Generation Enablement Report: The Rise of Enablement's Influence

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Introduction

Sales enablement transformed drastically over the last decade. In some ways, enablement itself is now table stakes in the B2B world as many companies already have an enablement function and use enablement technology. But the way enablement teams have driven organizational change, scaled best practices, and modernized training is what accounts for enablement's significant growth over the last couple years.

In March 2024, Seismic surveyed nearly 2,000 managers and senior leadership professionals in marketing, sales, enablement, and customer success roles within the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and Australia to understand their enablement strategies, impact, challenges, and go-to-market (GTM) processes, and how they differ across the four generations currently in today's workforce—Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials, and Generation Z.

WHAT IS ENABLEMENT TECHNOLOGY?

For the purposes of this study, enablement technology includes multiple capabilities and solutions, including sales content management and automation, training and coaching, buyer engagement, strategy and planning, and analytics and intelligence.

It came as no surprise that each generation has different enablement-related preferences and challenges. However, we also found they have a lot in common, especially the following:

- Managers feel that each generation has similar struggles when it comes to how quickly they adapt to new technology deployed in the workplace

- **91%** of enablement technology users say it helps them provide a better buyer experience

- **79%** of respondents said just-in-time knowledge tools help in the adoption of digital tools overall.

Ultimately, our research shows that when every generation is on the same page working together, that is when real change happens. When each generation combines its unique strengths, they transcend their age-related labels and become what we've dubbed **Generation Enablement** (Gen E) — defined not by their age, but by their commitment to gaining insights and establishing best practices that drive strategic change, foster a digital-native approach to learning, and champion the adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) not simply as a tool among many other tools, but as a virtual partner in revolutionizing productivity as we know it.

Executive Summary

Generation Enablement has arrived, and it's defining and refining what modern, strategic enablement looks like. This report found that Generation Enablement agrees on the following:
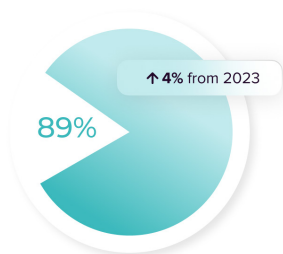
Enablement continues to explode in usage and investment...

82%

Consistent with 2023's numbers, the majority (**82%**) of respondents use enablement technology at work.

90%
87%
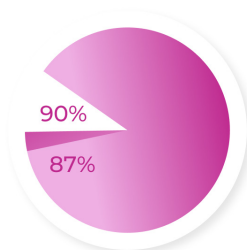
Marketing and sales executives rely even more on enablement tech, with usage at **90%** and **87%**, respectively.

↑**4%** from 2023

89%

And investment in enablement tools is poised to increase. Most organizations (**89%**) plan to retain or increase investment next year, up from **85%** in 2023's survey.

↑**34%**

Sales executives (respondents who identify as CSO, CRO or VP of Sales) were **34%** more likely than average to report plans to invest more.

... And it's not just for sales teams anymore

With such an explosion in usage and investment, this technology is no longer reserved only for sales teams. Whether you call it sales enablement, revenue enablement, or simply enablement, businesses increasingly deliver enablement across multiple departments, and this trend will ramp up in the coming years. Of those who plan to increase their investment, they intend to use additional funds to grow/expand enablement programs and functions (**75%**) and implement enablement tools in additional departments (**57%**).

92%
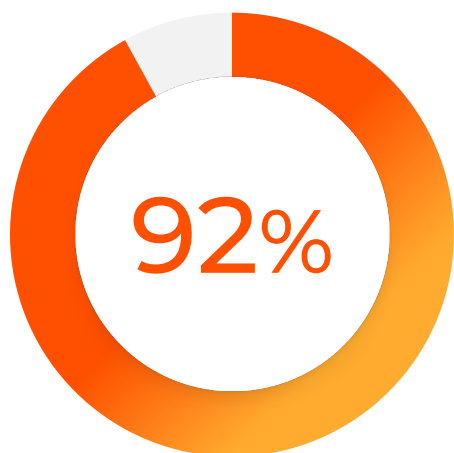
## AI is key to boosting productivity and efficiency

The innovation in AI, particularly generative AI, is one of the most exciting reasons to invest more in enablement technology. A whopping **92%** of global respondents say their company plans to increase its investment because of the promise of AI. When AI is enabled as a virtual partner, it has the potential to open the floodgates for more effective enablement. Surprisingly, Gen Z respondents seem the least enthusiastic about the promise of AI in the workplace.

(US = 94%; EU = 89%; AUS = 91%)

Everyone wants more learning and training at work, but their preferred learning style and format varies

Whether they prefer individualized lessons or just-in-time knowledge tools, today's generations can't agree on how they want to learn at work — but they *can* agree on a variety of formats and tech-supported experiences. Most respondents (**89%**) agree that businesses must provide a variety of learning and training experiences, and they're prioritizing enablement tools when looking for their next job (**82%**).

Why? Enablement elevates their day-to-day work as well as their overall career success, with **84%** expressing heightened satisfaction in their roles, underscoring how enablement tools contribute not only to professional advancement but also to overall career fulfillment.

