WSB MERITO UNIVERSITY POZNAŃ

Field of Study: Management Psychology

Master's Thesis

Why "Gen Z" Doesn't Want to Lead? A Comparative Analysis of Career Anchors and Leadership Attitudes of Generation Z Against Older Generations of Employees.

Dominik Rolewski, 101178

Supervisor

mgr Tomasz Szwed

Poznań 2026

Introduction

The modern labor market is undergoing continuous changes. One of the most visible symptoms is the modification of behaviors and attitudes of the generation entering the labor market towards career paths and managerial positions. Young employees representing Generation Z, upon entering the labor market, present a different approach to professional development than their older colleagues. Among Generation Z, the expert path gains an advantage over the traditional managerial route. Work-life balance is becoming the most important criterion for choosing an employer. Such behavior in the literature is referred to as "unbossing," and it poses a serious challenge to modern organizations functioning in a leadership crisis.

Context and Relevance of the Topic

An analysis of current trends in the labor market yields concerning conclusions: the role of the manager, which for many decades was perceived as a natural and desirable career goal, is losing its appeal among young employees. According to data presented in the report "People Development Trends for 2026" by House of Skills, more than half of Generation Z representatives active in the global labor market express no interest in taking mid-level managerial positions, and the majority lean toward developing within a specialist path instead of managing people. This situation is visible in Europe, where employees report a willingness to forgo a higher position in favor of balance between work, mental health, and private life.

The described phenomenon is not an isolated fact, but fits into a broader context of the leadership crisis affecting organizations in the modern world. Results of research conducted by Development Dimensions International as part of the Global Leadership Forecast 2025 indicate a difficult situation for management staff: a significant portion of leaders feel an increased level of occupational stress, a substantial amount of their working time is consumed by administrative tasks, and strategic work takes a back seat. Many leaders are considering stepping down from their managerial functions. In this respect, Poland does not deviate from the European trend – the employee engagement rate in our country ranks among the lowest on the continent.

The leadership crisis is complex in nature and encompasses the organizational system level, relationships between leaders and teams, and the leaders themselves. At the systemic level, it manifests through pressure for short-term results, frequency of changes, and insufficient support in the development of managerial staff. At the relational level, the crisis is expressed by a lack of time devoted to employees, unfulfilled team expectations, and one-way communication. At the personal level, leaders experience a sense of lack of influence on the organization, excessive responsibility, and loneliness in the managerial role. With such knowledge, Generation Z's reluctance to assume managerial roles can be viewed as a rational response to the observed dysfunctions of modern leadership.

Generation Z and its characteristics as a new participant in the labor market require analysis. Representatives of this generation, growing up in an environment dominated by the internet and social media, bring new expectations and values to the labor market. Key elements of their priorities include: the opportunity for continuous competence development, flexibility in work organization, autonomy in decision-making, and authenticity in professional relationships. Young employees

observe and experience the burnout and overload of their superiors, which undoubtedly reinforces their reluctance toward similar roles. Research results conducted on the Polish market indicate that the lack of development prospects is the main reason for leaving a job among Generation Z representatives after just their first year of employment.

Research Problem and Objectives of the Study

Taking this into account, it is worth asking why Generation Z is so reluctant toward leadership roles. So far, researchers have mainly focused on the environment: stress in a manager's work, overly low earnings, or fear of losing work-life balance. However, there is still a lack of analyses combining generational traits with individual professional needs – specifically with so-called career anchors, which determine how we approach leading others.

Career anchors, understood as enduring values and competencies motivating an individual's professional choices, are an important element of professional self-awareness. The model proposed by Edgar Schein distinguishes eight types of career anchors: technical/functional competence, autonomy, security and stability, general managerial competence, service/dedication to a cause, pure challenge, lifestyle integration, and entrepreneurial creativity. Each of these anchors can influence an individual's readiness to assume managerial roles in a different way.

Based on the above premises, the following research questions were formulated:

Main Research Question: How do career anchors differ between Generation Z and older generations of employees?

