MCDONALD’S UK
BRIDGING THE GENERATION GAP
THE IMPACT OF MULTIGENERATIONAL WORKING ON BUSINESS, PEOPLE AND CUSTOMERS
This summer, 16-year-olds born in the year 2000 will enter the workforce for the first time. With this, McDonald’s is one of the UK’s largest employers and provides jobs for people aged from 16 to 91. To better understand the impact of truly multigenerational working, McDonald’s has brought together statisticians, researchers and its own research and insights team to understand the value of an age-diverse workforce to its restaurant teams and to its customers.

**WELCOME TO THE YEAR OF MULTIGENERATIONAL WORKING.**

— CLAIRE HALL, CHIEF PEOPLE OFFICER, MCDONALD’S UK

“First and foremost, McDonald’s is a people business: and this is an exciting moment for us. As we welcome the newest cohort of young workers in to the business, it’s important to consider the very different things that our people need from their workplace.

Thousands of young people get their first taste of work with us every year, working parents value the flexibility we provide, and we have a growing number of older workers. This blend of personalities, experience and backgrounds is what makes working at McDonald’s fun and valuable. Our oldest worker, Bill Dudley, recently celebrated his 91st birthday, still happily working his regular four-hour shift alongside colleagues aged from 16 upwards.

Today, McDonald’s is half way through its biggest ever restaurant refurbishment programme, which will place more people in front of the counter than ever before. As part of the multi-million pound investment, our employees will greet customers at the front of house to help people order from digital touch-screen kiosks and create an even more welcoming and enjoyable experience.

We also recently announced plans to create over 5,000 new jobs by the end of 2017. In order to attract the best talent and continue to provide good jobs to those already with us, it is vital that we listen to our customers and our people. All of our people contribute a huge amount to our business, our customers and each other. It is thanks to them that we have achieved 10 years of UK business growth.

Back in 2008, McDonald’s commissioned a Lancaster University study to analyse the value of older workers to the business, and found that overall levels of customer satisfaction were statistically significantly higher in those restaurants with one or more mature employees.

Now for the first time, we have quantified the impact of not only the oldest workers within our business, but the full age span of people and the benefits of them working side-by-side as part of a multigenerational workforce.

We found the benefits to be far-reaching. Our people are happier in their jobs and our customers report a better restaurant experience when different generations are working together.

As life expectancy continues to rise and increasing numbers of older people choose to work later in life, the potential for a multigenerational workforce becoming the norm presents a significant opportunity for UK plc. I hope that our research gives employers food for thought and encourages them to recognise the very real possibilities of multigenerational workforces.”
In order to understand the impact of having multigenerational workforce, and the expectations that workers have of their job and their employer, McDonald’s brought together statisticians, researchers and its own research and insights team.

**THE VIEW OF McDoNAlD’S EMPLOYEES AND CUSTOMERS**

McDonald’s ran an employee survey in March 2016 of 32,000 restaurant staff across 381 restaurants.

A primary focus of the study was to understand the role of age ranges and older age groups within the restaurants. Whilst the majority of restaurants’ employees are under the age of 30, McDonald’s is still one of the largest employers of older age ranges in the country and therefore accounting for a diverse workforce.

Of the restaurants included in the study, 94% had at least one employee over the age of 50 and 51% had someone over the age of 60.

Analysis showed that where restaurants have a diverse age range of people working a shift together, employees were up to 10% happier in their jobs and had a more positive outlook towards McDonald’s role in their developmental and career growth needs, as well as their overall wellbeing.

In order to understand whether the impact of an age diverse workforce is felt on the opposite side of the restaurant counter, McDonald’s questioned nearly 1,000 regular customers drawn from across the country.

The survey found that an overwhelming majority (84%) like to see a mix of ages in the restaurant team and most (60%) expect better service as a result.

Customers are not disappointed, and of those who see a difference the majority do prefer the experience with just under half (44%) saying it created a good atmosphere in the restaurant.

**KEY FINDINGS**

To continue to attract people from across the broadest possible age spectrum, McDonald’s undertook extensive qualitative research to gauge the views of 5,000 people born between the years of 1900 and 2000 on the key components of a good job in 2016.

- **AGE MIX:** When asked to describe the type of people they prefer to work alongside, 58% said that working with people of different ages is their top priority. This is felt most keenly among the oldest groups (67% of those born between 1900 and 1964) and the youngest (57% of those born in 2000).

- **MENTORING:** There’s a clear desire for support and mentorship between the generations; 79% of the UK’s youngest workers say it’s important for them to have an older mentor in the workplace, while 74% of older workers value the opportunity to coach younger colleagues.

- **PROGRESSION AND PROMOTION:** Most prevalent among the youngest workers, 43% of 16 year olds joining the workforce now expect plentiful opportunities to grow within their organisation. Their ambition is echoed by almost half of the generation that precedes them (gen Y, 48%)

- **FLEXIBILITY:** An employer that provides flexibility to work the hours and shifts that suit their lives is also of great importance; 86% of workers say that having the flexibility and time to devote to their interests and life outside of work is essential.

