

Bridging the Generational Divide

The effect of generational diversity on workplace productivity and staff turnover in Guyana's aviation industry

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Four generations. One workforce.

The study at a glance

CENTRAL QUESTION

How does generational diversity shape productivity and staff turnover in Guyana's aviation sector?



Identify the traits and expectations of each generational cohort



Evaluate the impact on productivity, collaboration and efficiency



Assess why younger employees leave and how to retain them

238

aviation professionals surveyed

4

generational cohorts compared

4

sectors: airlines, regulators, airports and ANS, ground handling

Mixed

methods: Likert-scale survey plus open-ended themes

Four generations, one workforce



Baby Boomers

1946 to 1964

Values hierarchy, tradition and face-to-face communication



Generation X

1965 to 1980

Independent and adaptable; bridges analogue and digital



Millennials

1981 to 1996

Seeks work-life balance, purpose and career growth



Generation Z

1997 onward

Digital natives seeking innovation and fast advancement

Share of survey respondents (n = 236)



Millennials and Gen Z make up 78% of the workforce surveyed

Why aviation amplifies the challenge



Precision and safety

High-stakes teamwork depends on clear, accurate communication between every crew and shift.



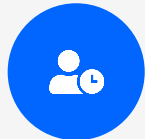
A dual workforce

Veteran Boomer and Gen X staff work alongside digitally fluent Millennials and Gen Z.



Technology adoption

New digital and automated systems feel natural to some and disruptive to others.



Retention pressure

High turnover in junior roles raises recruitment and training costs amid skills shortages.



The research gap

Most generational research comes from developed economies. Evidence from developing economies such as Guyana, where aviation is a key engine of growth, is scarce.

Where the generations diverge

BABY BOOMERS AND GEN X

Face-to-face meetings and formal email

Hierarchical, top-down authority

Structure, punctuality and set schedules

Established processes; change can feel disruptive

Job stability and traditional structures

Communication

Leadership

Work style

Technology

Career priorities

MILLENNIALS AND GEN Z

Instant messaging, voice notes and virtual platforms

Participatory, collaborative leadership

Flexibility and work-life balance

Rapid adopters of digital and automated tools

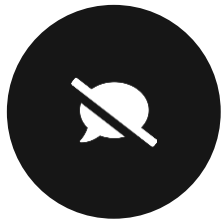
Visible advancement and meaningful work

THE PROBLEM

The cost of unmanaged generational gaps



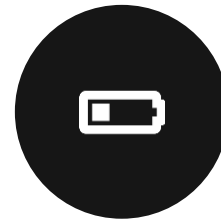
Mismatched expectations



Miscommunication



Conflict

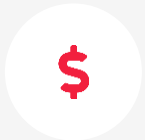


Disengagement



Turnover

WHAT IT COSTS THE ORGANISATION



Higher recruitment and training costs



Lost productivity and team cohesion



Operational and safety risk

"The generational divide, if unmanaged, undermines workplace harmony and operational efficiency."

FINDINGS

The generational gap is real and widely felt

86%



say generational differences affect workplace productivity

80%



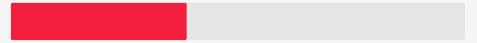
have experienced conflict caused by generational differences

