4-19-2019

Generational Differences in Remote Work

Lauren Nowakowski
Western Michigan University, booski18@hotmail.com

Recommended Citation

Generational Differences in Remote Work

ABSTRACT: In business, a remote worker consists of an individual that does their day to day work from an environment that is out of the office. Some employees work remotely 1-2 days a week; other times, it is remote work all the time. Different generations may view remote work differently. Some may find it to be a blessing, others a curse. This report will discover what generations are best suited for remote work, and which are better off in the office. The organization begins with defining who a remote worker is. Next, there are the benefits of having a remote worker and how we know they will be effective. Then transition into the different generational groups, what each one is like in a work environment, and their values. The next phase looks at Generation X and Baby Boomers to see if they would be strong candidates for remote work, the same is done for Millennials. After that, we focus on the four interviews that were done with various professionals in the remote work industry. Topics include who they are, their definition of a remote worker, the transition into a remote worker, and the pros and cons. The explanations continue to qualities necessary to be a strong remote worker and who the successful and unsuccessful generations are. There is mention of an intriguing outlier, then there is information on stereotypes of the older and younger generational groups. Next, problems with the interviews are discussed. These problems include personal relationships, lack of interviews, miscommunication, and explanation of the study. The last section includes the 36 responses from the survey. This discusses the range of generational groups and their beliefs. The problems include low responses, poor communication, better questions, and a better pool of surveyors. Lastly, the document features who the ideal remote worker truly is, suggestions, and a conclusion.

LITERATURE REVIEW: The study of remote work is widely studied in academia. This report features the various sources of literature that focus on remote work. The sources discuss benefits and negatives, the identity of a remote worker, and different generational groups in remote work. These sources will provide evidence to determining who would be the most successful remote worker.

Who is the Remote Worker? Remote workers are employees who complete their work from the comfort of their homes. The book, *The Remote Worker's Guide to Excellence*, by Eryck Dzotsi, defines a remote worker as, "…anyone who works for a company in a different geographical area, and spends the majority of the time at home instead of the office" (Dzotsi, 2012, 1). Dzotsi goes on to talk about how being a remote worker takes a lot of discipline, and how there are many factors that came into play when evaluating if a person will be a good remote worker. Some of his recommendations include strong communication skills, handling relationships with the team and the boss, and general work ethic. There are varying opinions on what makes a good remote worker. These factors can oftentimes be determined before the interview of a potential remote worker even takes place. Rachael Pasini recommends, "Hire employees who exude professionalism in their resumés, cover letters, emails, and interviews" (Pasini, 2018, n.p.). Some of the best employees are those with a strong work ethic.

Why Hire a Remote Worker? There are countless studies on the popularity of remote work. Studies show that over 70% of professionals around the world are working remotely at least once a week and 53% work half of the week (Browne, 2018). As of 2016, 43% of US workers are remote, compared to 39% in 2012 (Browne, 2018). The number of remote workers is increasing. The remote worker can provide a great deal of help to companies. The

employer can save money by having the employee work from home rather than come into the office, roughly $2,000 (Zimmerman, 2016). This could be due to the desk space charges, technology in the office, and saved time. Not only will a remote worker cost the company less money, they will even take a lower salary. Pasini claims, "One significant finding is that about 83% of workers are willing to accept less pay for a telecommuting option" (Pasini, 2018, n.p.). There are so many benefits for employees to work from the comfort of their home, many report that they are willing to take a pay cut to get that flexibility. Gallup's State of the American Workplace Report showed that over half of the respondents were willing to leave their current job for one that offered more flexibility (Pasini, 2018). This shows that turnover at companies may be lower if they can accommodate flexibility for their employees such as part-time remote work. Another study by the Society for Human Resource Management claims, "According to the *2015 Employee Job Satisfaction and Engagement* report from SHRM, 55% of employers cited the flexibility to balance work and life issues as a very important aspect of their job satisfaction, an increase of 10 percentage points from the previous year." (SHRM). This study shows how important it is for people in the workplace to have a flexible working environment. A study on productivity reported that remote workers were 13% more productive than office-based workers over a nine-month period, turnover was 50% lower, and remote workers reported higher work satisfaction and less "work exhaustion" (Zimmerman, 2016, n.p.). The productivity may be increased from the lack of communication with co-workers. In a cubicle setting, it is easy to get distracted and talk to peers, whereas at home, there is a chance for little to no distraction. Turnover could be decreased because of a lack of micromanagement opportunity by a superior. The remote worker must hold themselves to their own standards, which makes them very valuable if they

can do it well without another person monitoring them. Satisfaction can be improved because the remote worker is able to start and end work whenever they feel appropriate if they get their work done. It may be that they can wake up later and feel more refreshed since they don't have to commute. Another reason is they can wear what they feel is comfortable and will keep them productive. Remote workers provide a lot of value to companies by their decreased costs, decreased turnover rates, and increased satisfaction levels on the job.

How do we know the Employee will be Effective as a Remote Worker? Remote workers must start somewhere, just as anyone else. Some companies choose to hire people from within into remote work. Others start a person into a remote work position right away. It is company preference. There are several ways to determine if a person will be beneficial to the company as a remote worker, most of which are opinion based. One of the most important is going to be a strong work ethic; without it, a person will ultimately fail. Companies do not want to worry if an employee does not reply to an email right away and assume it is because they are slacking and not immersed in their work. There needs to be a trust factor with all remote workers and their managers. There needs to be a comfort of being independent and free from distractions of other employees. Remote workers do not often see other members of their team unless there is an in-person meeting. If a person needs social interaction, they may not be a great remote employee long-term. Dzotsi recommends setting goals, responding in a timely manner, and maintaining focus (Dzotsi, 2012). Remote employees need to be driven by their own success. They won't get the same treatment that an office worker gets with their boss coming to see them saying "job well done." Employees and clients can be upset if a remote employee does not reply to their email or inquiry after a decent amount of time. If for some reason the email is not top priority, email the person back and let them

know you are busy and will get back to them as soon as possible. Being professional in a remote environment is difficult, as there is no dress code and little to no rules, especially if you are in your own home. Any assignment that the employee has been given needs to be finished within ample time. Besides a strong work ethic, a remote worker needs to focus. If there is any lack of focus from the employee, it can result in decreased effort in their work. It is easy for a remote employee to be distracted by other household duties like cleaning, watching TV, or hanging out with family and friends. Remote employees need to have the mindset of, once they start work, they are at work and cannot be bothered. Ask yourself, if I was at the office, would I do this? If not, it probably isn't appropriate to do as a remote employee. In saying this, remote workers can vary in their skillset and the issues they face based on the generational group they belong to.

What are the Different Generation Groups? In this paper, the focus will be on Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials (Gen Y) as the primary generations. Baby Boomers are born from 1946-1964, Generation X from 1965-1976, and Millennials from 1977-1995 (Generational Breakdown: Info About All of the Generations). These generations are all different in how they perceive remote work, and what they value in a company environment.

What do the Different Generations look for in work? Each generation has a different stereotype associated with it. Pasini talks about these stereotypes and mentions how Baby Boomers are assumed to be inefficient with technology, and that Millennials have a poor work ethic (Pasini, 2018). This is not always the case. Companies must keep in mind that the stereotype does not mean that every single person within the generation will be their generation's stereotype. There are several differences among Baby Boomers and Millennials. One article mentions, "Whereas Baby Boomers may prefer face-to-face meetings over

remote work styles, younger generations tend to prefer tools that offer more flexibility and mobility, such as instant messaging and texting" (Sener, Damla, & Peter Shannon, 2018, n.p.). However, this may just be a stereotyped difference. Nordstrom mentions, "Almost eight in 10 Millennials report they'd like their manager to act like a coach or mentor" (Nordstrom, 2016, n.p.). The perfect manager varies depending on the generational group the remote worker belongs to. Many Millennials are looking to have a mentor of some sort to help them improve as they move forward in their professional careers. He goes on to say that, "Baby Boomers, by contrast, cite the top qualities for the perfect boss as ethical, fair, dependable and consistent" (Nordstrom, 2016, n.p.). Baby Boomers do not want a micro manager, they have had enough experience in their professional career to know what is best for them.

