

Can emojis aid workplace communication?

Opportunities Desk

Almost nine in ten (88%) of Gen Zers say emojis are useful at work. They enhance workplace communication, spark the right emotion and help build connections, says an Atlassian survey.

Atlassian, in collaboration with YouGov, surveyed 10,000 knowledge workers from the USA, Australia, France, Germany and India regarding their workplace communication and productivity from August 8 to 24, 2024.

A joint report by Boston Consulting Group (BCG) and Snap Inc projects that Gen Z already makes up 25% of India's workforce, a figure set to grow to 47% by 2035. But a general misalignment in communication practices between newer workforce entrants and their older colleagues is exemplified by the emoji debacle: less than half of Gen X and baby boomer knowledge workers think emojis have a place at work.

This disagreement can ladder up to major cultural issues, especially in workplaces where written communication is the norm: Almost all respondents (93%) regularly communicate in writing; nearly half (44%) said written communications are their primary mode of contact, ahead of speaking in-person.

According to the report, emojis are part of Gen Z's digital body language, a term for the day-to-day behaviours, such as how quickly someone responds to a message, whether they use emojis, their punctuation and tone. Digital body language is a crucial form of workplace expression and a key to forming enduring bonds.

Dominic Price, Work Futurist at Atlassian, in a communication, says: "The way we talk at work has gone through a full-blown transformation. Emails, DMs, Slack threads, Zoom chats—it's all digital now. And for a lot of us, that shift has been a learning curve," explains

In fact, Gen Z is 4x as



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likely as Gen X to experience unclear communication daily, and half of Gen Z respondents (48%) say they waste time each week attempting to interpret written messages from their colleagues — time that could otherwise be used for productive, mission-critical work.

Gen Z brings a funda-

mentally different set of workplace expectations. Many of them entered full-time employment during and immediately after the pandemic; from the beginning, they have been chasing emotional cues in a context-starved world.

As they look for jobs, approachable language is more than just a nice-to-have; it is an expectation. Gen Zers are motivated by emoji reactions at 2.5x the rate of their Boomer colleagues.

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