89%

82%   84%
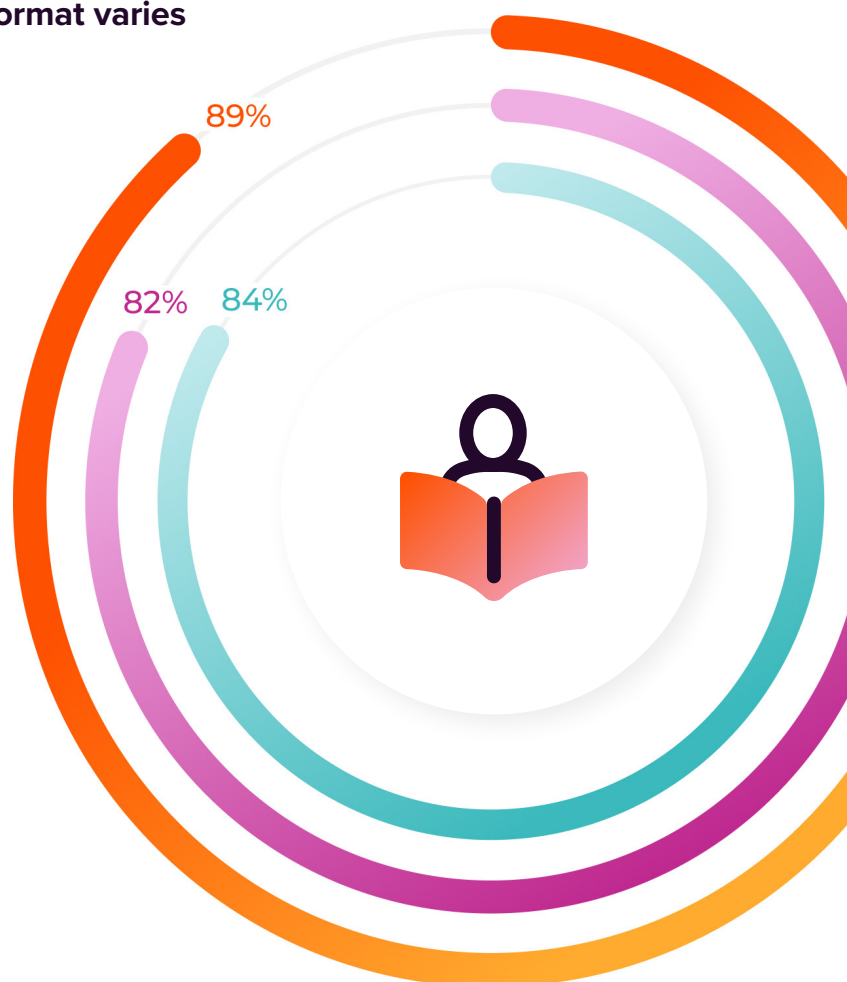
Gen E uses enablement to achieve big business goals

The vast majority of respondents view enablement technology as mission-critical to their work, with **83%** agreeing that enablement technology is integral to weathering difficult economic times.

Compared to non-users, enablement users were more likely to say they achieved their revenue goals (**17%**), client retention goals (**14%**), and marketing goals (**14%**). Enablement is the catalyst to achieve strategic business initiatives like retaining more employees, attracting new talent, growing their customer base, operating more efficiently, and exceeding revenue targets.

And it's not slowing down anytime soon – when asked whether the desire for strategic, effective enablement has increased over the last 3 to 5 years, **9 out of 10** respondents said yes.

83%
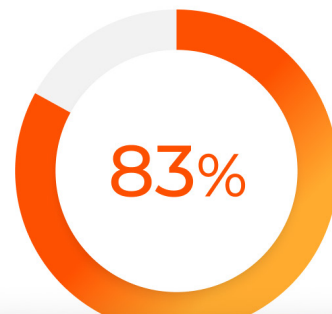
↑ **17%** Revenue goals

↑ **14%** Client retention goals

↑ **14%** Marketing goals

Methodology and demographics

	UNITED STATES	EUROPE	AUSTRALIA
Total Respondents (1,700)	**635** Male: 64% Female: 35% Non-binary: 1%	**746** Male: 48% Female: 52% • United Kingdom (UK): 32% • France (FR): 41% • Germany (DE): 27%	**319** Male: 50% Female: 48% Non-binary: 1%
Age Ranges	18–27: 8% 28–43: 45% 44–59: 38% 60–78: 8% 79+: 1%	18–27: 33% 28–43: 42% 44–59: 22% 60–78: 3% 79+: 0%	18–27: 12% 28–43: 49% 44–59: 30% 60–78: 8% 79+: 1%
Audience	Marketing, sales, enablement, and customer success professionals at the management level or above. 300 respondents, represented evenly across regions, hold a senior leadership title: Chief Marketing Officer, Chief Sales Officer, Chief Revenue Officer, VP of Marketing, or VP of Sales.		
Generations	Baby Boomers (born 1946–1964), Generation X (born 1965–1980), Millennials (born 1981–1996), and Generation Z (born 1997–2012)		
Confidence	Survey conducted at 95% confidence, +/–4% margin of error		Survey conducted at 95% confidence, +/–6% margin of error
Timeframe	February 22, 2024 – March 11, 2024		