Specific Questions:

1. Which career anchors dominate among representatives of individual generations in the Polish labor market?
2. Can statistically significant differences in leadership attitudes be observed between generations?
3. To what extent are career anchors linked to Generation Z's reluctance to take on managerial roles?
4. Which factors show the strongest association with readiness to hold leadership functions across individual generations?

Objective and Scope of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine and compare the career anchors and leadership attitudes of Generation Z in relation to older employees active in the Polish labor market. Achieving this goal will allow for the identification of generational differences in professional motivations and a deeper understanding of the mechanisms influencing young employees' reluctance toward managerial roles.

- Identification of dominant career anchors in individual generations (Baby Boomers, Generation X, Generation Y, Generation Z)
- Analysis of differences in leadership attitudes between generations
- Determination of relationships between specific career anchor configurations and attitudes toward management
- Identification of factors determining to the greatest extent the readiness to assume leadership roles by Generation Z representatives

The study was conducted on a sample of 173 employees representing various generations who completed Schein's Career Anchors Test via the platform career-anchors.pl. The analysis includes a comparison of results between generations, taking into account demographic variables such as birth year, position held, and industry/sector of employment.

Justification for the Choice of Topic

Undertaking this topic is justified by theoretical, practical, and cultural reasons. In the theoretical dimension, the study fills a research gap regarding the generational analysis of career anchors in the Polish context. Previous research on Generation Z focused mainly on issues related to technology, communication, and youth culture, paying relatively little attention to career attitudes. Combining Schein's career anchors theory with generational analysis allows for a deeper understanding of the mechanisms motivating young employees.

In the practical dimension, the study results are of significant importance for human resource management in organizations. Understanding generational differences enables the design of more effective recruitment strategies, development programs, and career paths tailored to the expectations of individual generations. In the context of the leadership crisis and growing reluctance toward managerial roles, identifying factors influencing these attitudes can support organizations in building succession strategies and preparing future leaders.

The thesis is also meaningful from the perspective of Generation Z itself – a deeper understanding of one's own professional motivations can support conscious career thinking and decision-making aligned with values, aspirations, and potential.

In the cultural dimension, this topic is very important, as generational theory is often overused in daily work as a tool for building prejudices and categorizing coworkers, superiors, and subordinates.

Structure of the Thesis

This thesis consists of six chapters, the layout of which reflects the sequence of the research process.

Chapter One – this Introduction – presents the context and relevance of the topic, formulated research problem, objective, and scope.

Chapter Two – Theoretical Context – provides an overview of generational theories and characteristics of Generation Z in the labor market. It also discusses the phenomenon of the leadership crisis in organizations and presents data on Generation Z's attitudes toward managerial roles.

Chapter Three – Career Anchors – presents the theoretical foundations of Schein's career anchors model, describes the eight anchors, and discusses their importance for professional orientation and leadership attitudes.

Chapter Four – Research Methodology – describes in detail the research tools, sample, data collection procedure, and statistical analysis methods.

Chapter Five – Results – presents the analysis of empirical data, including a comparison of career anchors across generations and the identification of factors related to attitudes toward management.

Chapter Six – Summary – final conclusions, theoretical and practical implications, as well as study limitations and directions for future work.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Context

This chapter forms the theoretical foundation for the conducted research. It contains a review of key concepts related to generational analysis, characteristics of Generation Z in the labor market, and the phenomenon of the leadership crisis in modern organizations. The goal of this chapter is to embed the research problem within a broader theoretical context and present the current state of knowledge regarding young generation attitudes toward managerial roles.

2.1. Generational Theories – Introduction

The concept of a generation in a social and professional context refers to a group of individuals who enter adulthood around the same time and, as a result, experience similar social, economic, and cultural events. Generational theories assume that shared experiences during identity formation permanently shape people's values, attitudes, and behaviors throughout their lives. Employees belonging to different generations may therefore exhibit different approaches to work, career, and leadership.

