



## How Story-First HR Can Transform Gen Z Engagement at Work

Gen Z believes on-the-job training is the fastest route to career growth—here's how HR leaders can utilise short-form, story-driven video content to help achieve those aims and strengthen the workforce.

By Puneet Rajput



India's workforce is undergoing a rapid generational transition, with Gen Z poised to make up nearly 27% of the working population by 2025. This cohort is entering organisations with a markedly different mindset shaped by digital fluency, constant connectivity, shorter attention cycles, and an expectation for authenticity in every interaction. Traditional HR communication models, from long onboarding decks to dense policy documents, are increasingly losing their relevance. Gen Z wants clarity, purpose, and storytelling. They want to feel engaged, not instructed. This shift calls for a new communication style, and micro-drama marketing offers an unexpected yet high-impact answer.

### Understanding Gen Z's New Workplace Expectations

According to a Deloitte India study, 94% of Gen Z professionals believe that on-the-job learning is the fastest route to career growth, while 85% say they invest time every week in upskilling. A global Deloitte survey further notes that 89% of them link job satisfaction directly to whether their organisation provides meaningful work. These findings paint a clear picture that this generation expects continuous growth, clarity of purpose, and communication that feels relevant, human, and action-oriented. For HR, it signals the need to move beyond information-heavy formats toward experiences that mirror how Gen Z learns, engages, and makes career decisions.

A simple, relatable scene can often explain a behaviour or policy far better than a long presentation. Light cliff-hangers keep attention high, and when the core message sits inside the narrative instead of being stated upfront, employees tend to remember it

longer. The most effective formats are often the simplest—quick clips shot on phones, featuring real teams, shared through everyday channels like WhatsApp or Teams. Gen Z responds to authenticity, not production gloss. Used well, these micro-stories help HR move from broadcasting information to creating shared experiences that feel relevant, human, and easy to act on.

### **Why Micro-Drama Marketing Fits Gen Z's Content Behaviour**

India's content ecosystem has simultaneously undergone a dramatic evolution. The micro-drama content market built on short, episodic, emotionally engaging stories is valued at USD 400–500 million today and is expected to grow nearly tenfold by 2030. This format thrives because it aligns naturally with Gen Z's consumption patterns: fast-paced, relatable, and immersive. When applied thoughtfully in the workplace, these same attributes can make communication more intuitive, memorable, and emotionally resonant. Micro-drama marketing reimagines HR communication by "showing" rather than "telling." A 45-second scene demonstrating feedback behaviour or a short episode illustrating a compliance dilemma can embed expectations more effectively than dense presentations. Narrative-based content taps into behavioural science principles, improving recall, emotional engagement, and actionability.

Short-form video culture has reshaped how young audiences absorb information, and micro-drama fits naturally into this shift. Platforms built on quick, expressive content have trained Gen Z to expect storytelling that is sharp, visual, and emotionally charged. For workplaces, this creates a powerful opportunity. Micro-dramas can bridge attention gaps, simplify complex ideas, and deliver messages in a format that feels instinctively familiar to this generation. When woven into internal communication from leadership messaging to culture-building and peer learning, short episodic stories create stronger recall, deeper emotional connection and a shared sense of understanding across teams.

### **How Micro-Dramas Strengthen Learning, Culture, and Change Adoption**

The impact of micro-dramas spans the entire employee lifecycle. In onboarding, episodic stories help new hires experience values, collaboration patterns, and culture in motion accelerating assimilation for a generation that connects best through lived examples. In learning and development, micro-dramas simplify complex concepts like leadership, emotional intelligence, ethical practice, or client management into digestible moments.

This approach is equally effective in operational and compliance-heavy contexts. Stories depicting safety scenarios, quality-first decisions, or conflict-resolution challenges create sharper recall and reduce ambiguity. For sales and customer-facing teams, dramatized workplace moments can influence daily behaviour far more organically than policy manuals. Micro-dramas are also powerful tools for change management. Whether introducing a digital system, restructuring teams or shifting to hybrid work, short episodic content helps employees understand the "why," lowers resistance, and humanises leadership. Research shows that employees who understand the rationale behind changes are thrice as likely to support them.

Crucially, organisations don't need high-end production to adopt this approach. Authenticity matters more than polish. Scripts inspired by real workplace moments can be filmed simply, using employees themselves as characters something Gen Z finds more credible. Distributing these stories through WhatsApp groups, internal feeds, LMS modules, or MS Teams ensures they integrate naturally into daily routines. Over time, this builds a communication culture that feels personal, trust-led, and emotionally intelligent.

Gen Z is reshaping workplace expectations. To engage them effectively, HR must move from transactional communication to emotional storytelling. Micro-drama marketing provides a modern, agile, and culturally relevant way to build connection, embed

provides a modern, agile, and culturally relevant way to build connection, embed culture, and shape behaviour in a language this generation intuitively understands. In an attention-scarce world, stories become strategy and HR becomes the storyteller that holds the workforce together.

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