



# UNDERSTANDING GENERATION Z ON THE JOBSITE

Generational Toolbox Talk – Part 1

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Jobsite: \_\_\_\_\_ Discussion Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

## WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT GENERATION Z

- Generation Z (born 1997-2012) makes up a growing share of early-career or entry-level construction roles.
- Like most newer workers, they do best when expectations, timelines, and results are clearly defined.
- Many are comfortable using phones, tablets, photos, and other visual tools to understand tasks and instructions.
- They are used to real-time feedback, rather than waiting for annual or end-of-project performance reviews.
- They have high expectations of being included, treated fairly, and treated with respect.

## WHY UNDERSTANDING GEN Z ON THE JOBSITE MATTERS

Worker injury rates are higher in the first year working in construction, when individuals are still learning the work, the hazards, and the pace of the jobsite. Clear direction, regular check-ins, and explaining the “why” behind the work are ways to reduce mistakes and prevent injuries. When workers don’t understand *why* a task matters, they are less likely to ask questions and more likely to make unsafe assumptions.

## HOW TO ENGAGE NEWER WORKERS ON THE JOBSITE:

- Explain the “why” behind the task. Clear expectations reduce conflict and prevent errors.
- Ask workers to repeat back instructions to confirm understanding.
- Use technology when it helps, but don’t force it.
- Give short, real-time feedback during the day.
- Pair newer workers with experienced mentors during higher-risk tasks.
- Use visuals when possible: drawings, photos, tablets, or marked plans.

### SCENARIO FOR DISCUSSION:

A new worker is told to take measurements but isn’t told why precision matters. Because they haven’t felt included by their supervisor and the more experienced coworkers, they hesitate to ask questions. The task feels disconnected and their attention drops, increasing the risk of making mistakes.

### Discussion Questions:

1. How does explaining the safety or structural impact of the measurements change the outcome?
2. What risks increase when someone doesn’t feel comfortable asking questions?
3. As a crew, what are some ways we can better communicate?