2.1.1. Foundations of Generational Theories

The concept of a generation is not new – it stems from observations by sociologists who noticed that people born around the same time often view the world similarly. As early as 1928, Karl Mannheim pointed out that young people entering adulthood together create a certain "shared consciousness." Key here are experiences from adolescence: major political events, economic crises, or technological breakthroughs. These shape the core of values and attitudes that remain for years.

In recent decades, this theory has become extremely relevant for business. Companies noticed that employee age is not just a number, but often signifies completely different approaches to duties. Today, four distinct worlds meet in the workplace: Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials, and the youngest, Generation Z. Each group has different motivations and expectations from employers. Understanding these differences has ceased to be a curiosity and become a necessity for effectively managing teams where people from such varied generations work side by side.

2.1.2. Definition and Periodization of Generations

Literature distinguishes several main generations in the labor market, with periodization varying depending on the source and geographic region. For the purposes of this study, the following periodization was adopted:

Baby Boomers (1946–1964) – the post-WWII baby boom generation. Characterized by strong attachment to work, loyalty to the employer, and orientation toward hierarchy. Raised during post-war prosperity, they value stability and job security.

Generation X (1965–1980) – the generation raised in the shadow of economic crises and political transformations in many countries. Characterized by greater individualism, pragmatism, and flexibility. They experienced visible changes in the labor market, including restructuring and unemployment.

Generation Y (Millennials, 1981–1996) – the generation growing up in the era of the internet and globalization. Characterized by openness to technology, growth orientation, learning opportunities, and expectations of feedback and recognition. They value work-life balance.

Generation Z (1997–2012) – digital natives raised in an environment saturated with smartphones, social media, and artificial intelligence. Characterized by high digital competence, preference for flexible work, and authenticity in workplace relationships.

2.1.3 Criticism of Generational Theories

It should be noted that generational theories are not without criticism. Some researchers point to overgeneralization and stereotyping. Differences between individuals within the same generation can be larger than differences between generations. Furthermore, much depends on cultural, economic, and occupational contexts. Despite these reservations, generational theories provide a useful analytical framework for understanding trends in the contemporary labor market.

2.2. Generation Z in the Labor Market

Generation Z, also referred to as "Gen Z," represents the youngest generation currently entering the workforce. Their specificity and expectations are the subject of intense research and discussion in human resource management literature.

2.2.1. Characteristics of Generation Z

Representatives of Generation Z were born between 1997 and 2012, meaning that in 2026 they are between 14 and 29 years old. They are the first generation to grow up in an environment fully dominated by digital technologies. Smartphones, social media, and internet access were natural elements of life from their earliest years.

Characteristic traits of Generation Z include:

- High digital competence – digital natives who intuitively use technology. They do not remember a world without the internet or smartphones. They naturally integrate technology into their professional and private lives.
- Search for meaning and authenticity – young employees expect their work to have purpose and align with their values. They are sensitive to workplace relationship authenticity and expect transparency from employers.
- Preference for flexibility – value remote work options and flexible scheduling. Reluctant toward rigid structures and hierarchy. Expect trust and autonomy in carrying out duties.
- Growth orientation – desire continuous learning and development. Expect regular feedback and clear career paths. Willing to change jobs if development prospects are absent.

2.2.2. Values and Expectations of Generation Z

Research conducted in the labor market identifies key professional values and expectations of Generation Z:

Work-life balance – one of the most critical factors when choosing an employer. Unwilling to sacrifice personal life for a career. Expect flexible work forms and respect for boundaries between work and personal life.

Development opportunities – competency and career growth perspectives are key motivators. Research shows that lack of development prospects is the main cause of departure after just one year of employment.

Autonomy and independence – prefer work that offers freedom in organizing time and execution. React poorly to micromanagement and excessive control.

Technology – expect employers to utilize modern technology. Ready to use AI tools, but expect appropriate training.