46%



say their organisation has no formal strategy to manage it

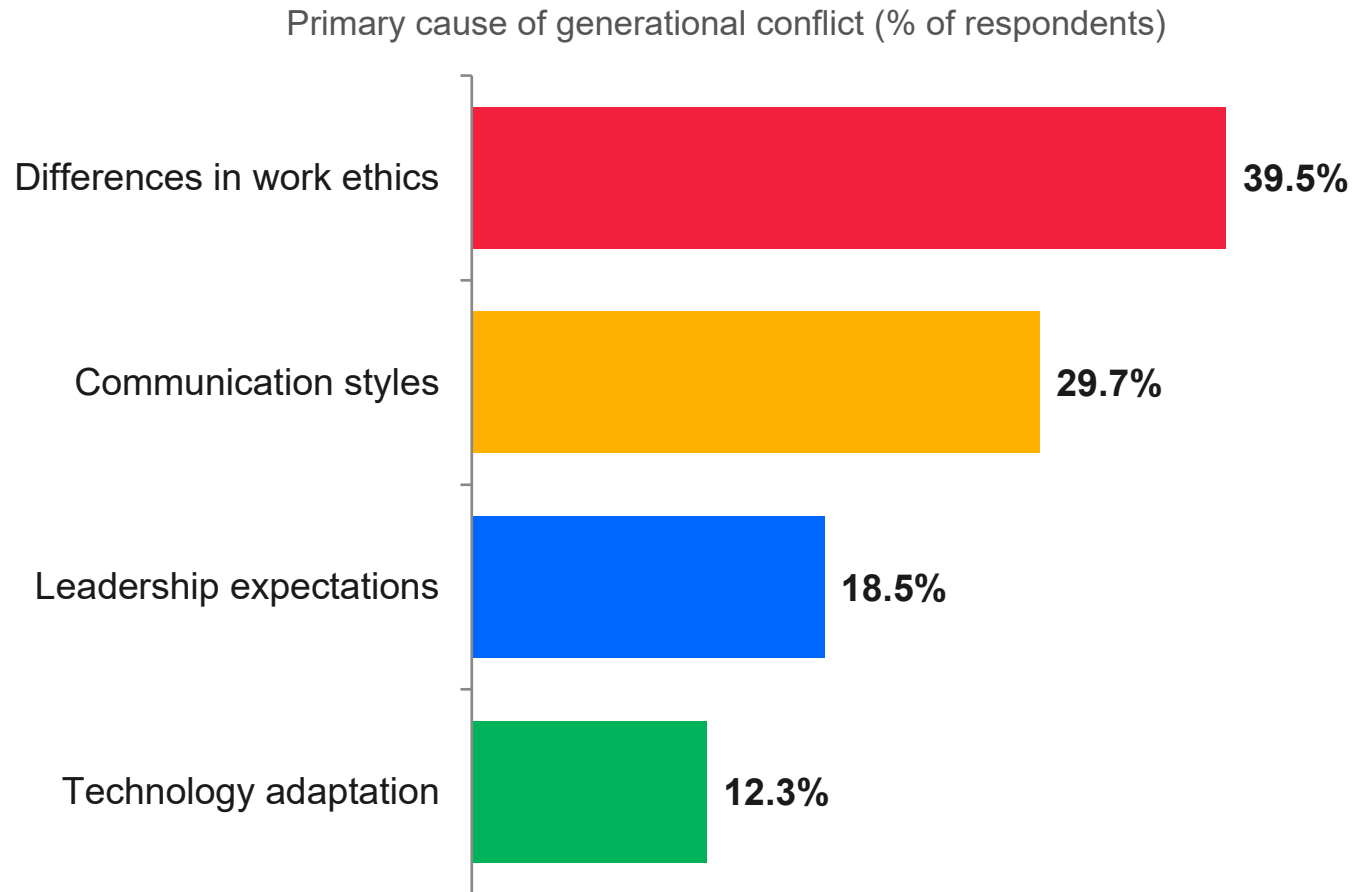
38%



have considered leaving their job because of generational conflict

More than one in three employees has thought about leaving over generational conflict