What do Generational Groups Value? Generation groups are going to want different things, mostly due to the way that industry was when they began working. One study by EY claims that, "…Millennials are tech-savvy, but aren't great team players. Gen X-ers are entrepreneurial-thinking but rank low on executive presence. And last, but not least, Boomers are team players and loyal, but don't adapt so well" (Giang, 2013, n.p.). There are pros and cons to each generation group. Some are more prominent for remote work life, and others are not. According to Glassdoor, there are different benefits that generational groups are looking for in their work. The article claims that, "Baby Boomers value salary level, health insurance, and a retirement plan" (Glassdoor, 2016, n.p.). Baby Boomers are becoming older and closer to retirement age, and it is justifiable for them to want health insurance and a solid retirement plan. According to the Society of Human Resource Management, Baby Boomers, "Are inclined to seek contract work after retirement" and "Tend to be workaholics who get

personal fulfillment from work" (Moss, 2018, n.p.). Even after Baby Boomers are retired, they still want to be out in the workforce, perhaps because they are so used to it. The Glassdoor article goes on to say that, "Gen Xers value salary level, a 401K plan with matching benefits, job security, advancement within the company, and opportunities for work-life balance" (Glassdoor, 2016, n.p.). It is important to note that not every generation is going to feel the same way about benefits and what they value in a company. Every person is different, and they may prefer different packages than another person. SHRM mentions that Generation X, "Prefer independence and fewer rules" and "Seek to balance work and family" and "Want to communicate directly with leaders" (Moss, 2018, n.p.). SHRM and Glassdoor seem to agree that flexibility is an important value for Generation X. Glassdoor continues to say that, "Millennials value benefits choices, paid time off, ability to work remotely, control over their schedules, and a great deal of flexibility" (Glassdoor, 2016, n.p.). Many people believe remote work has increased due to Millennials beginning to enter the workforce. SHRM goes on to say that Millennials, "Take an entrepreneurial approach to work" and "Prefer direct communication and feedback" and "Want a social, friendly work environment" (Moss, 2018, n.p.). These are just some of the values of Millennials according to the Society of Human Resource Management. Nordstrom found that, "…74% of Millennials report they want flexible work schedules… 94% of Baby Boomers also say they would like a special work arrangement such as flexible hours or telecommuting" (Nordstrom, 2016, n.p.). This is not an isolated occurrence, another study shows, "According to PwC's NextGen study, 64% of Millennials surveyed would like to occasionally work from home. This study also showed a slightly higher percentage, 66% to be exact, among members of Gen X and Boomers that would prefer to work from home" (Zimmerman, 2016, n.p.). Both studies prove that despite

how Millennials are viewed, they are not the only ones who have a desire for flexible work environments. It is believed to be this way because of the industries constantly adapting and changing.

Are Generation X and Baby Boomers Strong Candidates for Remote Work? Due to the stereotype of Generation X and Baby Boomers being technologically illiterate, people may assume that they are unfit to be a remote worker. Based on many of the articles, they sound qualified to be a remote worker. The two generations have been in business for longer amounts of time and can handle the independent work. In the appendix, a chart by EY, formerly Ernst & Young, in Business Insider shows the three generations (Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y or Millennials) and what their viewpoint was on different factors. Baby Boomers and Generation X lead the way in the executive presence, revenue generation, and relationship building (Giang, 2013).
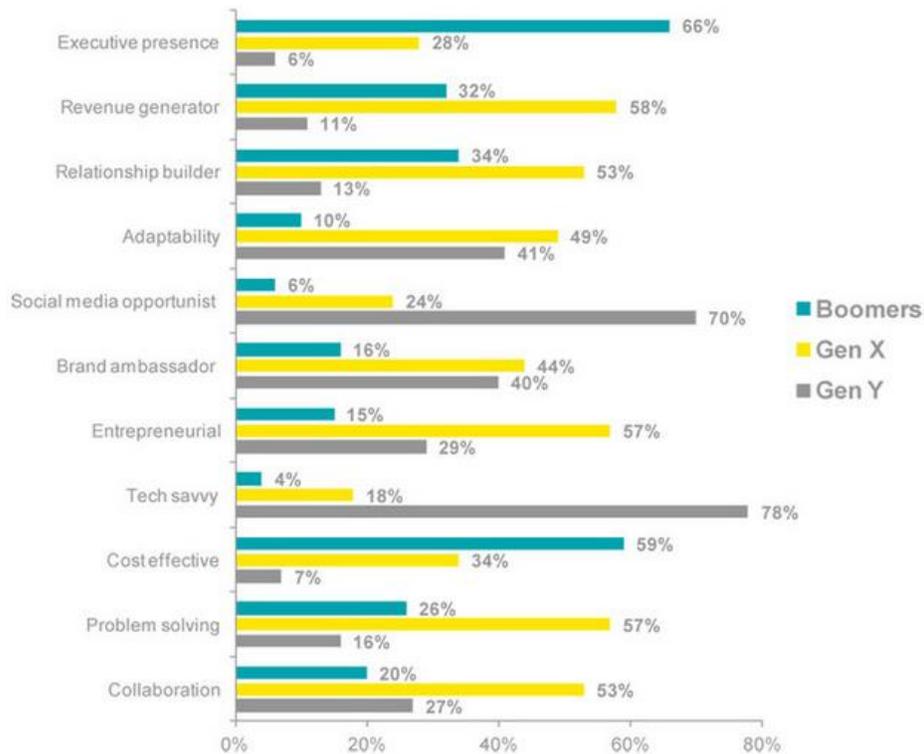
This is most likely due to the two generations being in the workforce for a longer period. Millennials have a strong sense of technology and can adapt to fit the needs of the technological forces faster. This may prove to be a problem if a Generation X or Baby Boomer employee is interested in remote work. The remote lifestyle is highly technologic due to the out of office content. However, Boomers and Generation X are considered to be the most cost effective (Giang, 2013). It can be assumed that since they have had the experience in the field, they do not require as much attention or training. If they do go into remote work, they may need more training than the Millennial due to the technology. Millennials are considered strong problem solvers (Giang, 2013). If a remote worker runs into trouble with a program, customer, or other issue, it is important to report it and solve the problem as fast as possible. Employers can trust that the Generation X and Baby Boomer employees will act as soon as possible to fix the problem. Overall, Generation X and Baby Boomers have flaws, but that does not mean they will never be fit for remote work.

