



GFAFBTM

NGA Glass Fabricator Conference



THE FUTURE OF GLASS
FABRICATION HAPPENS HERE

JUN 14-17, 2026

CHICAGO

PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE

Decoding the Generational Trends
Shaping the Next Era

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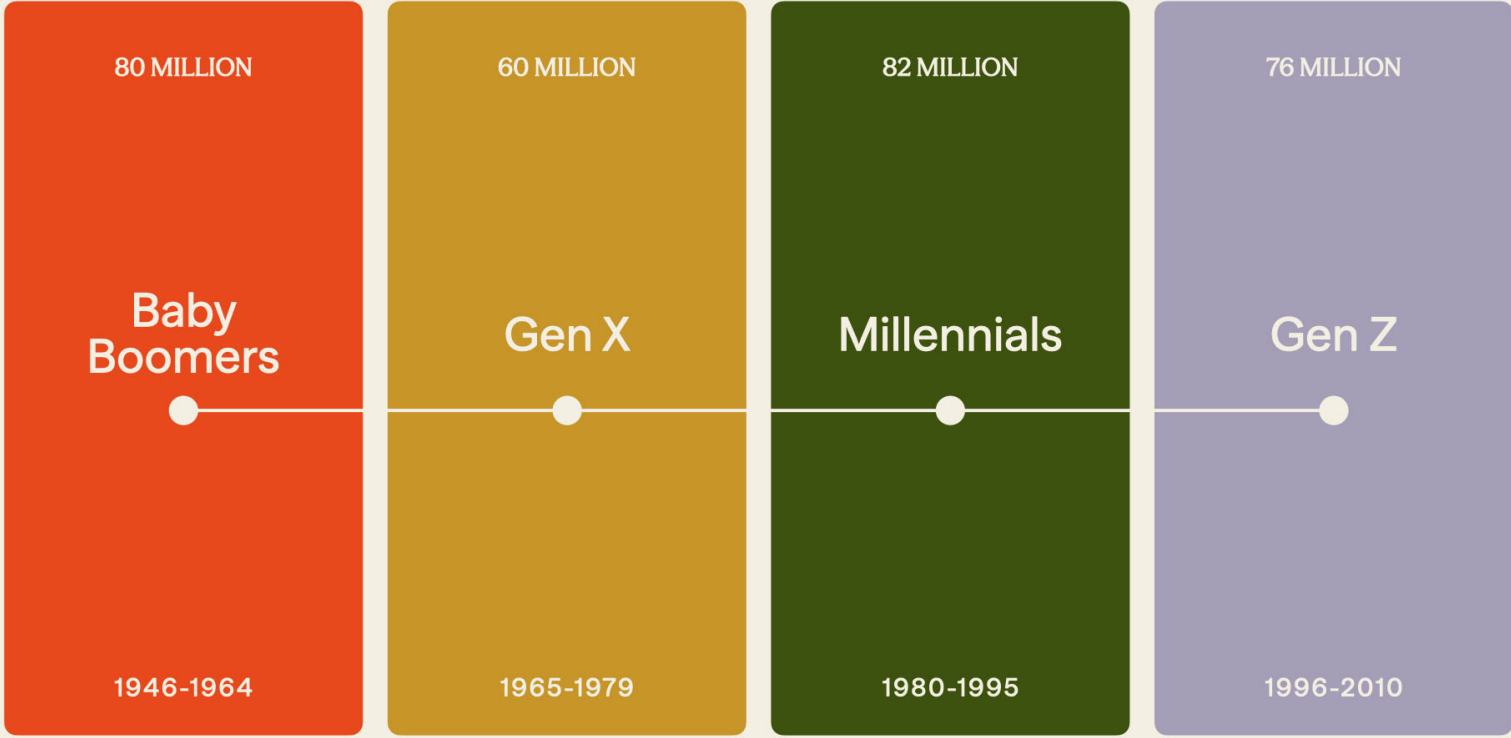


KIM LEAR
Generations Expert
Inlay Insights

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BABY BOOMERS 1946-1964



BEC
CONTRACTORS
NGA

When leaders say “they don’t have a good work ethic” what they usually mean is:

When leaders say “they don’t have a good work ethic” what they usually mean is:

Their *default behaviors* don’t match our *unspoken standards*

• CC

How can you create a shared definition of “work ethic?”