Industries represented (global):

Accounting **3%**	Engineering **2%**	Marketing & Communications . . **6%**
Administration & Office Support **2%**	Farming, Animals & Conservation **1%**	Mining, Resources & Energy **1%**
Advertising, Arts & Media **4%**	Government & Defense **2%**	Real Estate & Property **2%**
Banking & Financial Services **7%**	Healthcare & Medical **7%**	Retail & Consumer Products . . . **13%**
Call Center & Customer Service **1%**	Hospitality & Tourism **4%**	Sales **5%**
Community Services & Development **2%**	Human Resources & Recruitment **1%**	Science **0%**
Construction **5%**	Information & Communication Technology . .**5%**	Software & Technology **3%**
Consulting & Strategy **2%**	Insurance & Superannuation **1%**	Sport & Recreation **1%**
Design & Architecture **2%**	Legal **1%**	Trades & Services **1%**
Education & Training **5%**	Manufacturing, Transport & Logistics **8%**	Other **3%**

How Gen E approaches enablement adoption

To reap the benefits of enablement tools, it's critical that teams actively embrace and adopt the technology. **Gen E seeks to break down silos and bring teams together**, but their org's adoption of enablement technology is a prerequisite to truly move the needle. The level of adoption within teams and their commitment to consistent processes directly impacts the achievement of organizational success and ROI.

Alarmingly, **50%** of respondents, especially those in Europe, say their organization struggles with adoption. Respondents reported various reasons adoption is a challenge for their company, including lack of integration with internal workflows, lack of budget to support full adoption, and lack of proper training and resources to fully implement enablement tech.

(US = 42%; EU = 57%; AUS = 54%)

50%

Additionally, **43%** of organizations grapple with uneven adoption across departments.

(US = 41%; EU = 45%; AUS = 42%)
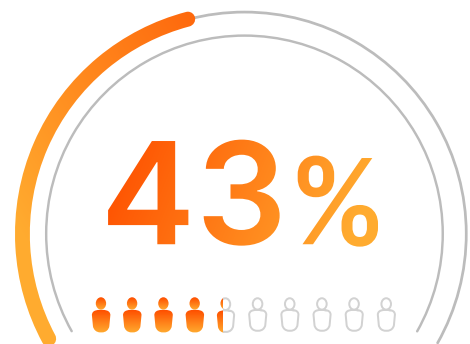
Reasons for this adoption disparity include varying levels of technological readiness (**56%**), resistance to change (**48%**), and a lack of awareness about the full potential of enablement technology (**47%**).

43%

> **Technology, enablement or otherwise, is only as good as its adoption. As enablement leaders, one of our core responsibilities is to ensure that those who we expect to benefit from any new technology understand both how to use it, and the value of using it. Additionally, we must ensure that we enable on tools not only at launch, but continuously, as people learn and adopt at different times in their journey.**

Patricia Peral
Senior Director, GTM
Enablement at Beeline

Enablement is not just for sales; it is increasingly delivered to all customer-facing and revenue-generating teams. **97%** of companies use enablement technology across multiple departments, while **3%** only use it with one team.

97%

3%

Of the respondents that only use enablement technology with one team,

51% have concerns about employee retention

(US = 42%; EU = 65%; AUS = 36%)

58% have concerns about client retention

(US = 58%; EU = 65%; AUS = 45%)

58% believe that cross-departmental enablement would enable their organization to improve client relationships

(US = 58%; EU = 65%; AUS = 45%)

65% believe that cross-departmental enablement would enable their organization to increase operational efficiency

(US = 58%; EU = 75%; AUS = 55%)

58% believe that cross-departmental enablement would enable their organization to increase revenue

(US = 50%; EU = 60%; AUS = 64%)

Acceptance of enablement technology varies between generations

Acceptance of enablement technology does not just vary by department — **67%** of respondents note that different generations are more or less accepting of enablement tools, with older generations generally more resistant to adoption.

(US = 65%; EU = 69%; AUS = 65%)

67%
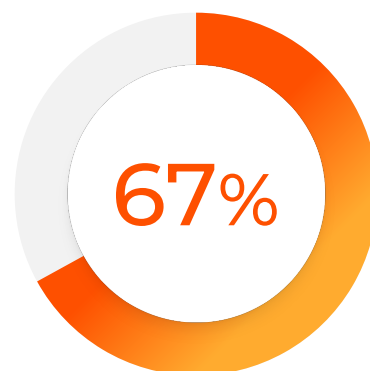
However, we predict this acceptance rate will increase in the coming years, following the trend experienced by respondents: **90%** of users say the desire for strategic, effective enablement has increased over the last 3 to 5 years — with **38%** reporting a significant increase.
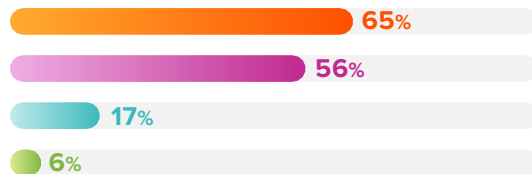
90%