Millennials – Fit for Remote Work? Millennials have a bad rep for being lazy, having a high degree of turnover, and a poor work ethic. So, can they be trusted to work remotely? The answer, yes. Despite their negative stereotypes, Millennials want to do well in their jobs and make an impact. A strong point was made in Inc. claiming, "For Millennials, the never-offline and always-available workplace is all they know" (Jenkins, 2018, n.p.). Millennials are often on their phone checking their email, social media, texting, and making calls. Many of their technology is used socially and can be adjusted to have the same attitude professionally. Jenkins goes on to say, "According to the 2016 Millennial Survey by Deloitte 16.8 percent of Millennials evaluate career opportunities by good work-life balance, followed by 13.4 percent who look for opportunities to progress and 11 percent who seek flexibility

(i.e., remote working and flexible hours)" (Jenkins, 2018, n.p.). The generation of Millennials are looking to have a great time and get rewarded for doing it. The work hard play hard mentality can be very effective for companies. For a Millennial remote worker to be successful, give them responsibility so they can measure and track their progress (Jenkins, 2018). Millennials like to see the impact that they have on the company with numbers and evaluations. Like most employees, they want to be independent in their work and have less of a micro-manager in their space. Employers need to give Millennials a chance before assuming they will not be successful remote workers. This paper will continue to look at different viewpoints of remote workers using interviews.

INTERVIEWS IN REMOTE WORK: There were four interviews in this study featuring various professionals in the remote workforce. Their time length within remote work varied from a few years to most of their professional career. Each interview featured the same questions, and the interviews ranged from twenty minutes to a full hour. For the confidentiality of the workers, their identities will remain hidden. Many opinions were noted during the interviews, and the most important information gathered will be included in the appendix.

Who were the Interviewees: The people that were interviewed were of different ages and professional backgrounds. Interviewees were sales people, consultants, recruiters, and managers. The industries that were represented were real estate, pharmaceutical, and food. The generational groups were Millennials and Generation X. Through various networking, the people being interviewed were recruited. The ranges of how long they have been working varied from eighteen years all the way to a couple months of remote work experience.

Defining a Remote Worker: A remote worker is defined in many ways, and I asked each interviewee to define it for me. Their responses to this question are listed below:

- A remote worker is anybody who has either a home office or everything they need to work out of their home 100% of the time.

- Anyone that doesn't have to report to an office every day.

- Someone who is home based is permanently outside of their formal business office.

- Somebody who can handle the daily duties from outside the office.

No matter their age group or industry, most of my respondents agreed that a person who is a remote worker is someone that is not physically in a typical office with their peers every day.

Transitioning to Remote Work: Each person had their own story to tell about their transition to remote work. Some of them struggled, and others were able to take the necessary steps to be successful right away. Many of them had created a sort of office in their home or apartment that they were able to use strictly for their job. This assisted in holding them accountable to only doing work because they made the rooms with little to no distractions. The office spaces featured a desk, desk chair, materials from the office, computer, filing cabinets, and printer. None of them mentioned that going to another space such as a coffee joint or renting out an office were beneficial to them.

Working Remotely – The Best: One of the most interesting responses that I received from the interviewees was what they thought was the best thing about working remotely. A popular response is that there is a lot more flexibility working remotely. This does depend on the company and the culture. An interviewee explained that they were able to spend more time with their family, not just at night like the typical worker. One of them mentioned that they did not have to worry about traffic or being in the office on time, since the office was at their home.

Working Remotely – The Worst: The worst things about working remote varied for each person. One of the most common responses was the distractions that can occur at home. Examples being day to day activities. Another interviewee mentioned that they would get phone calls almost 24/7, especially since their territory was in a different time zone. They claimed that people view remote workers as having it easier, and therefore can handle it if they call outside working hours. One of the interviewees explained that since some remote workers' paychecks depend on the amount of work that is done, it can be very stressful. It can feel as though you are working all the time and can be very overwhelming. Another common problem of remote workers is the lack of comradery, especially if the individual is an extrovert. There is a lot that a remote worker can miss since they are not in the office every day.

Necessary Qualities to be Successful: In the interview, I asked the interviewees what qualities were necessary to be successful in remote work. Some gave just one attribute and said that was just it, plain and simple. The attributes that were mentioned are below:

- Work Ethic
- Self-discipline
- Accountability
- Integrity
- Motivation
- Independence
- Initiative
- Time Management

The biggest takeaway from the qualities named is that they are all very similar. They are practically synonyms to each other. The most common of the phrases was work ethic and integrity. These qualities are what it takes to be a strong remote worker.

Generational Group – Successful: An intriguing find to the generational group question, "Which generational groups do you think would be the most successful as a remote worker? Least successful? Why?" was that many of the interviewees believed that their own generational group was the best, and that the opposite generational group was worse. The responses varied from Generation X, 30-40 year old's, and younger generation being better than the older generation. A common response to this question is that experience is required to be a great remote worker.

Generational Group – Unsuccessful: There were two common generational groups that were categorized as unsuccessful remote workers. These two groups were Millennials and Generation X. Although one of my interviewees explained, "[Millennials] There are certain people who are doing really well, and there are exceptions to the rule." Another unique response from one of the interviewees was that there was a bias. This person has seen the younger generation face to face in classes, and many of them are not doing their work. This implies that they would not do their work if they were remote. A quote that I found interesting was, "People who do get [remote work positions] later on in their lives have families and will get distracted from that." One of my interviewees explained that the older generation would not be successful. This person told me that their grandfather asked about their job, and he had no idea what a remote worker even was.

An Outlier: One of the remote workers struggled with one of my questions. The question, "Which generational groups do you think would the be the most successful as a remote

worker? Least successful? Why?" This person paused for a long time before answering the question, and I almost believed they had hung up. They eventually spoke and told me it is difficult to categorize a person based on their generation group. To quote the individual, "Every generation can have very poor remote workers, it matters on the skill set." This response was very genuine and interesting to me, as they felt very strongly about it.

Stereotypes of Older Generation: As much as we do not like to admit it, stereotypes are still around, and often, there can be a bias associated with them. The most common stereotypes of the older generation were that technology would be difficult for them, and that communication could be skewed. Another stereotype that was mentioned is that they are not open minded, they must work harder than everyone else to get where they want rather than smarter. These are only stereotypes and may not reflect what the generations are like.

Stereotypes of Younger Generation: Those in the younger generation, mostly Millennials, are not thought of highly in business due to stereotypes associated with the generational group. Many people believe that Millennials are not committed, and that they "do not take ownership of their careers." Another example is that, "[Millennials] They want the perks and all the benefits without having to put in the grunt work first." Interestingly enough, not having a work ethic was one of the stereotypes mentioned for the younger generation. Other examples were talking back, no respect, things are owed to them, and lack of social skills due to relying on technology. Again, these are only stereotypes and may not reflect actual generational groups.

Problems with Interviews: Interviewing is a difficult process. There were several problems that arose during the interview process. Some of the issues were the number of people being interviewed, the relationship with the interviewees, and explaining the study.

Personal Relationship Problems: When the interviewer has a personal relationship with the interviewee, there is bound to be issues. This caused some issues with my interviews as there were times when we got off topic. There could have also been a bias with answering some of the questions. Many of the people I was interviewing were worried about offending me and would often be reluctant to answer. It was hard to get them to treat me as an interviewer rather than a personal relationship.

Lack of Interviews: The number of interviewees that I was able to obtain was four. My goal was to interview between five and ten interviews lasting thirty minutes or more. My thesis chair and I were looking to only utilize people in our personal network. We were able to obtain a few, but some of them were unable to do an interview in a timely manner. Others were all at one company or the same industry, and we wanted to gain a wide range of industries. A solution to this could have been to post on LinkedIn to see if anyone in our connections would be interested in talking about their remote work experience.

Explanation of Study: The people who were doing the study with me wanted to know more about the study, and a lot of times they asked me about it right at the beginning. To prevent bias in their answers, I told them I would explain after the interviews. However, there were some people that I had explained it to beforehand, as I did not know I would be interviewing them. Therefore, this could have caused some bias, even if the person did not realize it.

