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Redefining Hospitality Work: How  
Today's Younger Talent Is Changing  
the Game.

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## What's One Thing You've Heard About Younger Workers Today?

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## What We Hear

*"They want promotions too fast"*

*"They keep job-hopping"*

*"They ask too many questions"*

*"They ghost interviews"*

*"They don't have a strong work ethic"*

## What It Could Mean

*"They want mentorship & a clear path forward"*

*"They'll stay where they can actually grow"*

*"They care deeply & want to learn the right way"*

*Change your interviews*

*They care about different things, important things.*

# The Leadership Reality Check

This isn't a labour crisis- it's a leadership one.

We've all said it – "They don't want to work." But what if they just don't want to work like we did."

Gen Z isn't the problem – outdated thinking is. And they're going to lead this industry soon, whether we are ready or not.



## Traditional Hospitality Roles

- *Rigid schedules with little flexibility*
- *Narrow job scopes with limited learning*
- *Minimal upward movement opportunities*
- *High turnover just assumed as "normal"*



## What Today's Younger Talent Really Want

### Flexibility

*Schedule autonomy & genuine work-life balance — not just the promise of it*

### Purpose

*They want to give back & align with company values that matter*

### Culture

*Psychological safety, inclusion, & true belonging in the workplace*

### Growth

*They want to develop skills & advance - not just clock in & out*

### Mentorship

*They crave leaders who coach & guide, not just direct & manage*

# Purpose



Shannon Menaul  
HR Director  
The Keg Restaurants

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**Which of These are Hardest For Your Organization to Deliver Consistently?**

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# What Leaders Must Do



# Growth & Mentorship

01

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Build Skill Arcs into  
Every Role

03

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Make it Visible

02

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Micro Promotions

04

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Align with  
Interests/Strengths

# Skill Arcs

Day 1- 30

Orientation & Foundation

Day 31-60

Integration & Application

Day 61-90

Ownership & Stretch

# Micro Promotions

Month 4-6

Expanded Responsibility

Month 6-9

Leadership Lite

Month 9+

Emerging Leader

# Visibility

Align with Strengths

# All Leads to More Retention

## Benefits of Internal Mobility vs. External Hiring

Internal hires:

- Cost Less
- Reach Full Productivity Faster
- Have a Higher Retention Rate



ONTARIO RESTAURANT HOTEL & MOTEL ASSOCIATION PRESENTS

# ONTARIO HOSPITALITY CONFERENCE 2025

Tyler Rutherford  
Director of Business Operations  
Gusto 54 Restaurant Group



# Flexibility

- Reduces Turnover
- Improves Retention
- Increases Job Satisfaction





## Flexibility Without Chaos



Shift to Collaboration



Core + Flex Hours



Team Based Scheduling

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## What's the Biggest Barrier to Offering Flexibility in Your Company?

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# They Ghost Interviews

93% of Gen Z respondents admitted to not showing up for scheduled interviews

Indeed Survey, Fortune

86% of jobseekers admitted to not showing up for interviews without notice

HRD Connect

34% of Gen Z respondents admitted to accepting jobs but failing to show up on their first day

The Guardian

## Why?

- Desire for Career Control & Autonomy
- High Expectations for Transparency
- Mental Health & Anxiety

## What Can We Do Differently?

- Follow Up Fast
- Make Them Personal
- Be Transparent
- Let Them Schedule

# The Future of Hospitality Leadership Starts Now

This Generation Isn't Entitled

They Want Partnership

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## Don't Wait To Be Disrupted.

Disrupt your own leadership – starting now.

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