38%
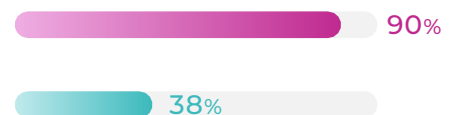
Respondent perceptions of resistance by generational cohort

The following are respondent perceptions around generational cohorts and their challenges adopting and utilizing enablement technology:
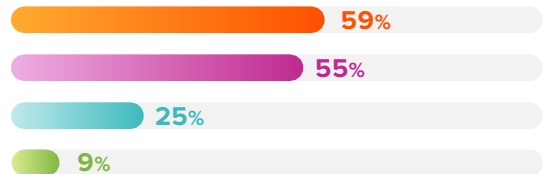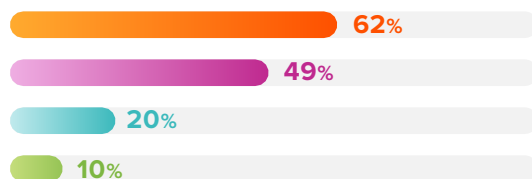
Legend
- Baby Boomers
- Generation X
- Millennials
- Generation Z

Difficulty with technology adoption
- 65%
- 56%
- 17%
- 6%

Resistance to change
- 59%
- 55%
- 25%
- 9%

Fear of technology or of feeling intimidated
- 62%
- 49%
- 20%
- 10%

Lack of familiarity with digital tools
- 60%
- 46%
- 22%
- 12%
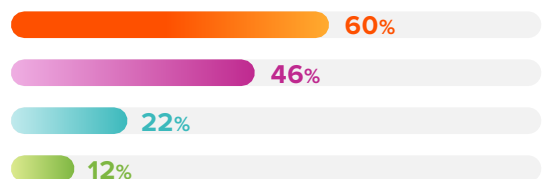
Over-reliance on manual processes
- 60%
- 45%
- 22%
- 12%
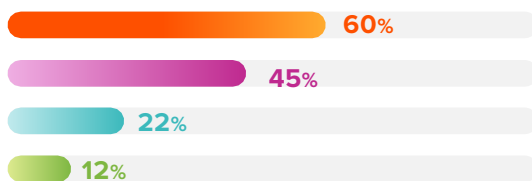
Difficulty in understanding the value of technology
- 64%
- 46%
- 20%
- 12%
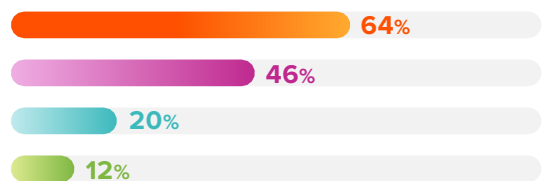
Skepticism toward the effectiveness of technology
- 60%
- 44%
- 26%
- 10%
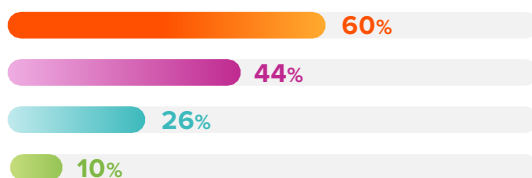
Speed of learning and adapting to new technologies
- 40%
- 38%
- 38%
- 31%
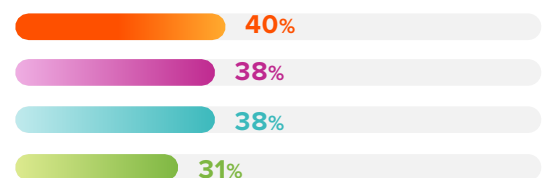
Preference for traditional learning methods
- 59%
- 55%
- 24%
- 10%
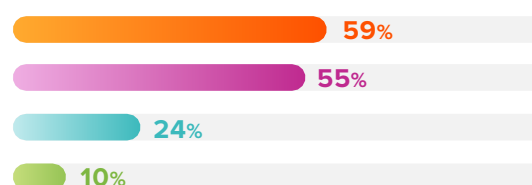
Need for more hands-on training
- 53%
- 51%
- 34%
- 21%
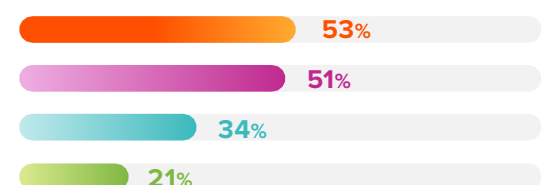
Perceptions around Baby Boomers and Generation Z differ greatly

The perception of Baby Boomers and Generation Z around difficulty with technology adoption differs greatly, as shown in the chart below. But despite these disparities, **87%** of respondents agree that more people will utilize enablement technologies in the workplace — across generations — in the next five years.