SURVEYS: Surveys were sent out to the department heads and their assistants throughout the Haworth College of Business. We estimate that 70 people were recruited in 3 departments, and we had 36 people respond to the survey. That puts our response rate at 47%. The data from the surveys can be found in more detail from the appendix of the paper.

Wide Range of Generational Groups: There were 20 males that took my survey, and eleven females. The largest amount of responses that I received were Generation X. This put most of my surveyed people between the age of 40 and 54. The oldest people were in the Baby Boomer generation which put them between the age of 55 and 73. The youngest people I had surveyed were Millennials which put them between the ages of 25 and 39.

Beliefs of Generational Groups: Over 77% of the people surveyed believed that remote work is popular in their industry. For the question, "If you had to guess, what percentage of the US population is working remotely today?" The mean for part-time was roughly 33%, and for full-time it was believed to be 26%. The key questions for the survey was trying to understand who the surveyed people thought would the least and most successful at remote work. For most successful, the highest amount was in the Millennials and the lowest was in Generation X. We asked what qualities were most important for a remote worker, and the top three were digital technology, professionalism / work ethic, and oral / written communication. Out of 31 responses, only one person did not believe remote work would continue over time. This person's comment was, "Remote work will not continue as people want to earn more money for less work. Thus, coming up with ways to achieve this goal by doing as little work as possible and outsourcing what needs to be done."

Problems with Surveys: When performing surveys, there will often be a large amount of issues that occur. Some of the notable problems with the survey is the amount of people who took the survey, questions within the survey, how the survey was passed around, and the people who were asked to survey. These issues, had they have been resolved, could have provided more responses and better data.

Small Responses and Poor Communication: Based on a study by the Western Michigan Institutional Research Facility, we were able to gather the hard numbers of professors, faculty, and staff in the Haworth College of Business. The total number was 186 individuals to which only 70 people were contacted and 36 replied. To get responses from the people within the Haworth College of Business, I first asked the Dean of the business college to personally send an email to the faculty, professors, and staff. However, I was informed that he no longer sends emails like this. My next option was to reach out to all the faculty department heads and their assistants and see if they would ask the individuals in their department to participate. I received three replies from various assistants and department heads saying they would send it out to their respective people. Only two out of the three told me how many people were in their department that they were sending it to. Therefore, we could have had a larger amount of people take the survey without us knowing. To get more responses, I reached out directly to a few of the faculty, staff, and professors that I had a professional relationship with, and all of them replied saying they had already taken the survey. Ultimately, had the department heads and assistants sent out the survey to more people, we could have had a larger pool of applicants.

Requiring Better Questions: Most of the questions from the survey were like many other surveys a person would see. However, we could have added some more questions that would have been more relevant and provided some great information. One of the people that took the survey commented, "Since participation in remote work will vary from industry to industry. There should have been a question on industry type." This would have been a great question as we asked them, "Would you say remote work is popular in your industry?" The next best question should have been the industry they were in. We did not require any of the

questions, so the responses were skewed because of this. Perhaps we should have considered making it a requirement.

Better Pool of Surveyors: My thesis chair and I spent some time determining who the best people would be to take the survey. Ultimately, we decided on the faculty, professors, and staff at the Haworth College of Business. We used a convenience sample to conduct our study successfully. One of the suggestions that I had from a professor was to use our LinkedIn connections, and this may have been a better alternative. I have over 1,400 connections on LinkedIn, and it would have provided a wide range of opinions and age groups. This could have helped the amount of responses we had received and ultimately helped us determine who the ideal remote worker truly is.

WHO IS THE IDEAL REMOTE WORKER? The strengths of having a remote worker include factors like less turnover, less cost, and overall happiness of employees. If a company did decide to hire a remote worker, who would be the best? Does it matter what generation they are in? What qualities should they look for?

Proof from Data: The data from this study proved to be inconclusive. We were not able to prove that one generational group dominated another in remote work. Many of the articles referenced varied in opinion. The amount of survey and interview data was smaller than initially hoped. From the data that we did collect, we believe that there is not necessarily an ideal remote worker. The generational group of the remote worker does not matter as much as the individuals experience level and applicable skills.

Suggestions for Future Research: For future researchers, the suggestions are to better define the generational years, include more data on Xennials, and have a broader market

of interviews and surveys. Many sources will claim various years for generational years, and it is not consistent. It is best to choose the most viable source and stick with that. Most of my data was from Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials. It would have been interesting to find more data on Xennials as well, which are in between Generation X and Millennials. There was a lack of it when I looked online, as most people choose to focus on Baby Boomers and Millennials. We used a convenience sample for our surveys and interviews. In the future, we would try and find people from various backgrounds and markets to have a wider range of data.

Future Studies: After deliberation with my team, we determined that remote work can be a study that can be valuable for future research. There are many other avenues besides generational groups that can contribute to a solid research study. We determined that life stages, meaning having children, getting married, or other important life events, could prove to be an interesting study. Other ideas were changes in technology, what industry the remote worker was in, their job description, or even the size of the company. There is unlimited potential to continue talking about remote work.

CONCLUSION: Our findings from the study showed that the experience and quality skills were the most important factor in a successful remote worker. It does not matter what their generational group is. Anybody can be a successful remote worker if they put in the work necessary to be effective.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- Where do you currently work?
- What is your title?
- What year where you born? (Helps me identify exactly which generational group you are)
- How do you define a remote worker?
- How long have you been working remotely?
- What was the process like to transition to a remote worker?
- In your opinion, what is the best thing about working remotely? What is the worst thing?
- In your opinion, what qualities does a person need to have in order to work remotely?
- Which generational groups do you think would be the most successful as a remote worker? Least successful? Why?
- What stereotypes are associated with the older generational groups? Younger generational groups? Do you believe that hinders them from working remotely?
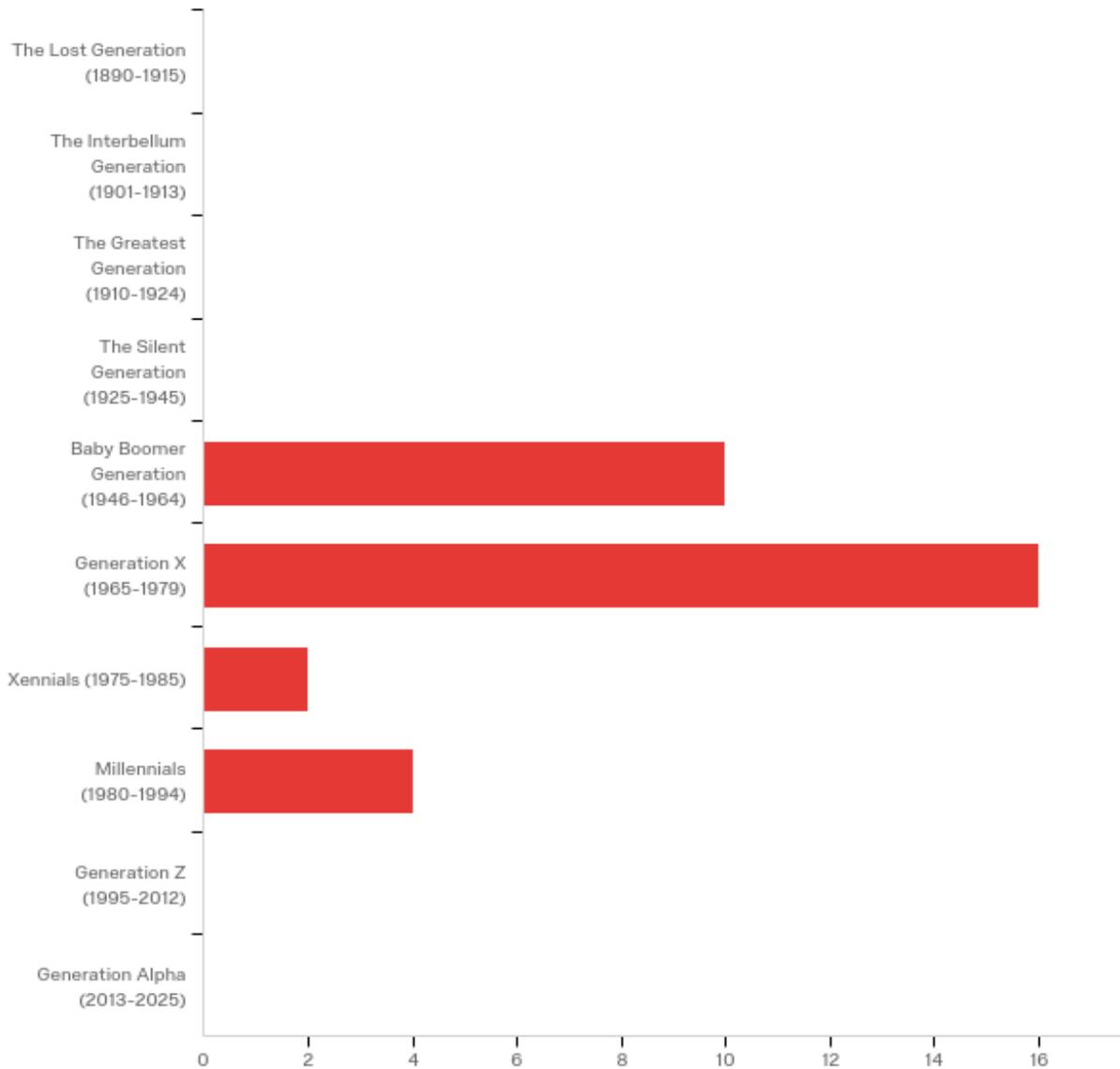- Comments/Questions?