- **FRIENDS:** McDonald’s found consensus across the generations when asking what matters to workers. Working in a social and friendly environment with the opportunity to make lasting friendships is a top priority for all groups.
KATIE TURNLEY, AGED 20, FOLKESTONE
Katie joined us three years ago, aged 17, working part-time during her A-levels. She was able to take several weeks off to study for her exams. Now at university studying veterinary medicine, Katie continues to work part-time.

She says: “I work part time at McDonald’s whilst also studying veterinary medicine and science at university. I’ve always wanted to be a vet, and it’s really useful how I can balance my studies whilst gaining experience of the world of work. I love working with different generations, people aren’t funny at all about being taught things by younger people and I’ve learnt so much off them about practical things like mortgages. We even call the Branch Manager at our restaurant McMum!”

ANNEMARIE MATHER, AGED 44, LIVERPOOL
AnneMarie started working at McDonald’s part-time when she was 16-years-old. She is now an Operations Consultant and has completed a foundation degree with McDonald’s.

She says: “I joined McDonald’s when I was 16 years old, and I’ve worked at a lot of different restaurants in my time here. I’ve done my Foundation Degree with McDonald’s and I’m now a [insert job title]. What I love most is seeing the great sense of community amongst workers at McDonald’s, with people of all ages working together and learning from each other. People like my dad, Kenneth, who works one day a week at McDonald’s and really enjoys meeting people of different ages and from different backgrounds.”

MIANNA DODD, AGED 34, STRETFORD
Mianna started working part-time for McDonald’s when she was 16 years old and has been with us ever since. She is now a business manager and completed the McDonald’s foundation degree.

She says: “I started working at McDonald’s when I was 16 years old, just after I finished my GCSEs, and I’ve been working there ever since. I’m now a Business Manager and working here has unlocked so many opportunities for me, including completing a Foundation Degree and being a member of the management team for the restaurant at London Olympics in 2012. Although I don’t have any kids, I value the flexibility a job at McDonald’s gives me as I help my sister out with her children and I can easily pick them up from school or go to sports day. I know that many of the mums I do work with also appreciate having a job that can fit around them.”

SABIR ALUM, AGED 17, LUTON
Sabir has been working at McDonald’s since December and is training to become a crew trainer. He enjoys how flexible the workplace is, he is able to manage his shifts around his studies.

He says: “I’ve been working at McDonald’s since December 2015 as a way for me to make some money. I’m currently studying at college, so I wanted my first job to be somewhere that would offer me flexible hours for my study schedule. The team are really friendly and welcoming, and my cousin also works here too which is great. Sometimes it doesn’t really feel like work because we all get along so well. It’s nice to have the older workers there too because they’ve taught me life skills I didn’t really know before, like personal finance. There’s loads of training available, so I’ve been making the most of that and am now working towards becoming a Crew Trainer.”

KENNETH CLARKE, AGED 74, LIVERPOOL
Kenneth’s daughter AnneMarie is an operations consultant for McDonald’s. After Kenneth retired from his job in construction, AnneMarie suggested he continue to use his skills by working as a maintenance man at McDonald’s. Kenneth joined us eight years ago, working one day a week. His granddaughter Lauren also works at the same restaurant.

He says: “I really enjoy working at McDonald’s and have done for all the years I have been there. My favourite part about the job is working with all the young people and interacting with all the lovely customers. They keep me young and give me a good laugh. Working one day a week works really well for me and I am thankful McDonald’s are so flexible with my shifts. I really enjoy working for the same company as AnneMarie and Lauren as it means we continue to have things in common and can give each other tips.”

ROISIN O’GRADY, AGED 17, WOOLWICH
Roisin works in our Woolwich restaurant and especially enjoys the teamwork and atmosphere among the team.

She says: “Since working at McDonald’s, I’ve fallen in love with the team and really enjoy coming to work every day. The people here are so friendly and it’s like working with one big family; we all respect each other and look out for one another. It’s hard work, especially when you’ve got hungry customers, but the skills I’ve learnt and people I’ve met make it more than worthwhile.”
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

EMPLOYEES
A survey of over 32,000 McDonald’s employees across 381 restaurants was carried out in March 2016 in order to understand employees’ happiness and wellbeing. Additional analysis by Gain Theory.

CUSTOMERS
An online survey of a nationally representative sample of 835 regular McDonald’s customers was completed in May 2016.

GENERAL UK WORKFORCE
YouGov plc. carried out a qualitative survey among 4,202 adults born between the years of 1900 – 1998 between 17 - 19 May 2016. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all UK adults (aged 18+). Research Bods conducted the same survey among 948 adults aged 16, born in 2000. Work was carried out between 19 – 24 May 2016.