Of those who have noticed resistance to new tech from certain generations:

65% report difficulty with technology adoption from **Baby Boomers**

56% report difficulty with technology adoption from **Gen X**

38% report issues with speed of learning and adapting to new tech from **Millennials**

**31%** report issues with speed of learning and adapting to new tech from **Gen Z**

31%

38%

65%

56%
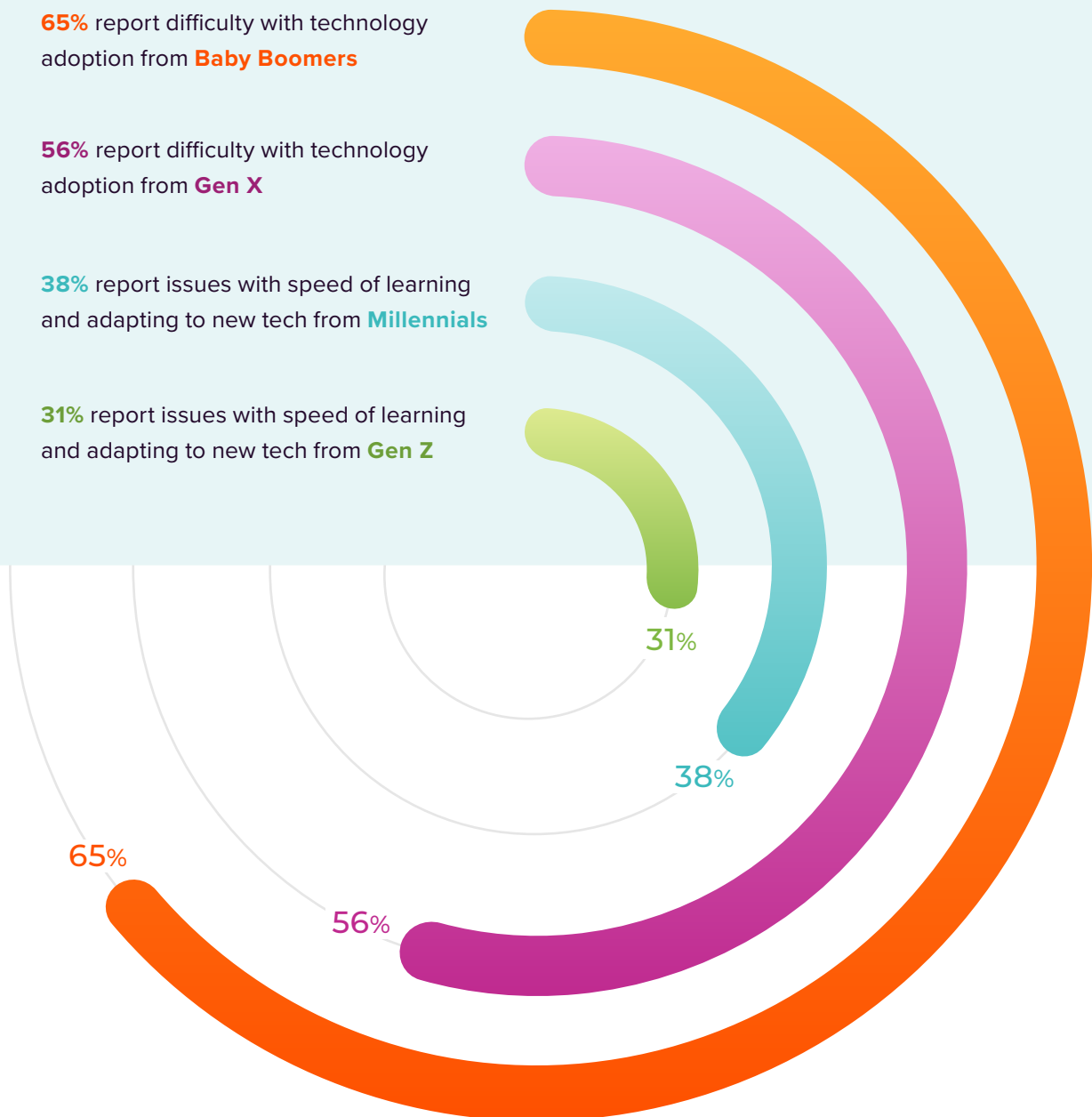
Bridging the gap with personalized learning

Achieving successful implementation of new enablement technologies necessitates a tailored approach to support the diverse needs of different generations in the workforce. In fact, **89%** of respondents agree that providing a variety of learning and training experiences encourages different generations to adapt more seamlessly and confidently navigate the technology.
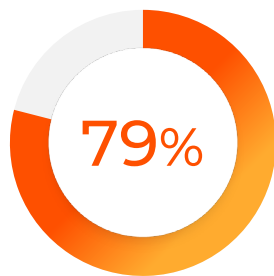
(US = 94%; EU = 85%; AUS = 87%)

When asked how to cope with adoption challenges to improve the usage of new digital tools, respondents recommended the following methods:
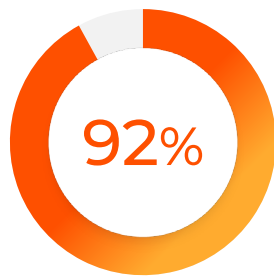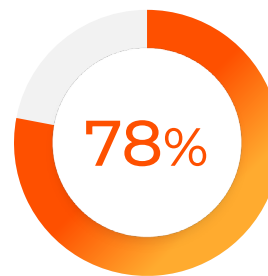
92% **Personalized tutorials**
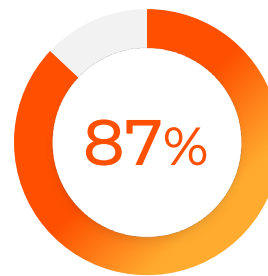
87% **One-to-one trainings**

79% **Just-in-time knowledge tools**

78% **AI-powered technology**
(for example, lessons or quizzes generated by AI copilots)

When we looked at each generation's preferred learning format, all four generations favored personalized tutorials except for Boomers, who prefer one-to-one trainings at the same rate. This may mean Boomers are more open to a variety of learning/training formats if the content is personalized to them. Boomers may be more averse to "one size fits all," mass training methods.