SURVEY REPORT

Q1 - What is your gender?
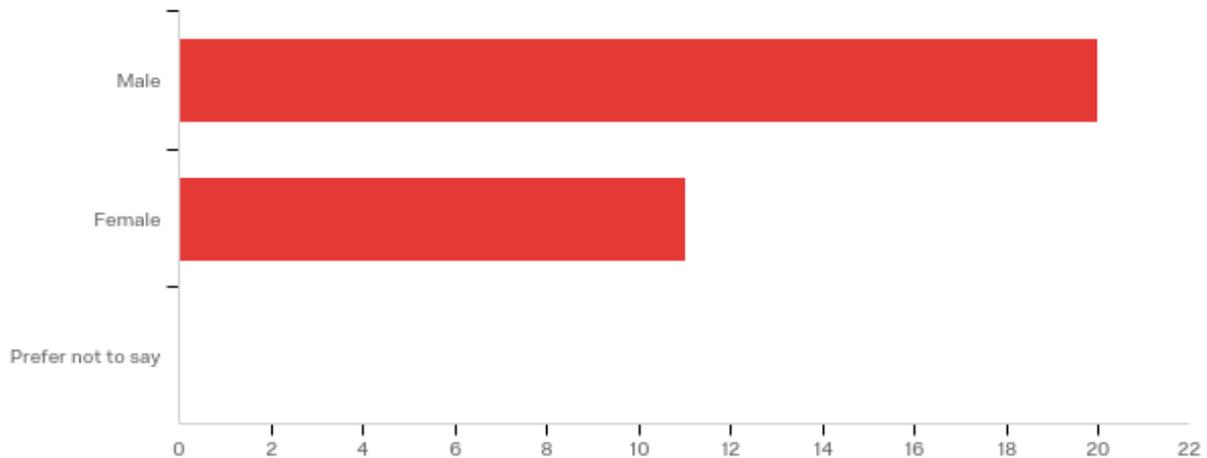
#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	What is your gender?	1.00	2.00	1.35	0.48	0.23	31

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Male	64.52%	20
2	Female	35.48%	11
3	Prefer not to say	0.00%	0
	Total	100%	31

## Q3 - Which generational group(s) do you belong to?

Data source misconfigured for this visualization

#	Answer	%	Count
1	The Lost Generation (1890-1915)	0.00%	0
2	The Interbellum Generation (1901-1913)	0.00%	0
3	The Greatest Generation (1910-1924)	0.00%	0
4	The Silent Generation (1925-1945)	0.00%	0
5	Baby Boomer Generation (1946-1964)	31.25%	10
6	Generation X (1965-1979)	50.00%	16
7	Xennials (1975-1985)	6.25%	2
8	Millennials (1980-1994)	12.50%	4
9	Generation Z (1995-2012)	0.00%	0
10	Generation Alpha (2013-2025)	0.00%	0
	Total	100%	32

Q4 - Would you say remote work is popular in your industry?
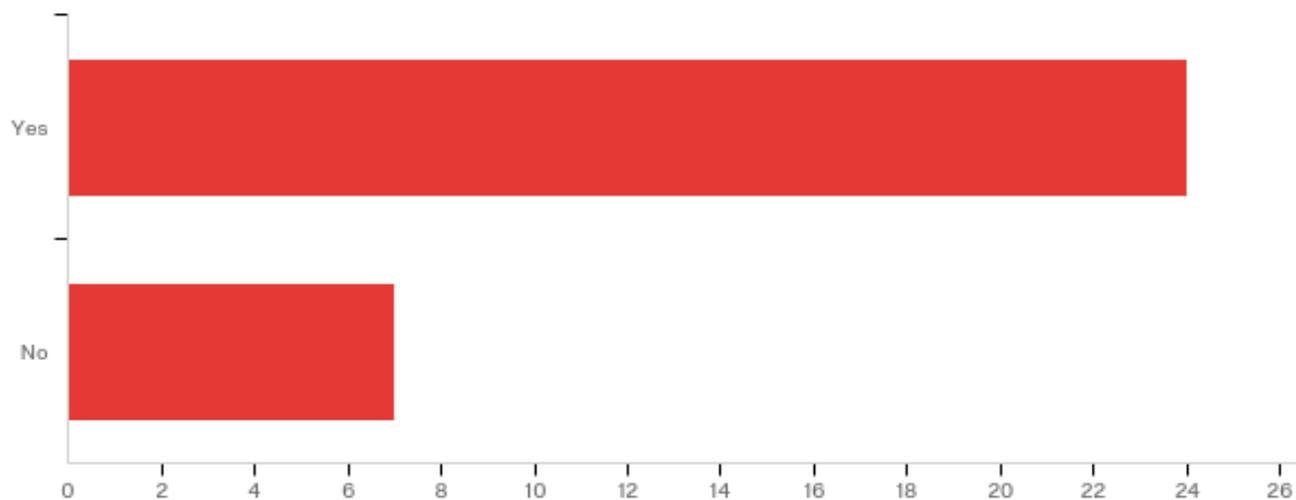
#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Would you say remote work is popular in your industry?	1.00	2.00	1.23	0.42	0.17	31

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes	77.42%	24
2	No	22.58%	7
	Total	100%	31

Q5 - If you had to guess, what percentage of the US population is working remotely today?

| #	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Part-time	4.00	81.00	33.42	20.27	410.89	31
2	Full-time	3.00	60.00	26.16	13.96	194.97	31