What drives generational conflict



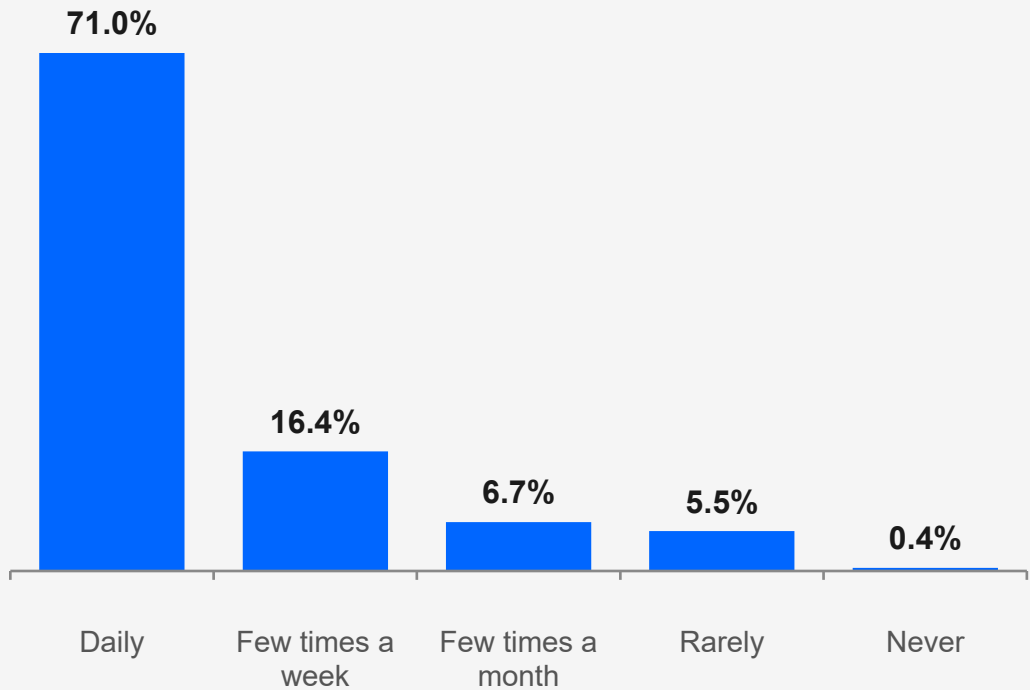
69%

of conflicts trace to work ethics and communication style

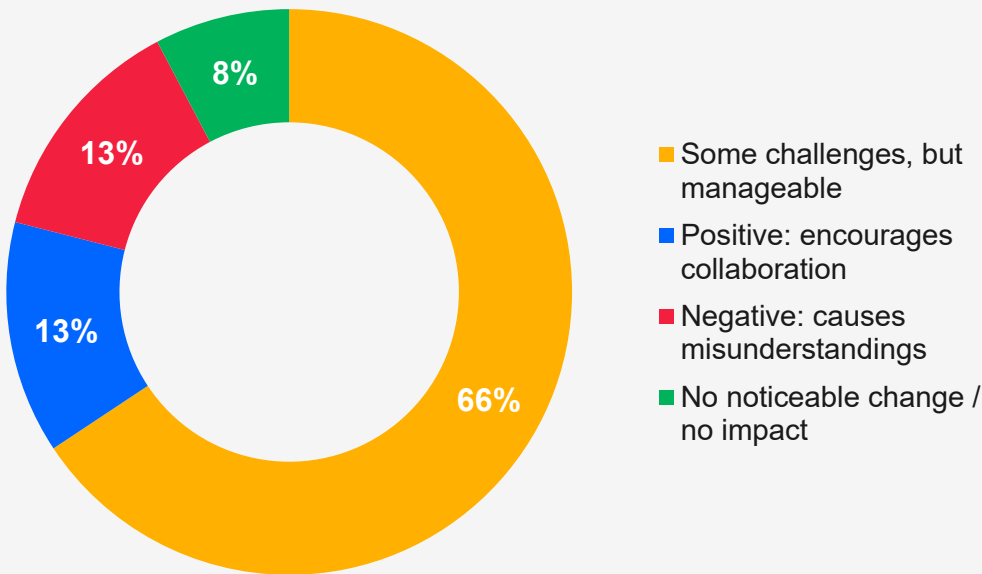
- Different standards for punctuality, dedication and commitment
- Face-to-face versus digital messaging preferences
- Younger staff want participatory leadership; older staff expect hierarchy

Collaboration is constant; the impact is manageable

How often do you collaborate across generations?

