023?

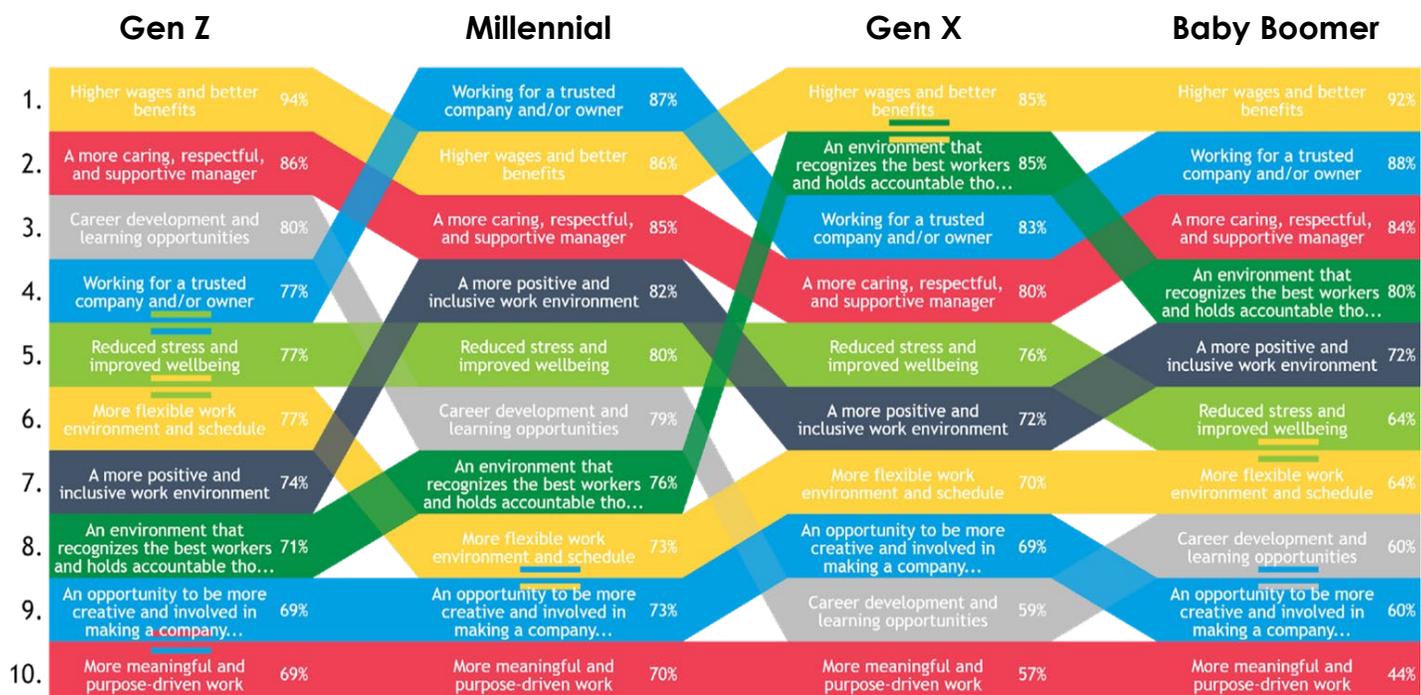
Our research also aimed to understand the type of environment and priorities hospitality workers want in 2023. While the priorities overall were very similar, there were some significant differences among different work generations.

The following differences should be noted among hospitality workers when compared to other workers in the Las Vegas valley.



Hospitality employees rated a trusted company (84%) and a caring manager (83%) as being more important when compared to all Las Vegas employees.

Across generations, you see greater differences in what they believe is most important.



What Is Your Strategy to Attract, Engage, and Retain Your Best People?

This report provides important insights into the attitudes and associated behaviors of workers in Las Vegas, NV, in 2023. Knowing that satisfied, otherwise content workers are still looking for new work means that executives, owners, and managers must act now to create and implement a clear and effective employee experience (EX) strategy.