Q8 - Which generational group(s) do you believe would be the MOST successful as a remote worker? (Multiple Answers)
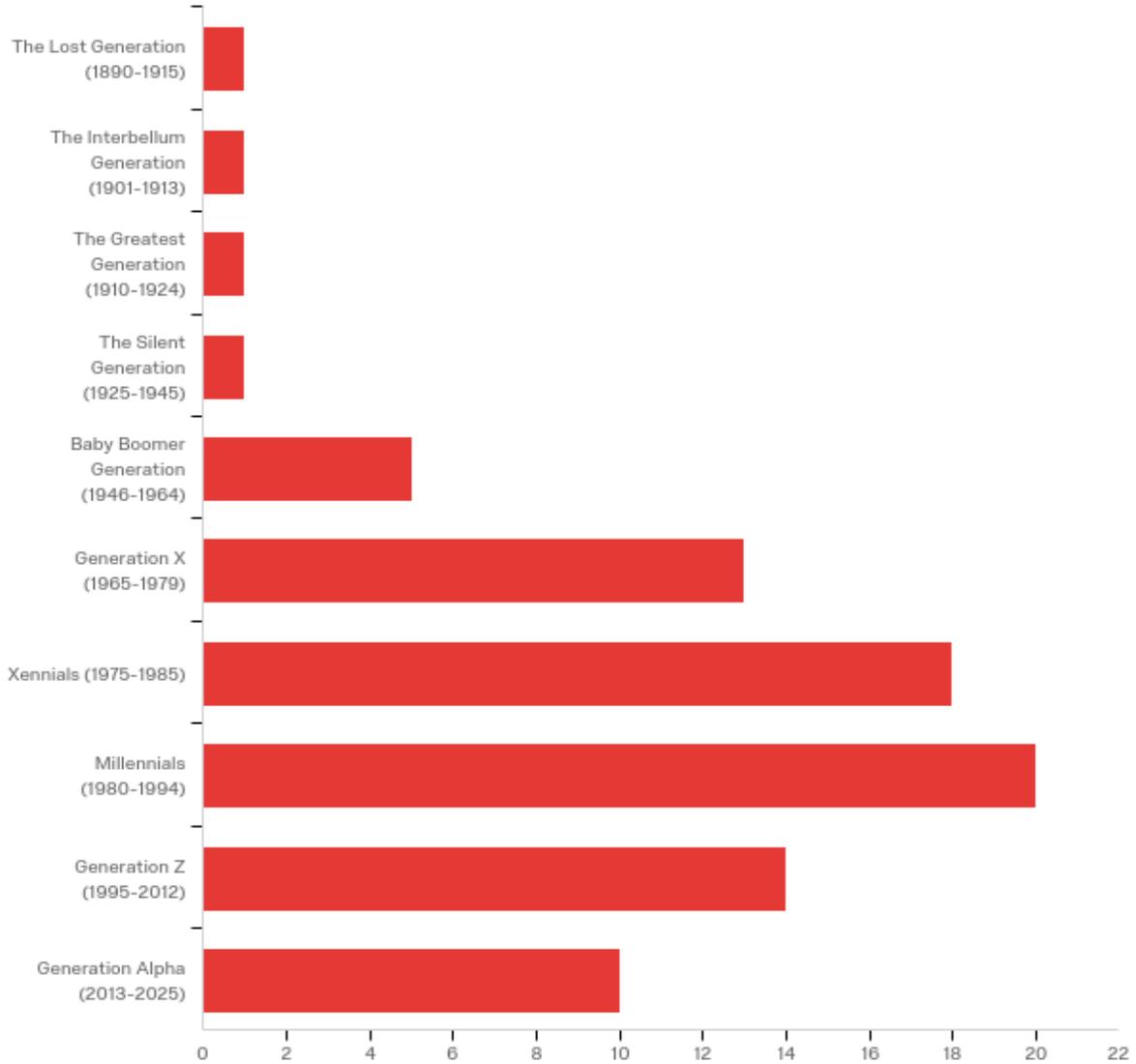
#	Answer	%	Count
1	The Lost Generation (1890-1915)	1.19%	1
2	The Interbellum Generation (1901-1913)	1.19%	1
3	The Greatest Generation (1910-1924)	1.19%	1
4	The Silent Generation (1925-1945)	1.19%	1

| 5	Baby Boomer Generation (1946-1964)	5.95%	5
6	Generation X (1965-1979)	15.48%	13
7	Xennials (1975-1985)	21.43%	18
8	Millennials (1980-1994)	23.81%	20
9	Generation Z (1995-2012)	16.67%	14
10	Generation Alpha (2013-2025)	11.90%	10
	Total	100%	84

Q9 - Which generational group(s) do you believe would be the LEAST successful as a remote worker? (Multiple Answers)
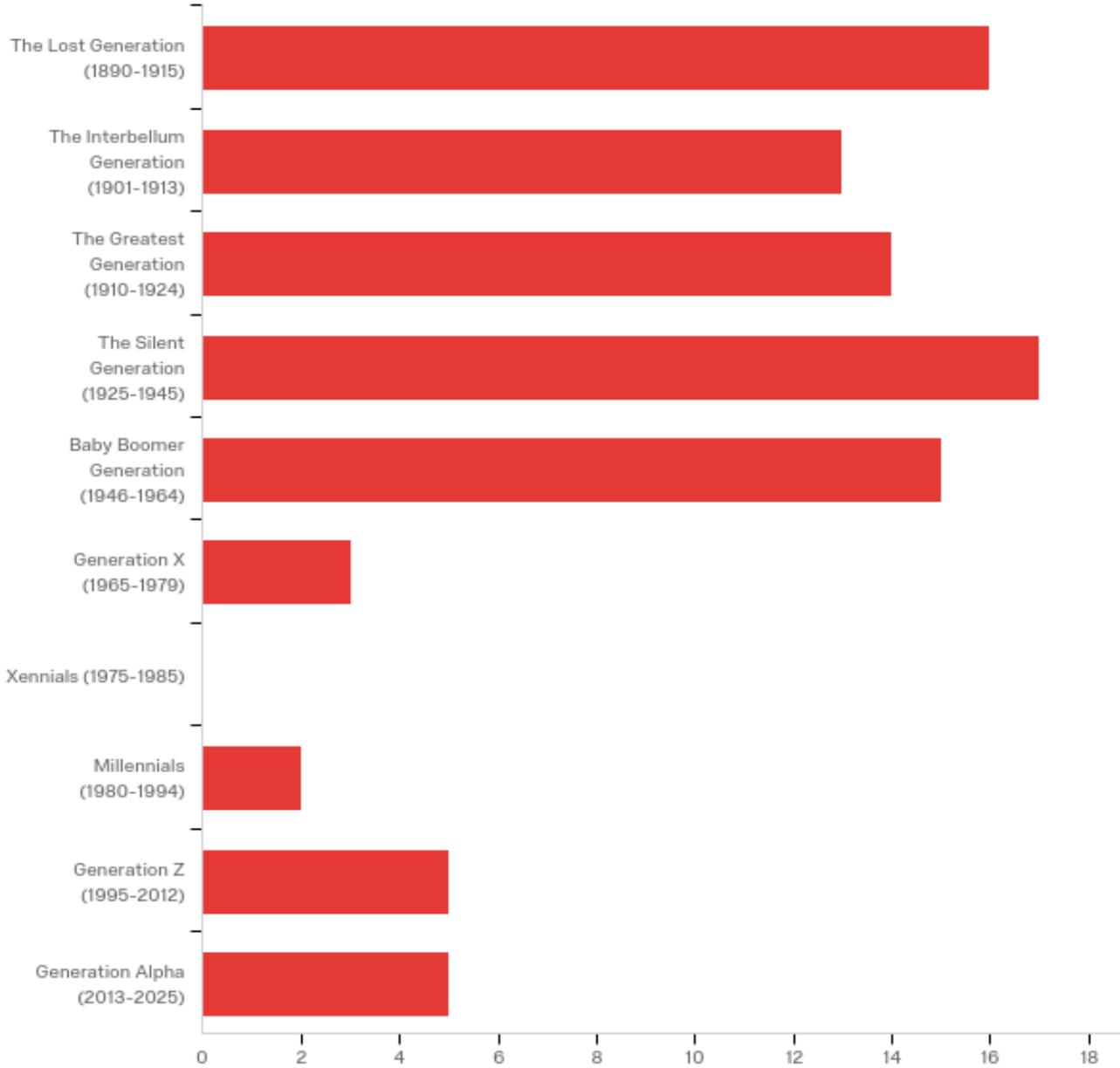
#	Answer	%	Count
1	The Lost Generation (1890-1915)	17.78%	16
2	The Interbellum Generation (1901-1913)	14.44%	13
3	The Greatest Generation (1910-1924)	15.56%	14