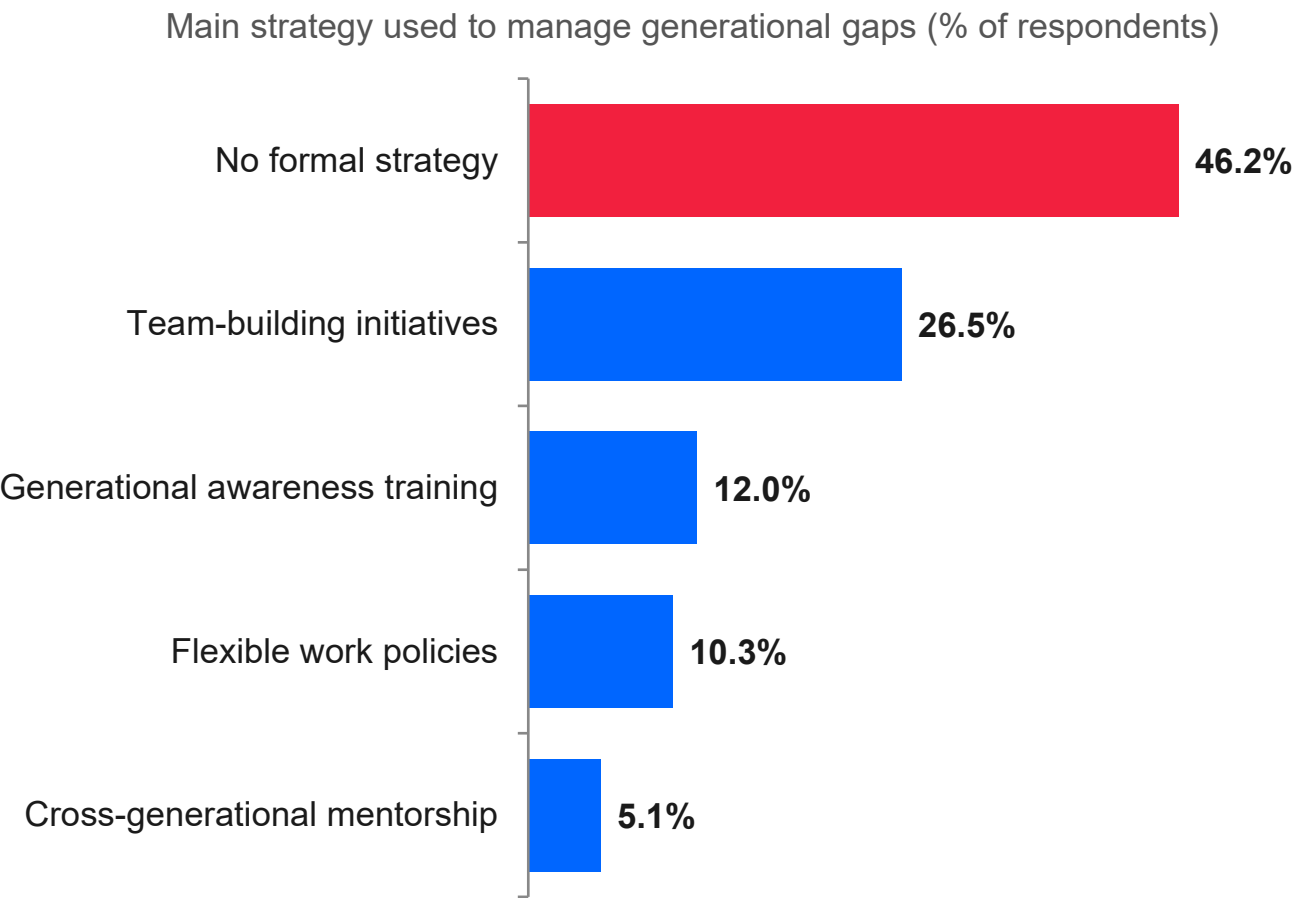


How do generational differences affect productivity?



Source: survey collaboration frequency question; Table 4.10 (productivity impact)

Organisations are not yet equipped



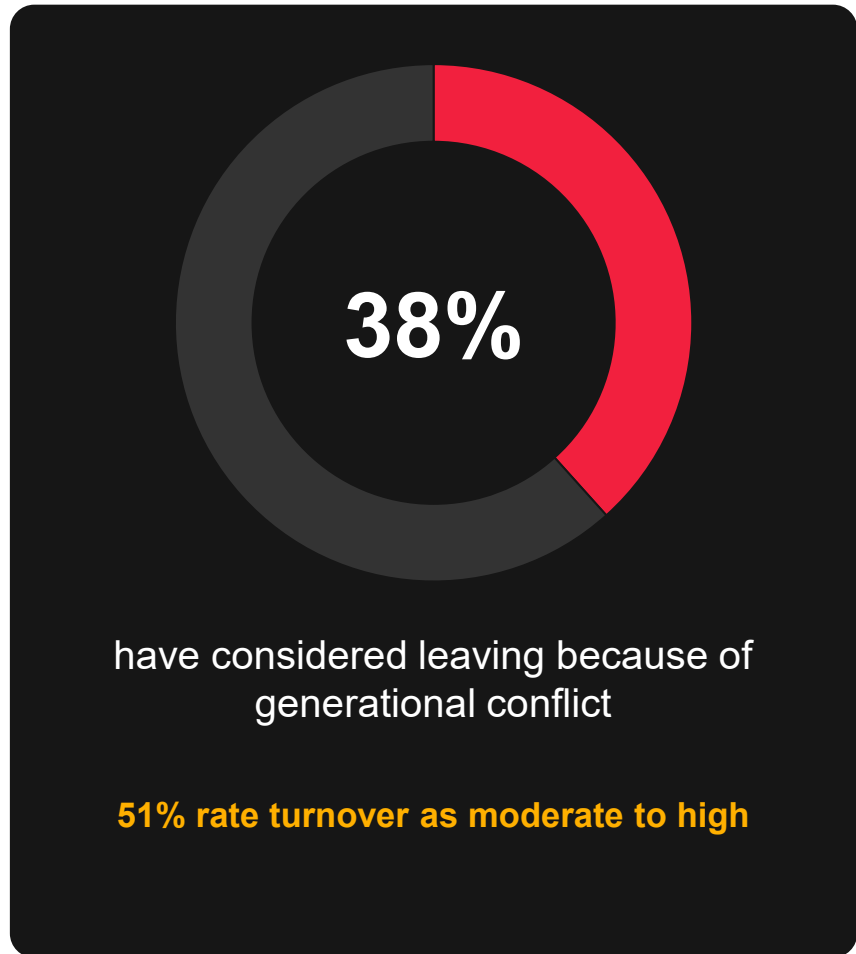
17.5% rate their management's generational strategies as effective