Best Practices

Based on this research, we recommend the following best practices:

- Ensure the wages offered are competitive for the industry, position, and experience level. Be transparent with staff about the process to determine what a competitive wage is, utilizing independent data to support any wage setting. Review wages more than once a year.
- Offer meaningful benefits to a variety of worker groups to create a distinct recruitment advantage.
- Communicate clearly and openly about strategies, goals, and plans to your workers to promote trust. Ask for their ideas on how to achieve those goals and make improvements.
- Ensure you have a program in place to develop your managers' leadership skills to ensure they are equipped to meet the emotional- and people-related demands of their roles. Establish expectations on how people should be treated and ensure those expectations are a part of any performance review and bonus program.
- Ensure managers are comfortable and able to provide informal feedback and recognition daily to their employees to reinforce the desired behaviors and develop the right skills.
- Update your rewards program to ensure your best people are rewarded and that any reward is meaningful to them.
- Ensure your managers are comfortable having tough conversations when workers fail to perform or behave appropriately.
- Discuss the things (and people) that cause unnecessary stress in the workplace with your staff. Develop a plan to reduce the impact of these stressors.
- Create more opportunities for your workers to develop teamwork, build connections, celebrate successes, and have fun.

Once businesses understand their employees' needs and wants, they can prioritize investments of time and money into those processes, tools, and technology that will support the business' ability to attract, engage, and retain the right people. This knowledge can also help direct a manager's behaviors and attitudes regarding their people, none more important than the care, respect, and support they provide their teams.

What Good Managers Do

Managers account for 70% of the culture of any team. These activities and actions significantly and positively impact how your workers feel about what they do and whom they do it for. Here are some of the things you should see your manager doing:

- Each week, managers acknowledge how an employee made a difference.
- They allow employees to make decisions (which fosters trust).
- Managers walk their operation and observe their teams, providing daily feedback to employees on how they are performing.
- They recognize their best performers.
- They create opportunities for staff to have some appropriate fun at work.
- Managers work alongside their employees and share their expertise.
- They ask their employees for ideas on how to improve the way they work.
- They know their employees' personal passions and priorities.
- They know each of their employee's career aspirations.
- They are available and approachable to their team.
- Managers actively talk and engage with their people, focusing on how they are doing rather than just what they are doing.

Looking for more insights on the employee experience or want a more personalized approach to improving your company culture? Contact our team at Connect@SGEinternational.com for consultation and coaching to determine where your organization should begin its EX transformation.

SGEi

SGEi is a global consulting and training business founded by Shane Green, a world-renowned consultant, keynote speaker, author of *Culture Hacker*, and television personality. SGEi works with global Fortune 500 leaders and innovative start-ups on customer experience, organizational culture, and leadership. They have worked with brands like the NBA, W Hotels, Westfield, MGM Resorts International, Foot Locker, NetJets Inc., Cisco Systems, United Airlines, and BMW to reprogram their employee experiences to elevate performance and deliver better customer experiences.

Stickybeak

Stickybeak is a New Zealand start-up launched globally two years ago. It uses chatbots to make quantitative market research more conversational and less boring for respondents and faster and less expensive for companies. Unlike conventional research, which uses professional paid responders' panels, Stickybeak recruits unique respondents fresh for each survey via social media. The company is based in Auckland and is backed by some of the country's most successful investors. Global clients include the World Health Organization, Dole, SCJ, Tetra Pak, O2, Vodafone, and Costco, and global agencies like Ketchum, Fleishman Hillard, and Golin.

The Research

The research was conducted on the Stickybeak platform to understand Las Vegas workers' behaviors and attitudes regarding their employment. Survey audiences were recruited via social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok). The survey sample included 544 workers from Las Vegas. The final respondents were comprised of the following:

- Age: 120 gen Zers, 182 millennials, 176 gen Xers, and 66 baby boomers
- Gender: 248 male and 296 female
- Hospitality workers: 185