|			
4	The Silent Generation (1925-1945)	18.89%	17
5	Baby Boomer Generation (1946-1964)	16.67%	15
6	Generation X (1965-1979)	3.33%	3
7	Xennials (1975-1985)	0.00%	0
8	Millennials (1980-1994)	2.22%	2
9	Generation Z (1995-2012)	5.56%	5
10	Generation Alpha (2013-2025)	5.56%	5
	Total	100%	90

Q10 - From the list of "Career Readiness" competencies* from the Zhang Career Center, please choose which quality(s) are most important for a remote worker? *Defined by NACE (National Association of Colleges and Employers)
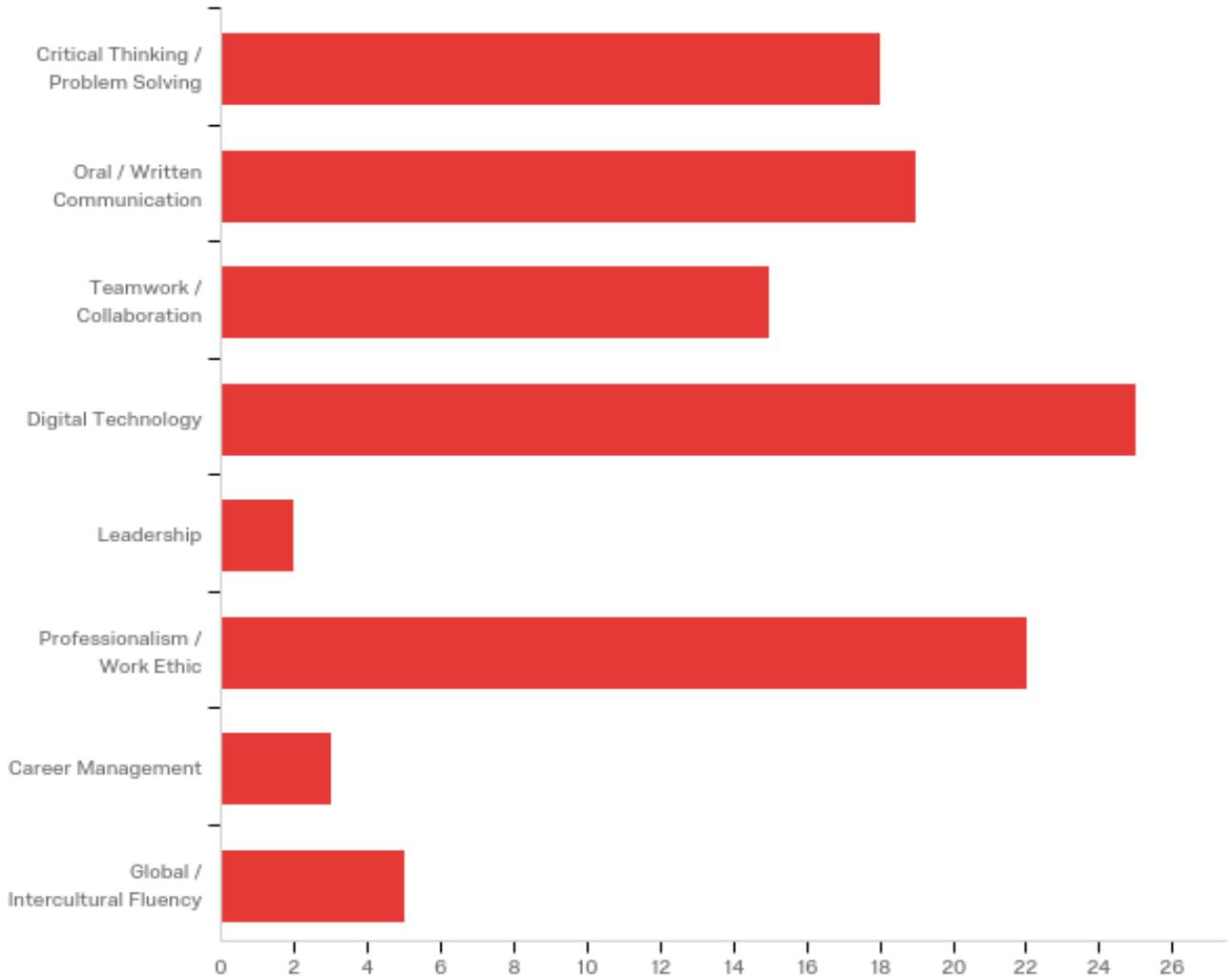
#	Answer	%	Count
1	Critical Thinking / Problem Solving	16.51%	18
2	Oral / Written Communication	17.43%	19
3	Teamwork / Collaboration	13.76%	15
4	Digital Technology	22.94%	25
5	Leadership	1.83%	2

6		Professionalism / Work Ethic	20.18%	22
7		Career Management	2.75%	3
8		Global / Intercultural Fluency	4.59%	5
		Total	100%	109

Q12 - In your opinion, will remote work continue to increase over time?
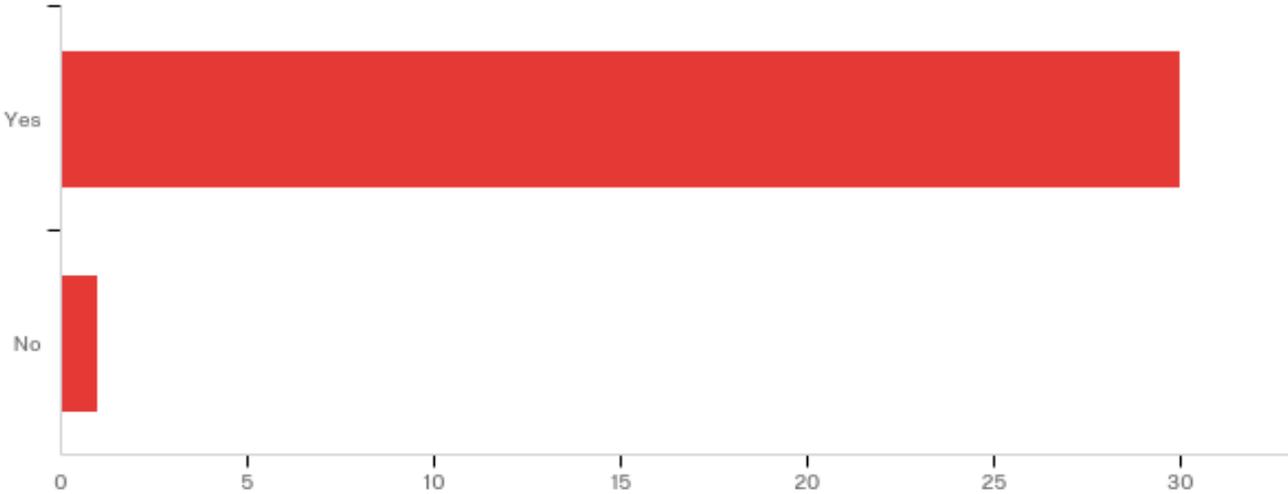
#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	In your opinion, will remote work continue to increase over time?	1.00	2.00	1.03	0.18	0.03	31

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes	96.77%	30
2	No	3.23%	1
	Total	100%	31

Q13 - Comments / Questions

Comments / Questions

I think you have to distinguish between people who are spending most or all of their work time at a remote location as opposed to someone who primarily works at an employer's worksite, but also works secondarily from home or elsewhere.