**WHAT DO YOU DO?
STOP TALKING ABOUT “WORK ETHIC” AND START TALKING ABOUT:**

• CC

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Effort signals: How do you show you're engaged?

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How can you mentor most effectively?

“Wisdom doesn’t come from experience. It comes from reflecting on experience. Between ages 25 and 75, the correlation between age and wisdom is zero. Gaining insight and perspective is not about the number of years you’ve lived. It’s about the number of lessons you’ve learned.”

ADAM GRANT

GENERATION X 1965-1979



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GENERATION X

1965-1979



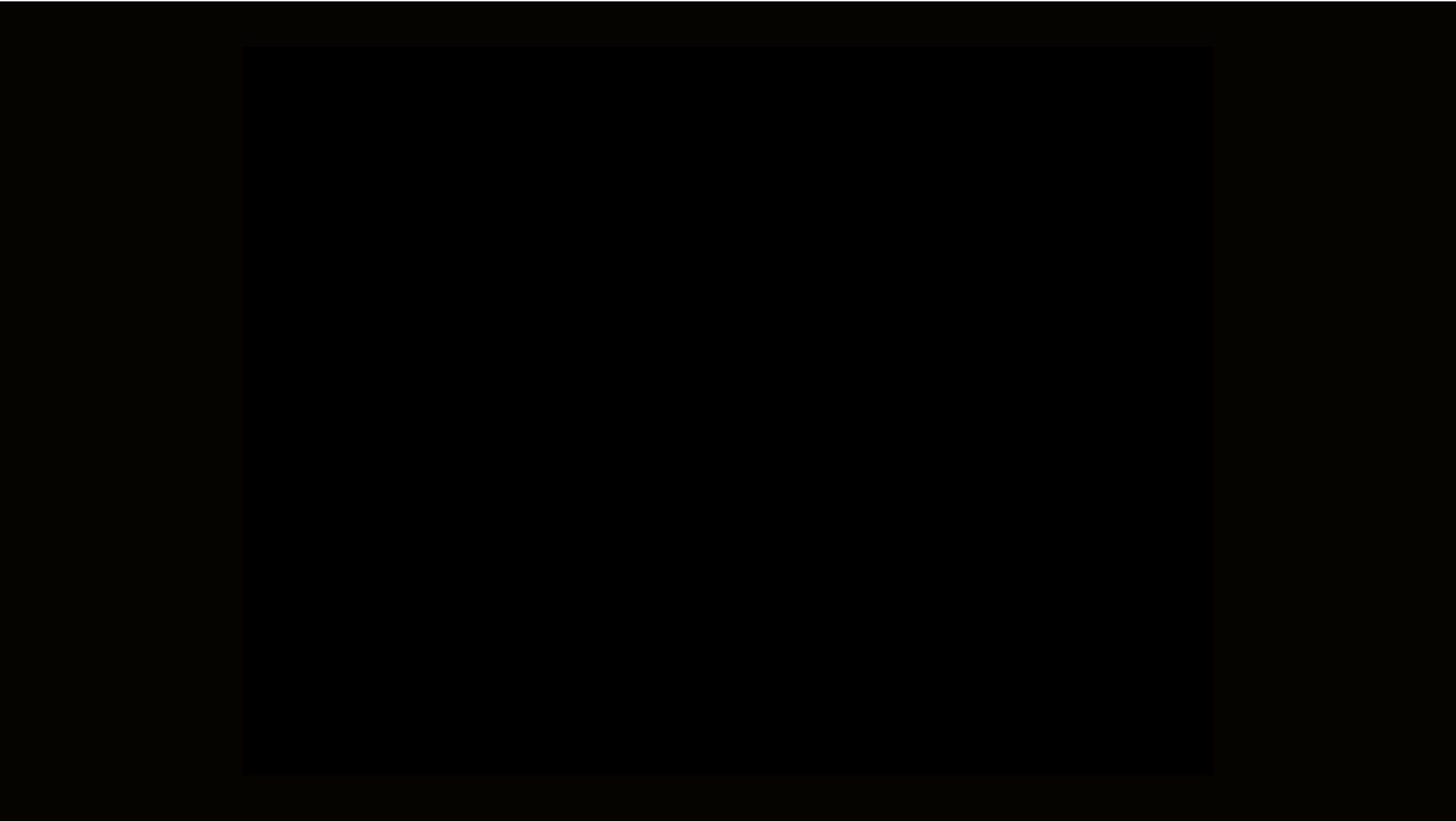
Skeptical



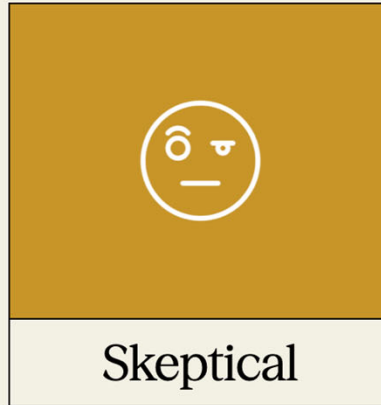
Independent



Entrepreneurial



GENERATION X
1965-1979



• cc

How do you deliver feedback and communicate more effectively?

WHAT DO YOU DO?

MAKE “INVISIBLE RULES” VISIBLE, AS EXPLICITLY AS POSSIBLE

Write a one-pager called: What “Great” Looks Like on This Team

- Response time expectations
- What “owning” a task means
- What the differences are between “done” and “draft”
- How proactive someone should be
- What earns trust here

WHAT DO YOU DO?

SAY:

None of this is obvious. I don't want you guessing what we value. I want to make it explicit to help you succeed.

