

# Transform Millennials Into Future Leaders

A practical guide for HR, L&D, and people-centric organisations

August 2025



# Rethinking Leadership Pipeline

“By 2030, **74% of the global workforce** will be Gen Z's and millenials.”

*Deloitte 2025*



The real concern? **Only 6% of Gen Zs** reported that their goal was to **attain a leadership position**.

Effectively, by 2030, **just 4 out of every 100 worker** want to be in people management positions.

So how can HR, L&D and People & Culture leaders ensure that their leadership bench is healthy, and have succesion plans ready for the future of work?

# Understanding The Next-Gen Mindset

It is imperative to understand that Millennials and Gen Z's view leadership as a two-way street. They not only want, but expect their managers to be great leaders.

Only then, will they **put in the effort** to aspire and be next-gen leaders themselves.



## 01

### They Expect More From Their Managers

Gen Z's and millennials identify mentorship and feedback from their managers as **one of the most important factors** for their career growth.

## 02

### They Want To Become Better

They recognize that for them to advance in their career, soft skills such as communication and leadership is **the highest priority**.



# Setting the Leadership Benchmark

## Why clear expectations are necessary.

For Gen Z and Millennials, **leadership is a behaviour**, not a title. The earlier they see what is expected, and encourage, the more likely they are to lean in.

Organizations need to **establish leadership behaviours** early.

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## Normalize feedback = transparent growth

By ensuring people are held accountable for their leadership growth from consistent feedback, you're shaping **a bench of self-aware** and **feedback-driven leaders** from the start.

There is no need to “train” or “retrain” them later.



# Leadership Needs To Be Measurable



## What Gets Measured, Inevitably Grows

Leadership development can't rely on vague impressions or gut feel — especially for emerging leaders who are still forming their identity. When leadership is left **undefined** and unmeasured, it becomes **inconsistent**, invisible, and inaccessible.

**Clear expectations** paired with **regular feedback** help individuals know where they stand, what's working, and what to improve. Measuring leadership behaviours — not just results — builds fairness, clarity, and momentum. And when feedback comes from multiple perspectives (managers, peers, direct reports), it becomes a mirror, not a judgment — helping leaders see the impact they have, and where they can grow next.



# A Four-Step Model for Developing Emerging Leaders



## Early Exposure

Introduce leadership language, expectations, and values during onboarding — not just during promotions.



## Honest Feedback

Use tools like 360s, peer check-ins, or manager reflections to create a culture of continuous learning.



## Action Plans

Support individuals in setting growth goals based on feedback, focused on their leadership potential.



## Momentum

Create systems for revisiting, reflecting, and recognising growth over time.

## Need help?

Schedule a discovery session with us by clicking [here](#).





## Principles and Practical Tips to Include in Your People Strategy



### A Few “Shifts” in Mindset

- **Content to culture:** Move beyond just delivering training — foster environments where leadership values are lived and reinforced.
- **Annual to ongoing:** Replace big events with lighter, more frequent check-ins and feedback moments.
- **Intervention to integration:** Embed development into the flow of work, not outside of it.



### Practical Tips

- **Recognize Leadership Behaviours:** Celebrate things like mentoring a teammate, giving thoughtful feedback, or leading a discussion — not just performance results. It teaches people that how they work matters just as much as what they achieve.
- **Give Clear Leadership Examples:** Share a simple list of expected leadership behaviours — like “shows initiative,” “actively listens,” or “keeps others informed.” This helps teams understand what leadership looks like in your context.
- **Frequent Check-Ins:** Alongside annual reviews, Use quick prompts, monthly reflections, or short peer feedback to make growth continuous and manageable.

# A Leadership Readiness Checklist

(that you can start using today)



## **Ensure new hires understand what leadership looks like, not just structurally, but behaviourally.**

From the first day, people are picking up cues about what's valued. Beyond org charts and role titles, are you making visible the behaviours and mindsets that define leadership in your culture?

Whether it's how decisions are made, how people are treated, or how accountability is handled — new employees are learning what leadership means through observation. Being explicit about these behaviours early on helps them see that leadership is more than a position — it's a way of operating.



## **Are we offering feedback early enough to build self-awareness before people take on leadership roles?**

Waiting until someone is in a formal leadership role to start offering meaningful feedback is a missed opportunity. Self-awareness is foundational to good leadership — and it takes time to build.

Introducing feedback tools (like check-ins, or custom lightweight 360 surveys) early in someone's journey helps them grow their self-awareness muscles gradually, and respond to input with curiosity rather than defensiveness. It also normalises feedback as a growth tool, not a judgment.



# A Leadership Readiness Checklist

(that you can start using today)



## **Are our current leaders modelling the values we want to see in future leaders?**

Younger employees aren't just listening to what leadership says — they're watching how leaders behave. Every interaction is a lesson in what's acceptable, expected, and rewarded. Are your current leaders showing empathy, transparency, adaptability, and accountability?

Or are they unintentionally reinforcing outdated models? Aligning leadership behaviours with the values you want to see in future leaders is one of the most powerful forms of development you can offer — even before any formal training takes place.



## **Do we track and recognise leadership behaviours even before promotions happen?**

Too often, leadership gets recognised only after someone has received a formal title. But what about the team member who steps up during a crisis, mentors a peer, or initiates a difficult conversation with care?

Recognising these behaviours — through feedback, shoutouts, or informal acknowledgments — reinforces that leadership is about contribution, not just hierarchy. It builds confidence, encourages repetition, and shows that the organisation is paying attention to growth in action.

# Start Developing Future Leaders Now!



## How To Get Gen Z and Millennials to Buy In?

They're not rejecting leadership. Instead, they're expecting more from leadership.

And before they feel comfortable enough to even imagine leading, organizations need to provide them with the right environment to grow into leaders.

And the best part? You can start right now.

→ **Unsure where to start?**

Schedule a discovery session with us by clicking **[here](#)**.

# Contact Information



Should you have any questions about our guide, please do not hesitate to contact us via the contact information towards the right.

If you want a discovery session with one of our team, please register your interests [here](#).

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