Remote work will not continue as people want to earn more money for less work. Thus coming up with ways to achieve this goal by doing as little work as possible and outsourcing what needs to be done.

The generations from 1890-1945 are irrelevant. Also, I am not sure if the answers reflect the reality. The answers are just my honest opinion, however, may not reflect what is happening in the real world. Since participation in remote work will vary from industry to industry. There should have been a question on industry type.

Evolution of economical growth is based on digital convenience, Amazon is crushing Walmart. To wear two hats in the job market will be the norm!! Online degrees along with .com's will individualize the workforce

Just FYI... My industry experience is food manufacturing. That was my basis for answering these questions.

As we continue to isolate ourselves from other human being (texting and emailing) we are losing the need for communicating/connect with other people. I think we all need some sort of interactions with others in order to keeps us from becoming uncaring/unfeeling cogs in a machine. I like being able to talk to my coworkers about everything and nothing. From our cosmic beginnings to the TV show on last night.

None

ERNST & YOUNG CHART
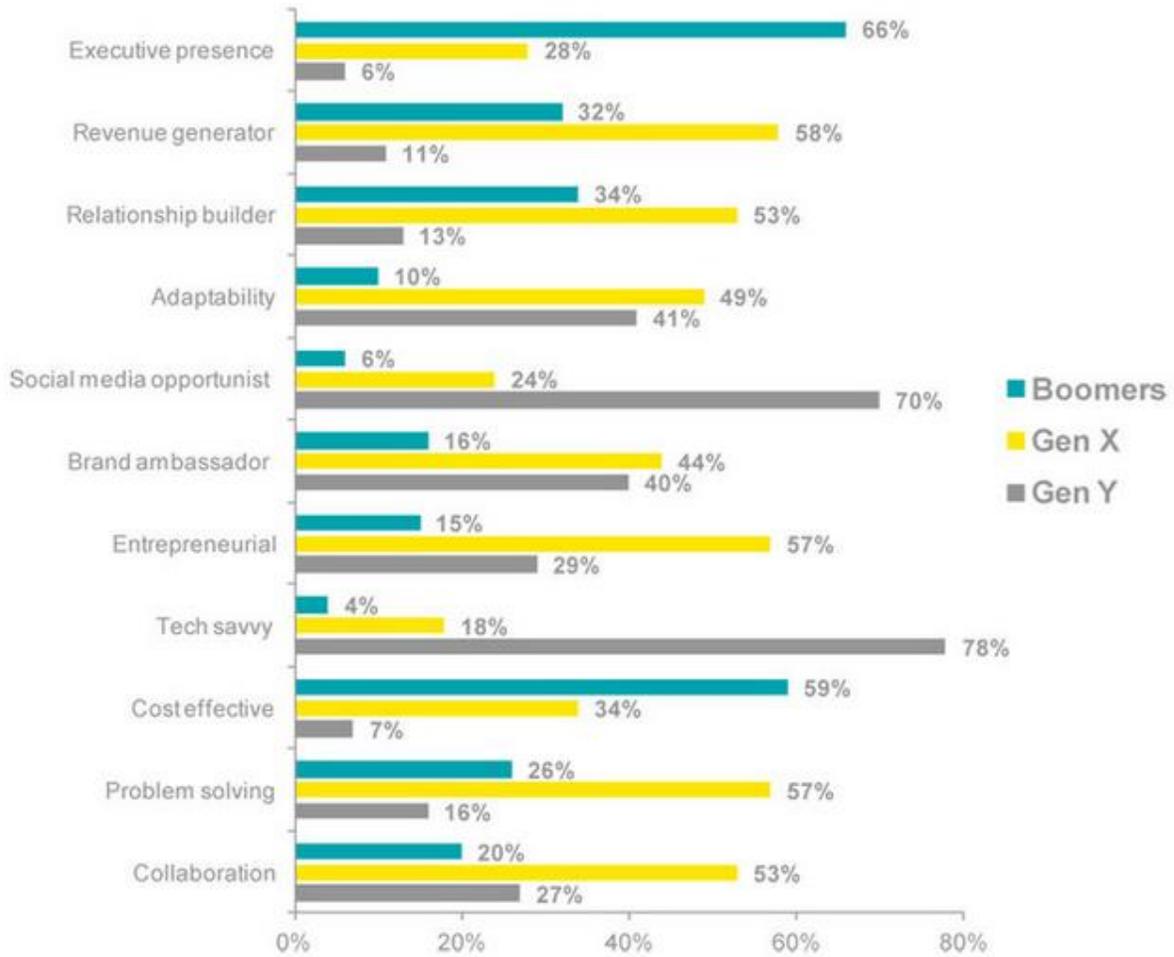
CITATIONS

Browne, R. (2018, May 31). *70% of people globally work remotely at least once a week, study*

    says. CNBC.

Dzotsi, E. K. (2012). *The remote workers guide to excellence.* Charleston, SC: CreateSpace.

Generational Breakdown: Info About All of the Generations. The Center for Generational

    Kinetics.

Giang, V. (2013, September 09). *Here Are The Strengths And Weaknesses Of Millennials, Gen*

    X, And Boomers. Business Insider.

Glassdoor Team. (2016, October 25). *Employee Benefits: What Each Generation Wants –*

    Glassdoor for Employers. Glassdoor.

Jenkins, R. (2018, May 01). *8 Tactics to Get the Most out of Your Remote Millennial Workers.*

    Inc.

Jenkins, R. (2018, January 08). *This Is Why Millennials Care so Much About Work-Life Balance.*

    Inc.

Moss, D. (2018, October 19). *5 Generations 7 Values = Endless Opportunities.* Society for

    Human Resource Management.

Nordstrom, D. S. (2016, August 22). *Generational Differences: When They Matter, And When*

    They Don't. Forbes.

Pasini, R. (2018, January 30). *Baby Boomers and Millennials: Closing Generational Remote*

    *Work Gaps.*Virtual Vocations.

Sener, Damla, and Peter Shannon. (2018, August 11). *Enabling a Multigenerational Workforce.*

    Business Insights: Global.

Stahl, A. (2017, September 04). *Create This Sort of Work Environment If You Want To Retain*

Millennials. Forbes.

Walker, Jason. (2017, March). *Create A Healthy Culture For the Multi-Generational Workforce: 10 tips to follow.* Aurora.

Zimmerman, K. (2016, October 14). *Do Millennials Prefer Working From Home More Than Baby Boomers And Gen X?* Forbes.

https://wmich.edu/institutionalresearch/reporting/factbook.php/

https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/trends-and-forecasting/special-reports-and-expert-views/Documents/Flexible%20Work%20Arrangements.pdf