Company values – sensitive to ethics and company values. Desire to work for organizations with a clear mission acting in accordance with declared values.

2.2.3. Attitudes Toward Managerial Roles

One of the most interesting features of Generation Z in the context of this study is their attitude toward managerial roles. Research indicates a clear reluctance to assume management positions:

According to data from the House of Skills 2026 report, 52% of Generation Z representatives globally do not want to hold mid-level managerial positions. Furthermore, 72% prefer developing within a specialist path over managing people. In Europe, this trend is particularly strong – over half of Europeans prioritize mental health over a higher position.

This reluctance may stem from several factors:

- Observing parent burnout – Gen Z observed burnout and overload among parents and older colleagues in managerial roles, associating leadership with stress, overtime, and health issues.
- Different hierarchy of values – professional success is not as strongly tied to power and status as in earlier generations; they prefer focusing on skill development.
- Inadequate compensation – many feel the pay difference between specialist and mid-level manager is disproportionate to added stress and responsibility.
- Fear of losing autonomy – managerial roles mean more meetings, reporting, and administration, and less autonomy in daily work.

2.3. Leadership Crisis in Modern Organizations

The leadership crisis phenomenon is an essential context for understanding Generation Z's attitudes toward managerial roles. Modern organizations face a deep management staff crisis affecting all management levels.

2.3.1. Scale and Nature of the Crisis

Research by Development Dimensions International (DDI) in the Global Leadership Forecast 2025 shows a dramatic picture:

- Stress and burnout – 71% of leaders report increased occupational stress. A significant percentage experience burnout affecting efficiency and health.
- Lack of time for strategic tasks – only 30% of managers' time is spent on strategic tasks; the rest is consumed by administration, meetings, and operational issues.
- Considering resignation – 40% of leaders consider stepping down from management roles, especially mid-level and front-line leaders.
- Low trust – trust in direct superiors dropped by 14 percentage points in 24 months (from 46% to 32%). 7 out of 10 leaders do not trust direct supervisors or senior management.

2.3.2. Dimensions of the Leadership Crisis

The leadership crisis encompasses three main dimensions:

Systemic level – demands for immediate results lead to short-term pressure. Too many simultaneous changes cause "change fatigue." Development support is inadequate.

Relational level – leaders lack time for employees. Communication is one-way (giving orders rather than listening). Employee expectations regarding flexibility and autonomy go unmet.

Individual level – leaders lose sense of impact, feel excessive responsibility, and experience loneliness in leadership roles.

2.3.3 Consequences of the Leadership Crisis

- Drop in employee engagement – in Poland, engagement is at 8% (ranking 35th out of 38 European countries).
- Great detachment – growing gulf between leaders and employees as described by Gallup.
- Difficulties in recruiting management – fewer people willing to take management roles ("unbossing").
- Threat to leadership continuity – threat of a leader exodus.

2.3.4 Attempts to Overcome the Crisis

- At the board level – open communication, moving away from pure KPI management to culture and relationships.
- At the HR level – revising incentive systems, investing in leadership human skills.

- At the manager level – practicing "tough empathy," developing human skills, prioritizing personal well-being.

2.4. Connection Between Leadership Crisis and Gen Z Attitudes

Gen Z's reluctance can be viewed as a rational response to observed leadership dysfunctions:

- Observers of crisis – watched parents/colleagues suffer burnout; want to avoid repeating mistakes.
- Different aspirations – value balance, autonomy, and skill development over titles or power.
- Seeking alternative paths – pursuing technical paths, innovation roles, project work, remote work, and freelancing.

2.5. Chapter Summary

1. Generational theories provide a useful framework despite limitations.
2. Gen Z prioritizes flexibility, skill growth, and life balance.
3. Reluctance toward management is pronounced and rational given observed dysfunctions.
4. Leadership crisis affects all organizational levels.

Chapter 3: Career Anchors – Theoretical Framework

This chapter analyzes Edgar Schein's career anchors concept as the primary framework for interpreting career orientations and attitudes toward managerial roles. Data collection relied on diagnostic tools on career-anchors.pl.