WHAT DO YOU DO? SET EXPECTATIONS AS MUTUAL COMMITMENTS, NOT JUST DEMANDS

SAY:

Here's what I commit to: clear priorities, fast feedback, and no surprises.

Here's what I need from you: proactive communication, visible ownership, and high-quality first drafts.

MILLENNIALS 1980-1995





chrome

MILLENNIALS

1980–1995



Collaborative



Empowered



Risk-Averse



In Search of Meaning

THE AGE OF Authenticity



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AUTHENTICITY IS ABOUT BRINGING
YOUR
WHOLE SELF
TO WORK

LEADERSHIP DEMANDS THAT YOU
BRING YOUR
BEST SELF
TO WORK

• CO

How do you create shared expectations about authority?

WHAT DO YOU DO?

USE BOUNDARIES TO AVOID ACCIDENTAL CULTURE SETTING

THE RISK:

Whatever a senior leader vents about or fixates on gets multiplied through the organization.

- Complain about workload → Normalize burnout culture
- Stress about uncertainty → Amplify anxiety
- Overshare frustration with peers/board/customers → Endorse that behavior

WHAT DO YOU DO?

DECIDE WHICH EMOTIONS ARE FOR WHICH ROOM

Private space (coach, therapist, spouse, friend): fear, doubt (unless this impacts performance or safety), anger, exhaustion, venting

Leadership space: clarity, priorities, tradeoffs, direction

**WHAT DO YOU DO?
ASK YOURSELF THIS QUESTION:**

• CO
If everyone copied how I'm handling this,
would culture get better or worse?