Understanding barriers to enablement technology adoption and embracing the Gen E ethos by implementing the solutions noted above will set organizations up for success. **Looking ahead, 92% of respondents anticipate an increase in desire for strategic enablement in the next 5 years — with 49% predicting a significant increase.**

Don't stop at Sales: How Gen E enables the entire GTM team

82%
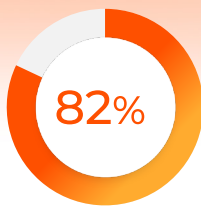
Enablement technology is generating measurable impact, with 82% of respondents estimating that enablement tools will help their company exceed its revenue targets in 2024.

(US = 86%; EU = 77%; AUS = 83%)

Time savings is also one of the most prominent value-adds from enablement technology: **92%** of those who use enablement technology say that it frees up time to focus on revenue-generating activities — a **15%** increase from our 2023 survey.

92%

↑ **15%** from 2023
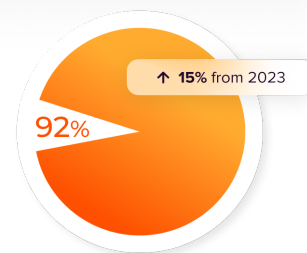
The potential efficiency gains from enablement technology are significant. **On average, respondents save 12 hours per week.** The result is more time to focus on high-value activities:

86% say enablement technology frees up time to focus on **revenue-generating activities**

86% say enablement technology frees up time to focus on **other priorities**

83% say that enablement technology gives their team a **competitive advantage**

Respondents who use enablement technology at work agree that enablement technology supports many business outcomes and GTM processes. In fact, when asked to rank their company's performance on a scale of 1 to 5 (with 5 being the highest) respondents who use enablement technology at work give their company's financial growth, the overall effectiveness of their GTM organization, and the effectiveness of enablement programs **an average score of 4**.

The following are the top ten ways enablement technology helps GTM organizations:

1 Increasing revenue

2 Increasing customer satisfaction or customer engagement

3 Operational optimization

4 Improving marketing and sales alignment

5 Increasing client retention

6 Informing planning/forecasting efforts

7 Decreasing wasted admin time

8 Faster speed to market

9 Engaging buyers

10 Providing marketing-approved content to sales

Organizations that are embracing the Gen E mindset are redefining success in profound ways. **86% of enablement tech users report that their company strategically integrates these tools into their overall business strategy, leveraging them as indispensable assets rather than mere aids.** Similarly, closing the enablement gap has become synonymous with organizational resilience, with a growing emphasis on extending enablement beyond sales to empower the GTM team.

(US = 90%; EU = 80%; AUS = 84%)

"

Enablement technology sits in the background a lot of the time, but it does have a real knock-on effect on our workload and our overall workplace happiness, due to the fact it does a lot of heavy lifting for us.

Therefore, I also found it quite surprising that 23% of participants said their companies wouldn't consider enablement technology to be a must-have. This leads me to believe that a lot of people don't truly understand the power of it, and the knock-on effect it has on overall business achievements.
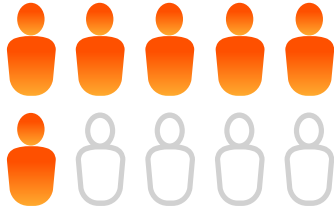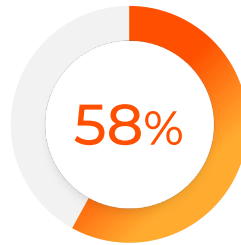
Elli Jones
Customer Marketing Manager at Cognism

Teams using enablement tools

6 in 10 Enablement users say that their company's sales team uses enablement tech

58%

While **58%** report that Marketing uses enablement tech

53%
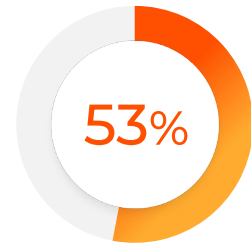
And **53%** say that enablement tech is used by customer success teams

By seamlessly integrating enablement tools across departments, Gen E can break down organizational silos that lead to behavioral black holes, rogue tools, disparate processes, content chaos, and varying expectations. Survey respondents agree, reporting that cross-org enablement has led to these top five outcomes:

1 Increased time for high-value activities

2 Greater organization alignment

3 Greater speed to market

4 Greater GTM adaptability to market changes

5 Greater GTM alignment

Attracting and retaining talent

Respondents overwhelmingly agree that enablement technology helps them do their job better, makes their job easier, and makes them more productive. And the impact goes beyond their day-to-day wins — it impacts their career trajectory, too. **84%** of enablement tech users attribute their career success to the strategic use of enablement technology, citing improved decision-making, enhanced productivity, and a sharper competitive edge. Furthermore, **84%** express heightened satisfaction in their roles, underscoring how enablement tools contribute not only to professional advancement but also to overall career fulfillment.