3.1. Genesis and Development of Career Anchors

Developed by Edgar Schein at MIT Sloan School of Management in the 1970s following MBA alumni tracking. Published first in 1978 ("Career Anchors: Discovering Your Real Values") and revised in 1990 ("Career Anchors: Revised Edition").

3.2. Definition and Essence of Career Anchors

Career anchors are core, enduring values and competencies that guide career choices – representing what an individual will not give up. Functions include stabilizing career direction, providing selection criteria for job choices, and serving as primary motivators.

3.3. Model of Eight Career Anchors

3.3.1. Technical/Functional Competence (TF)

Focus on developing and applying specialized skills; identity built on expertise rather than managing people.

3.3.2. Autonomy/Independence (AU)

Value working on own terms without external control; dislike rigid hierarchy and bureaucracy.

3.3.3. Security/Stability (SE)

Value predictability, job security, clear career paths, and guaranteed benefits.

3.3.4. General Managerial Competence (GM)

Aspirations to lead others, advance hierarchically, exercise power/influence, and take accountability for organizational results.

3.3.5. Service/Dedication to a Cause (SV)

Motivated by helping others and contributing to social good; value- and ethics-oriented.

3.3.6. Entrepreneurial Creativity (EC)

Need to create new ventures, innovate, and take risks; prefer building own projects over managing corporate structures.

3.3.7. Pure Challenge (CH)

Motivated by solving tough problems, overcoming obstacles, and constant competition/achievement.

3.3.8. Lifestyle Integration (LS)

Value harmony between professional work, family, personal life, and self-development.

3.4. Career Anchors and Leadership Attitudes

3.4.1. General Managerial (GM) – Natural leadership orientation.

3.4.2. Technical/Functional (TF) – Reluctance due to fear of losing touch with hands-on work.

3.4.3. Autonomy (AU) – Reluctance due to hierarchical restrictions.

3.4.4. Security (SE) – Reluctance due to increased exposure to risk.

3.4.5. Service (SV) – Ambivalent; depends on social alignment.

3.4.6. Entrepreneurship (EC) – Preference for own ventures.

3.4.7. Challenge (CH) – Depends on technical vs. administrative nature of challenge.

3.4.8. Lifestyle Integration (LS) – Reluctance due to threat to work-life balance.

3.4.9. Summary Table – Anchor Influence on Managerial Attitudes

Anchor	Influence on Attitudes Toward Managerial Roles
GM (General Managerial)	Natural readiness for leadership roles
TF (Technical/Functional)	Reluctance - fear of losing connection with subject matter
AU (Autonomia)	Reluctance - restriction of independence
SE (Security/Stability)	Reluctance - higher risk

Anchor	Influence on Attitudes Toward Managerial Roles
SV (Service)	Ambivalence - can motivate depending on context
EC (Entrepreneurial)	Reluctance - preference for own path
CH (Challenge)	Depends on character and role of challenge
LS (Lifestyle)	Reluctance - threat to work-life balance

Table 1. Anchor Attitudes Toward Managerial Roles

3.5. Chapter Summary

Understanding anchor distributions is key to explaining why young employees avoid management roles.

Chapter 4: Research Methodology

4.1. Research Objective and Questions

To compare career anchors and leadership attitudes of Gen Z against older generations in Poland.

Main Question: How do career anchors differ between Gen Z and older generations?

Specific Questions:

1. Which anchors dominate in each generation?
2. Are there statistically significant differences?
3. How do anchors relate to managerial attitudes?
4. Which factors show strongest link to leadership readiness?

Independent Variables: Generation, Birth Year, Position, Industry.

Dependent Variables: Anchor scores (TF, AU, SE, GM, SV, EC, CH, LS), Dominant anchors, Readiness for managerial roles.