73.5% have never received generational workforce training

74.4% report no initiatives to improve cross-generational communication

Source: Table 4.9; survey Q24 and Q26; communication initiatives question

Generational friction is pushing people out



WHAT EMPLOYEES SAY DRIVES THEM AWAY



Career stagnation

Staff feel progression favours certain groups and cannot see a path forward.



Leadership misalignment

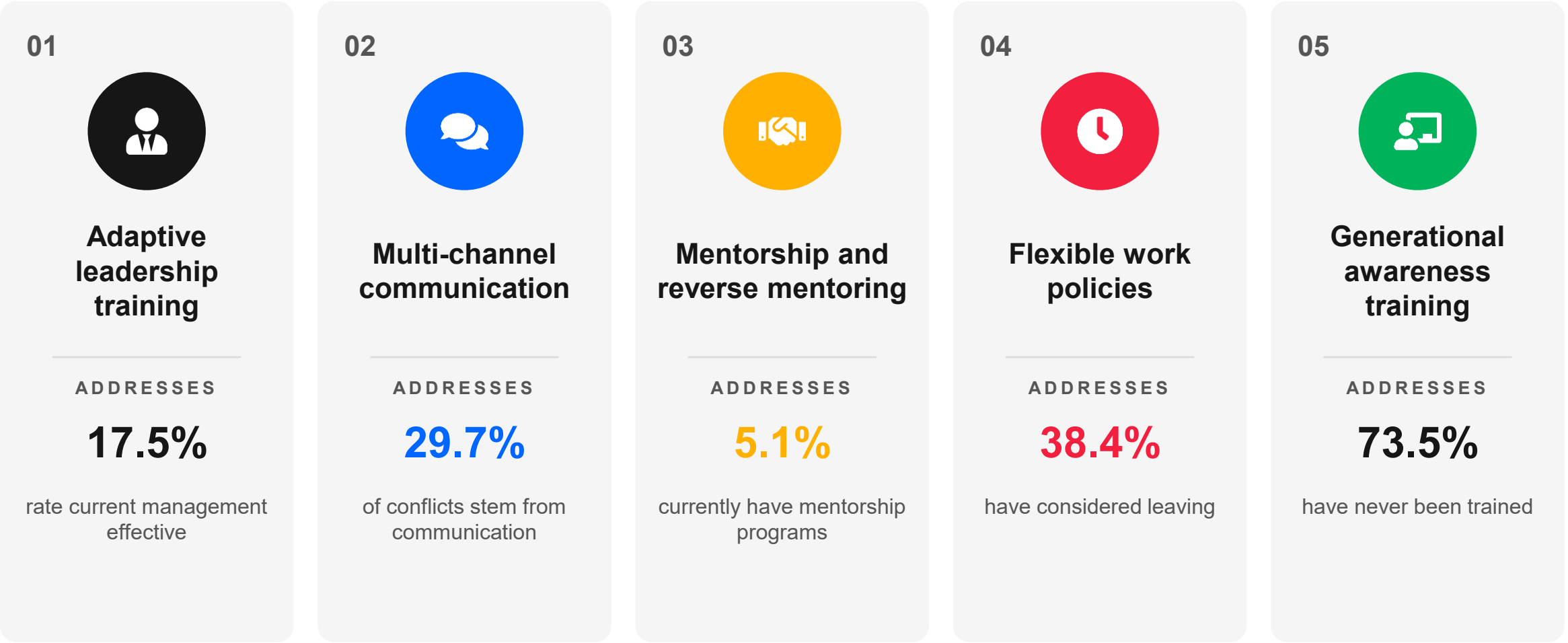
Managers overlook generational needs, leading to disengagement.



Rigid workplace structures

Inflexible policies make it hard for younger staff to adapt and stay.