GENERATION Z 1996-2010



	1994	2024
Avg. Time Online Daily	0 HR 0MIN	7 HRS 3MIN
Debt As % of GDP	64.2%	119.6%
Cost of College	\$12,140	\$24,030
Drug Overdose	7,828	>112,000

Bruce mehlman data compilation
Full source material in follow up material

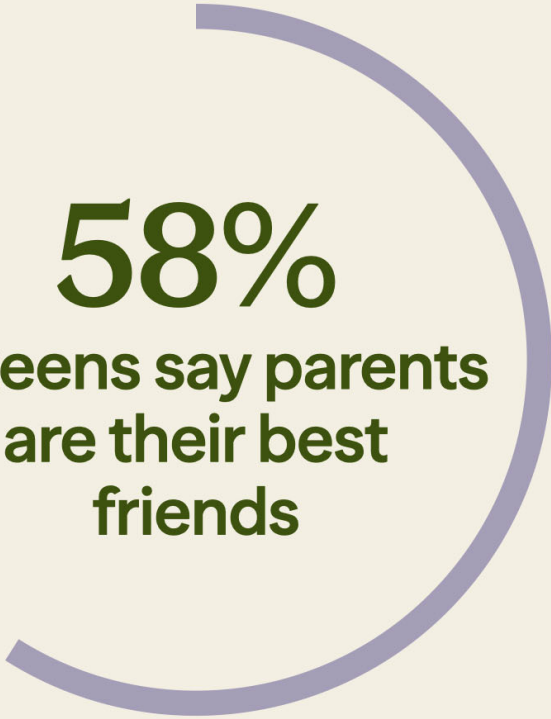
PARENT/CHILD Friendships



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58%
of teens say parents
are their best
friends

SPARKS AND HONEY: GEN Z TEENS, 2018

Slow Life Strategy



• C

What does this mean for you?

How do you recruit the best talent?

WHAT DO YOU DO? MAKE YOUR DEVELOPMENT STORY CONCRETE

VAGUE:

We invest in our people.

CONCRETE:

- Every new-hire gets a 90-day ramp plan
- You'll have a dedicated manager and mentor
- Here's what people who started in this role are doing 3 years later
- Here's how we decide who gets promoted

WHAT DO YOU DO?

ASSUME YOUR OFFER WILL BE WORKSHOPPED AT THE KITCHEN TABLE

- Your reputation will be Googled
- Glassdoor will be read
- Reddit threads will be skimmed
- Compensation will be compared
- Stability will be questioned
- Manager quality will matter more than you think

WELLBEING *Revolution*



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**JUST
SAY
NO**



**THIS IS A
BRAIN ON
DRUGS.**



**ANY
QUESTIONS?**



If you don't make time
for **wellness**.



You'll be forced to make
time for **illness**.

WHAT AM I WILLING TO
SACRIFICE
FOR MY
JOB?

• C

What does this mean for you?

*People rarely go from good to great
because they suddenly become more
motivated.*

*People rarely go from good to great
because they suddenly become more
motivated.*

*They do it because the context finally
makes extra effort feel worth it.*

WHAT DO YOU DO?

