



DIGITAL NATIVES

In 7 years digital natives will dominate the workforce.
Are you ready?



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THE WORKPLACE IS CHANGING. ORGANISATIONS hear every day that their workforce and society are rapidly becoming more digitally savvy, and those that choose to run from new technologies or ignore this transformation will be left behind.

The arrival of digital natives in the workplace – the generations that have grown up with technology and their smartphones constantly within reach – is causing disruption to traditional working norms. Technology is embedded in their lives - they communicate online, consume media online, shop and look for recommendations online, they form online-only relationships. Technology offers them flexibility at the click of a button.

So it makes sense that the workplace embraces this digital force and learns from it.

WHY DO DIGITAL NATIVES MATTER?

Masters of navigating and filtering through the virtual world, this emerging workforce will perform at their peak when they are easily able to access it and encouraged to integrate it with their working life. Digital natives, of which millennials (those born in the early 1980s to the early 2000s) make up the majority, are projected to be 50% of the workforce by 2020, further reaching 75% by 2025 (Forbes). In just seven years they will become the majority of your employees, customers and suppliers. Traditional working methods of being tied to a desk will become less effective and potentially a hindrance.



The use of laptops, mobile phones and online apps mean that we no longer need to work in a static environment, and for digital natives, there is no learning curve. For most businesses, a smartphone is no longer seen as a disruption to work, but as a productivity tool with the ability to perform work tasks, tap into HR systems, access information and data directly; all while on the move or away from the four walls of the office.

THE CHALLENGE TO STAY AHEAD

Some more traditional organisations remain stuck, either living in fear of change or unwilling to hire this generation, who may appear lazy and constantly glued to their phones. According to the Yellow SME Digital Readiness Survey, twenty per cent of New Zealand SMEs have no online presence. However we all know technology continually advances around us, and organisations need to keep up to attract the best candidates, so they don't further fall behind the competition.

New technologies for mobile working are already proving their business value – reducing email traffic, coordinating teams, enabling communication across hierarchies and saving time on traditional processes. These tools are creating more opportunity for change, productivity, flexibility, innovation, and employee engagement.

BRIDGING THE TECHNOLOGICAL GAP – A PATH FORWARD

The technological gap between generations should be understood, and organisations are now being challenged to create a balanced working environment that attracts both digital natives and older generations.

It's important to continually evaluate the way your workplace is using technology, how you can improve and the ways you could be unlocking the potential of your younger staff members.

It's clear that change has arrived and is rapidly increasing – don't leave your people's potential untapped and don't leave your business behind in the dark ages!

SOME STEPS YOUR BUSINESS CAN TAKE TO ATTRACT DIGITAL NATIVES

1. Embrace the change in your workforce.
2. Review your hiring processes to ensure you're connecting with the right people.
3. Conduct a culture survey to determine your fit with the changing workforce.
4. Review your company's approach to technology and the value it could add to your business.