When looking for their next role, **82%** of respondents say that supportive internal systems and development opportunities are a priority when job searching. Sales executives were **69%** more likely than average to say this, perhaps because a sales leader's success hinges on the ability to meet their bookings targets — something that enablement is proven to support. In fact, **52%** of all respondents state that they would not work for a company that doesn't use enablement tools — up from 48% in 2023. European respondents were **24%** more likely than Americans to agree with this statement.
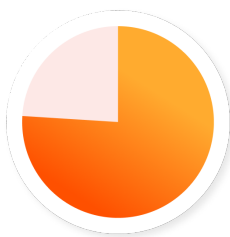
76% say their company's enablement tools will help attract new talent in 2024

78% among sales and marketing executives

80% say their enablement tools will help their organization retain more employees in 2024

88% among sales executives and **79%** among marketing executives

Improving the customer journey

91%

say enablement technology helps them provide a better buyer/customer experience

94% among sales executives and
90% among marketing executives

83%

say their enablement tools will help their business maintain client relationships in 2024
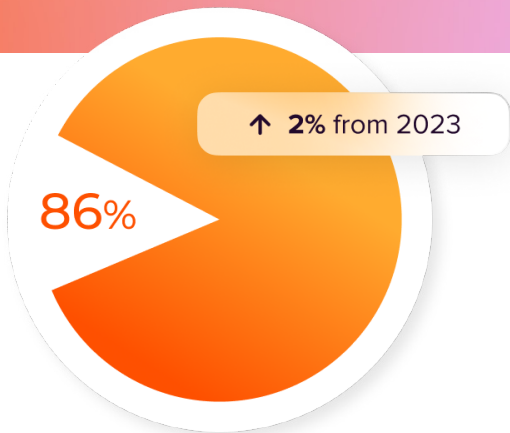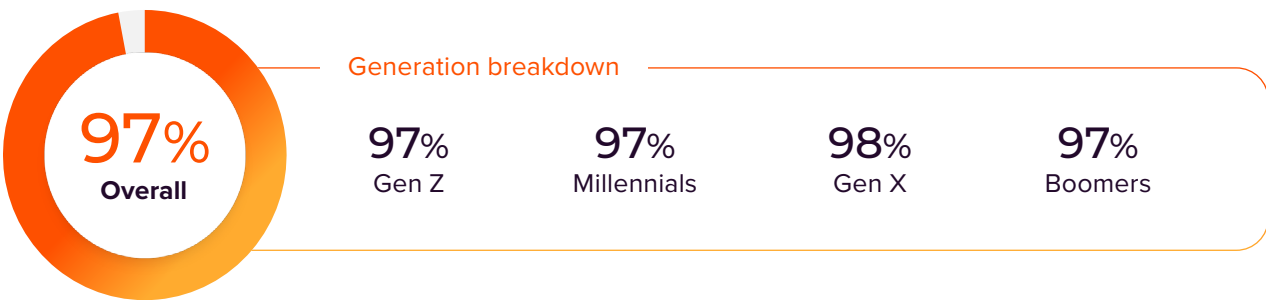

83%

say their enablement tools will help their organization grow its customer base in 2024

Gen E harnesses AI and data to drive impact

When leveraged effectively, enablement technology can be the catalyst for GTM professionals to drive strategic change within their organization. So, it's no surprise that **86%** of leaders say enablement tools will help them operate more efficiently in 2024, up from 84% in 2023.

86%

↑ **2%** from 2023

Respondents say that enablement technology makes their job easier:

97%
Overall

Generation breakdown

| **97**% Gen Z | **97**% Millennials | **98**% Gen X | **97**% Boomers |

100% of marketing executives

98% of sales executives

Respondents say that enablement technology helps them improve productivity and results:

93%

↑ **5%** from 2023

Makes them more productive, up 5% from 2023

Boomers were most likely to say increased productivity was the top benefit of enablement tech (99%)

88%

Allows them to drive stronger results

81%

Improves their confidence

GEN E HARNESSES AI AND DATA TO DRIVE IMPACT

Most recently, the use of generative AI in business has skyrocketed, and we believe these numbers will continue to grow. **77%** say they see AI as a virtual partner with great potential across their organization — and enablement users were 31% more likely than non-users to say this.

(US = 84%; EU = 73%; AUS = 74%)

79% agree that using AI-powered technology in the workplace boosts productivity. As generative AI becomes more prevalent, we predict Gen E will harness the technology to continue to drive productivity gains across the entire GTM engine.