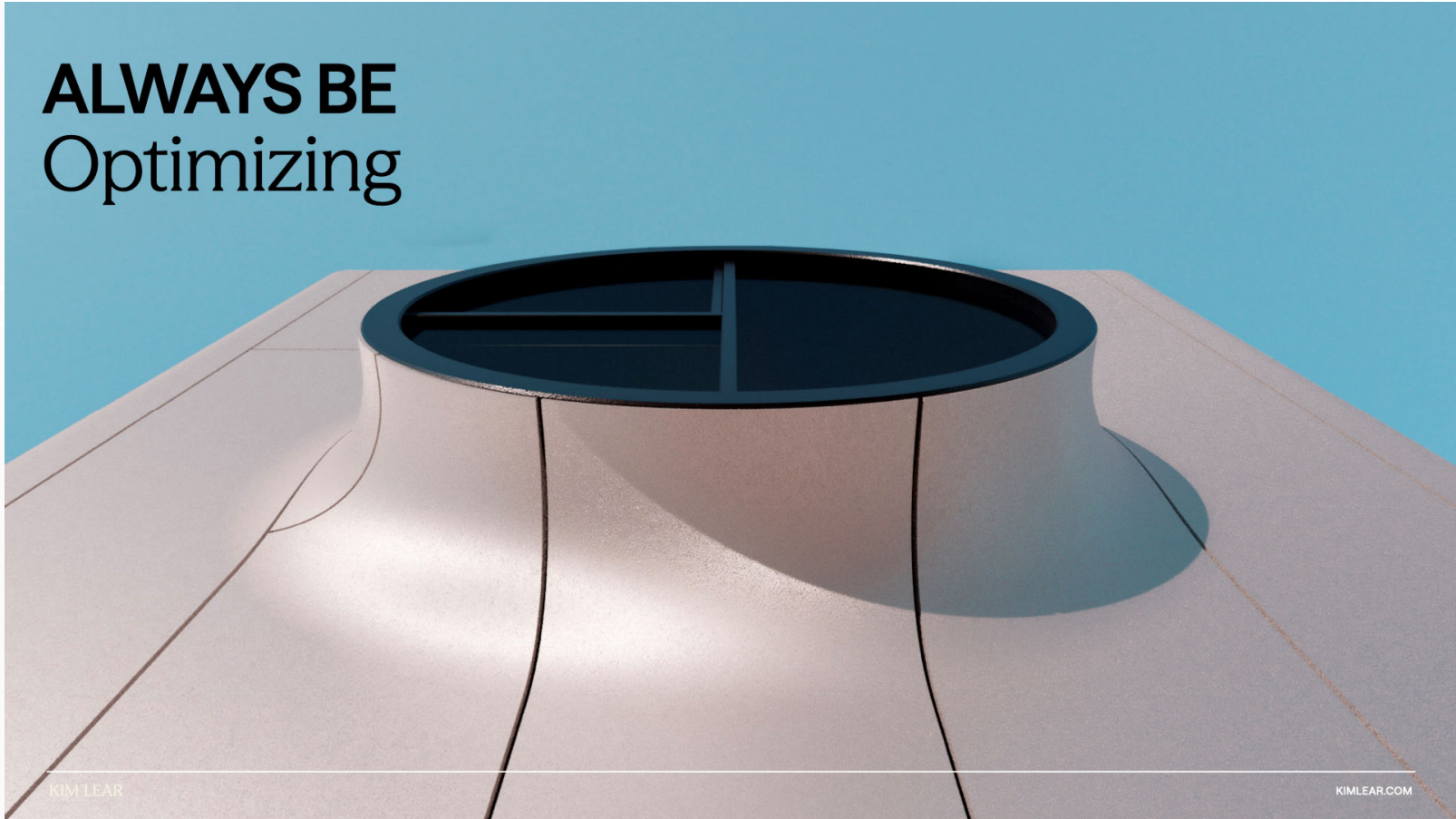
PUBLICLY REWARD STRETCH, NOT JUST SPEED

If your culture only celebrates fast turnarounds and constant availability, you train people to optimize for output, not excellence

START SPOTLIGHTING :

- Thoughtful work
- Craft
- Judgement
- Anticipating problems

ALWAYS BE Optimizing



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CONVENIENT

Involving little
trouble or effort

OPTIMAL

To make as
effective, perfect,
or useful as possible

CONVENIENT



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OPTIMAL



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• CC

What does this mean for you?

• CO

How do you create more optimal workplaces?

To a digital native worker, bad processes don't feel annoying. Bad processes feel unethical. Young people feel like you're treating human effort and time as an infinite, disposable resource.

**WHAT DO YOU DO?
ASK YOURSELF:**

Where are smart people doing dumb, repeatable work?

WHAT DO YOU DO?

ASK YOURSELF:

Where does momentum die?

- Where do things stall?
- Where do we lose energy?
- Where do handoffs get fuzzy?
- Where do decisions get re-litigated?

Thank you!

Kim Lear

kim@KimLear.com

Kids These Days on Substack



QUESTIONS?

Please use the mic stands at the sides of the room or raise your hand and a runner will bring a mic to you. All sessions are being recorded, so we want to make sure every question is heard clearly by everyone in the room and those watching later.

THANK YOU!



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