4.2. Research Instrument – Schein's Career Anchors Test

40 items scored on a 6-point Likert scale (1=Strongly Disagree to 6=Strongly Agree). High psychometric reliability (Cronbach's alpha 0.70–0.85).

4.3. Platform career-anchors.pl

Automated scoring, standard instructions, demographic intake, and aggregated JSON data export.

4.4. Study Sample

173 employees on the Polish market.

Generation	Birth Years	Number of Respondents
Baby Boomers	1946–1964	5
Generation X	1965–1980	16
Generation Y (Millennials)	1981–1996	105
Generation Z	1997–2012	47

Table 2. Generational Criteria

4.5. Data Collection Procedure

Data collected online from March 26, 2026 to May 12, 2026. Voluntary, anonymous participation.

4.6. Statistical Analysis Methods

- Descriptive Statistics (frequencies, cross-tabs, means, medians)
- Group Difference Tests (Kruskal-Wallis test, Mann-Whitney U test, ANOVA)
- Correlation Analysis (Spearman's rank correlation)

- Regression Analysis (Logistic regression)

4.7. Methodological Limitations

Convenience sample, unequal generational sizes, self-report subjectivity.

Chapter 5: Research Results

Sample size N = 173.

5.1. Sample Characteristics

Generation	Count	Percentage
Baby Boomers (1946–1964)	5	2.9%
Generation X (1965–1980)	16	9.2%
Generation Y (1981–1996)	105	60.7%
Generation Z (1997–2012)	47	27.2%

Table 3. Sample Characteristics

40 respondents (23.1%) hold managerial positions; 133 (76.9%) are specialists.

5.2. Career Anchors Across Entire Sample

5.2.1. Dominant Anchors

Anchor	Count	Percentage
Lifestyle Integration (LS)	56	32.4%
Technical/Functional (TF)	38	22.0%
Security/Stability (SE)	27	15.6%

Anchor	Count	Percentage
Autonomy/Independence (AU)	22	12.7%
Service/Dedication (SV)	10	5.8%
Pure Challenge (CH)	8	4.6%
Entrepreneurial Creativity (EC)	7	4.0%
General Managerial (GM)	5	2.9%

Table 4. Most Frequent Dominant Anchors

5.2.2. Mean Scale Scores

Anchor	Mean	Standard Deviation
Lifestyle Integration (LS)	4.60	1.02
Security/Stability (SE)	4.24	1.03
Autonomy/Independence (AU)	4.13	0.99
Technical/Functional (TF)	4.09	0.95
Pure Challenge (CH)	3.68	1.10
Service/Dedication (SV)	3.51	1.06
Entrepreneurial Creativity (EC)	3.13	1.14
General Managerial (GM)	2.62	1.22

Table 5. Mean Anchor Scale Scores

5.3. Career Anchors by Generation

5.3.1. Scale Means by Generation

Anchor	Baby Boomers	Generation X	Generation Y	Generation Z
TF (Technical)	3.76 (2.02)	3.84 (0.81)	4.12 (0.91)	4.26 (0.87)
AU (Autonomy)	3.72 (2.01)	4.11 (0.83)	4.20 (0.96)	4.02 (1.03)
SE (Security)	4.12 (1.58)	3.84 (1.08)	4.34 (1.06)	4.33 (0.90)
GM (Managerial)	3.12 (2.30)	2.59 (1.41)	2.47 (1.16)	2.76 (1.05)
SV (Service)	3.88 (1.55)	3.86 (0.95)	3.58 (1.08)	3.85 (1.13)
EC (Entrepreneurial)	3.24 (2.02)	2.69 (0.73)	3.11 (1.14)	3.31 (1.14)
CH (Challenge)	3.44 (2.02)	3.40 (0.95)	3.55 (0.98)	3.53 (1.17)
LS (Lifestyle)	4.24 (1.79)	4.50 (1.08)	4.67 (0.83)	4.63 (1.04)