Five evidence-based levers



Lead differently, communicate on every channel



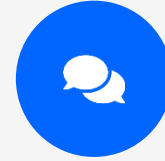
01 Adaptive leadership training

WHY

Leaders apply one style to everyone, yet generations respond differently to feedback, structure and authority.

WHAT TO DO

- Train managers on each generation's work, communication and motivation preferences
- Shift from command to coaching and guidance
- Blend traditional organisational values with modern expectations



02 Multi-channel communication

WHY

Communication style mismatches cause nearly 30% of generational conflict.

WHAT TO DO

- Combine face-to-face meetings with digital collaboration platforms
- Offer digital tools training for senior staff
- Set clear communication guidelines to reduce misinterpretation

Connect, flex and build awareness



03 Mentorship

- Pair experienced staff with junior colleagues
- Reverse mentoring: younger staff share technology and trends
- Recognise mentors with career development credits

ADDRESSES Only 5.1% have mentorship programs today



04 Flexible work

- Offer hybrid options and adaptable schedules where operations allow
- Publish transparent career progression paths
- Anchor retention policies in work-life balance

ADDRESSES 38.4% have considered leaving

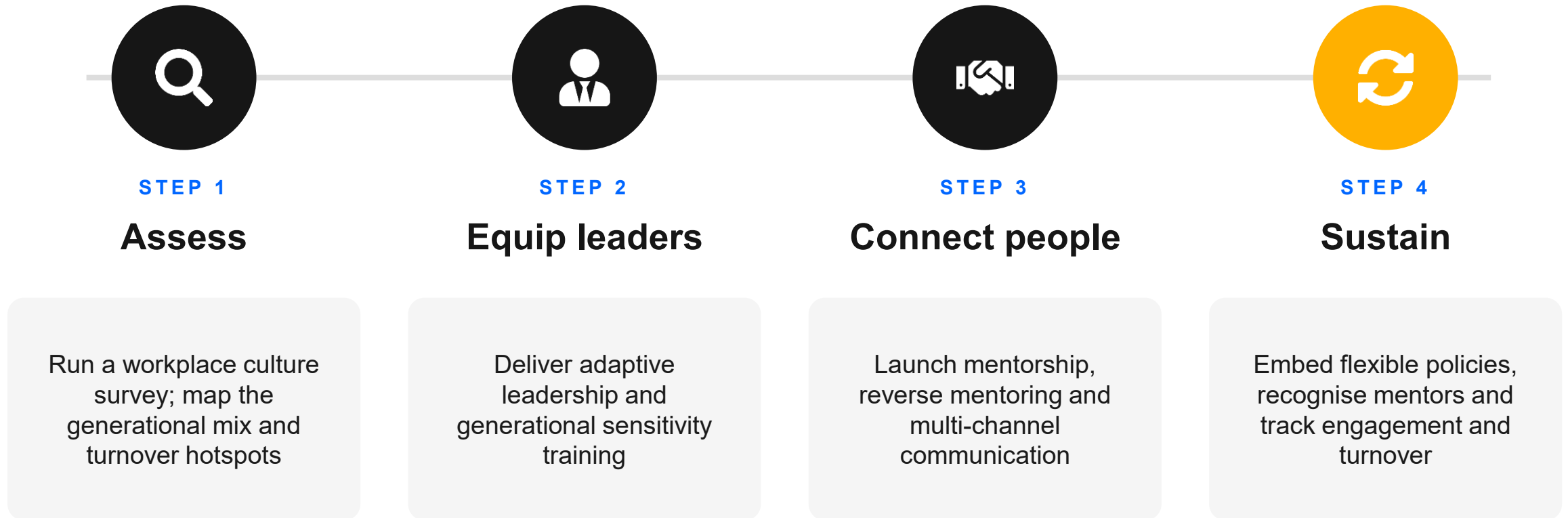


05 Awareness training

- Run workshops on generational traits and work approaches
- Use cross-generational team-building
- Run periodic culture surveys to refine the programme

ADDRESSES 73.5% have never been trained

A suggested path to implementation



Goal: turn generational diversity from a source of friction into a competitive advantage

Key takeaways

1

Generational diversity shapes performance

86% see a direct effect on workplace productivity.

2

Conflict is cultural, so it is manageable

Work ethics and communication drive nearly 70% of conflict.

3

Unmanaged gaps cost talent

38% have considered leaving; 46% of organisations have no strategy.

4

Structure turns friction into advantage

Adaptive leadership, mentorship and training are the proven levers.



Thank you

Generational diversity, well led, is a competitive advantage.

Questions and discussion

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