(US = 87%; EU = 72%; AUS = 76%)

> **AI-powered enablement technology can do things we may not even realize to make our jobs easier, change habits, and save humans time. It takes care of repetitive and administrative tasks, like formatting an email list to prepare for easy import into a campaign tool. This saves hours of tedious admin work for my team.**

Sara Rogers
Senior Manager, Marketing Operations at TylerTech

Gen Z responds with lowest enthusiasm towards AI

Interestingly, we noticed a trend from the youngest generation, Gen Z, and their optimism around AI. When asked about their organization's likelihood to invest more in enablement due to the promise of AI, only **85%** of Gen Z said yes. While this is a healthy majority, it was noticeably lower than Boomers (**91%**), Gen X (**95%**), and Millennials (**97%**). Additionally, Gen Z was the least likely to view AI as virtual partner to them – only **70%** agreed with this statement, markedly lower than the older cohorts. This surprising trend may simply be due to Gen Z's lower confidence in AI as the "next big thing." This age group may also see AI as a threat to their jobs compared to their older counterparts, who have weathered many technology hype cycles and market conditions.

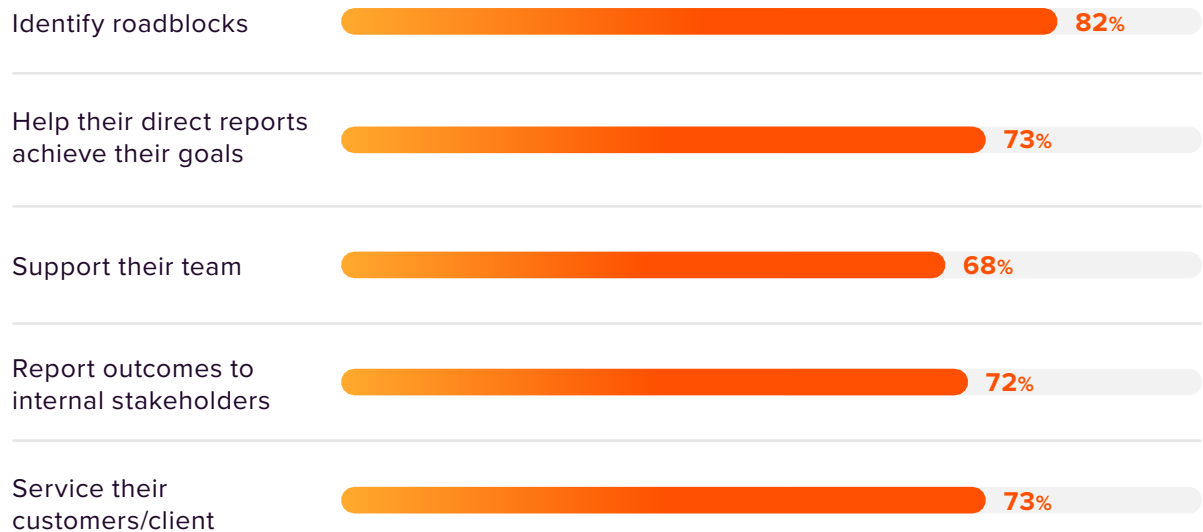Generation Enablement Report: The Rise of Enablement's Influence | 19

Today's enablement leaders are evolving to the strategic, data-driven approach characteristic of Gen E. Nearly all respondents who use enablement technology rely on analytics from their enablement tool(s) to make data-driven decisions:

Sales executives 98%
Marketing executives 92%
Respondents overall 90%

For respondents **who do not use** enablement technology, the lack of data to inform decisions creates challenges:

They say it's difficult to ...

Identify roadblocks 82%

Help their direct reports achieve their goals 73%

Support their team 68%

Report outcomes to internal stakeholders 72%

Service their customers/client 73%

Respondents strongly believe that decreasing enablement technology spend would adversely impact their businesses:

57% say it would lead to lower revenue

100% of marketing executives say it would lead to lower customer retention

57% say it would lead to lower employee retention

60% are concerned it would lead to operational inefficiencies

Meanwhile, respondents who do not use enablement technology report spending too much time on admin activities (**26%**) and having difficulty increasing revenue (**20%**).

Conclusion

Across the globe, sales, marketing, enablement, and customer success leaders alike are joining Gen E, using enablement technology as a strategic lever to support critical business outcomes like retaining customers, upskilling teams, closing deals faster, and growing revenue.

Findings from this study demonstrate the vast potential of enablement technology and its transformative impact on the business. For many organizations, maximizing success will come down to understanding adoption barriers and bridging the gap between generations with personalized training. Small steps can yield big gains, enabling organizations to get the most out of their investment and exceed their revenue targets.

Speak with our team to join Generation Enablement today.

About Seismic

Seismic is the global leader in enablement, helping organizations engage customers, enable teams, and ignite revenue growth. The Seismic Enablement Cloud™ is the most powerful, unified enablement platform that equips customer-facing teams with the right skills, content, tools, and insights to grow and win. From the world's largest enterprises to startups and small businesses, more than 2,000 organizations around the globe trust Seismic for their enablement needs. Seismic is headquartered in San Diego with offices across North America, Europe, and Australia.

To learn more, visit **Seismic.com** and follow us on **LinkedIn**, **X (formerly Twitter)** and **Instagram**.

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