Table 6. Mean Scale Scores by Generation

5.4. Statistical Significance of Generational Differences

5.4.1. Kruskal-Wallis Test

Anchor	H	p-value	Significant?
TF (Technical)	3.68	0.298	No
AU (Autonomy)	1.45	0.693	No
SE (Security)	3.27	0.352	No
GM (Managerial)	3.54	0.316	No
SV (Service)	2.40	0.495	No
EC (Entrepreneurial)	4.08	0.253	No

Anchor	H	p-value	Significant?
CH (Challenge)	0.55	0.907	No
LS (Lifestyle)	0.16	0.984	No

Table 7. Kruskal-Wallis Test Results

Key finding: There are NO statistically significant differences in career anchors across generations (all p > 0.05).

5.4.2. Mann-Whitney U Test: Gen Z vs. Others

No significant differences found (GM p = 0.065, trend level).

5.5. Managerial Positions by Generation

Generation	Managers	Specialists	% Managers
Baby Boomers	0	5	0%
Generation X	6	10	37.5%
Generation Y	33	72	31.4%
Generation Z	1	46	2.1%

Table 8. Managerial Positions by Generation

5.6. Relationship Between Anchors and Managerial Roles

Spearman correlation for GM anchor and holding a manager position: rho = 0.409, p < 0.0001. GM mean score: Managers = 3.46, Specialists = 2.31 (p < 0.0001). No other anchor showed a significant association.

5.7. Top 3 Anchor Combinations

1. Lifestyle + Security + Technical (14.4%)
2. Autonomia + Lifestyle + Security (9.8%)

3. Lifestyle + Security + Challenge (8.1%)
4. Autonomia + Lifestyle + Technical (7.5%)

Chapter 6: Summary and Conclusions

6.1. Synthesis of Findings

- No significant generational differences in Schein's career anchors.
- Lifestyle Integration is the dominant anchor across all generations (32.4%).
- General Managerial orientation is the lowest overall (mean 2.62/6; 2.9% dominant).
- Gen Z holds significantly fewer management roles (2.1%), largely explained by age/career stage.
- GM anchor is the sole statistical predictor distinguishing managers from specialists.

6.2. Final Conclusions & Implications

- Unbossing and reluctance to manage reflect a systemic workplace shift rather than a unique Gen Z quirk.
- Organizations must redesign leadership roles to reduce burnout, administrative burden, and stress if they hope to attract future leaders.
- HR must build clear dual career tracks (expert vs. managerial) and offer genuine work-life integration.

References

[1]: House of Skills (2026), *Trends in People Development for 2026*, report available at https://houseofskills.pl

[2]: Development Dimensions International (2025), *Global Leadership Forecast 2025*, report available at https://www.ddi.comp (2025), State of the Global Workplace: 2025 Report, report available at https://www.gallup.com, *Polish Generation Z and Career Building*, study available at https://www.pracuj.pln E.H. (1978), *Career Anchors: Discovering Your Real Values*, Jossey-Bass/Pfeiffer; revised edition (1990), *Career Anchors: Revised Edition*

[6]: Mannheim, K. (1928). The Problem of Generations. In: P. Kecskemeti (ed.), *Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge*. Routledge & Kegan Paul., W.H., Wallis, W.A. (1952). Use of Ranks in One-Criterion Variance Analysis. *Journal of the American Statistical Association*, 47(260), 583-621. https://doi.org/10.2307/2280779

[8]: Mann, H.B., Whitney, D.R. (1947). On a Test of Whether one of Two Random Variables is Stochastically Larger than the Other. *The Annals of Mathematical Statistics*, 18(1), 50-60. https://doi.org/10.1214/aoms/1177730491

[9]: Fisher, R.A. (1925). *Statistical Methods for Research Workers*. Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd.

[10]: Spearman, C. (1094). The Proof and Measurement of Association between Two Things. *American Journal of Psychology*, 15, 72-101., D.W., Lemeshow, S. (2000). Applied Logistic Regression. John Wiley & Sons. https://doi.org/10.1002/0471722146