

# Designing the Gen M Enterprise



The MobileIron Gen M Survey asked more than 3,500 professionals across France, Germany, Japan, Spain, the U.K., and the U.S. about how they feel about mixing their work and personal lives. The study uncovered a new demographic, called "Gen M," that relies heavily on mobile technologies for both work and personal activities. Men age 18-34 and people with children under 18 in their household best represent this hyper-connected group.

Gen M does more than a quarter (26%) of its work on smartphones or tablets and uses mobile extensively for "shadow tasking," or blending personal and work activities throughout the day. 82% of Gen M does at least one personal task on mobile per day during work hours, and 64% does at least one work task on mobile per day during personal hours. Shadow tasking allows Gen M to stay connected to personal responsibilities during work and business responsibilities after work.

However, 61% of Gen M suffers from mobile guilt when receiving work communications during personal hours and 58% suffers from mobile guilt when receiving personal communications during work hours. Shadow tasking is very important to Gen M, and 60% would leave their job if their employer did not allow any remote work at all or restricted their ability to do personal tasks at work. Gen M also values privacy, and 29% would leave their job if their employer could access personal emails, texts, photos, or videos on their smartphones or tablets.

## Mobility fundamentally changes how we work and live

Gen M behavior is a window into the changing work style of the enterprise. The news is full of headlines about the latest mobile gadgets and how people are using them at work and home. However, the real story, the big overarching theme that gets lost in the barrage of headlines about technology, is that mobile is changing the very meaning of work and its place in our lives.

*We live in a hyper-connected culture. Work style is changing at a fundamental level, especially for a new group of workers called Generation Mobile, or "Gen M."*

**gen m**

**Men age 18-34  
People with children  
under 18 at home.**



**of work done on  
smartphones or tablets.**



**does at least one  
personal task on mobile  
per day during work  
hours**



**64%  
does at least one work  
task on mobile per day  
during personal hours**

It is now possible to work anywhere at any hour in many professions. But it is equally possible to do “life” tasks and take care of our personal responsibilities anywhere at any hour as well. While we can work from home or Starbucks or a doctor’s waiting room, we can also complete personal tasks during traditional work hours in the office – reading personal email, checking to make sure the kids made it home from school, paying bills electronically, etc. The old notion of the work/life balance has given way to a continuum of work/life blending and context switching that encompasses our waking hours. We do personal tasks in the shadow of work and work tasks in the shadow of home life.

*Nearly two thirds of Gen M feels guilty when they receive work communications on personal time.*

But this shadow tasking comes at a price: mobile guilt. Gen M feels guilty about both types of shadow tasks as mobile blurs the boundary of the 9-5 work day and 5-9 personal day. Guilt stems from a mismatch between the behavioral expectations and norms of an organization or culture and the actions of an individual. The source of Gen M’s mobile guilt is most likely workplace policies that have not kept up with the pace of change in our hyper-connected culture.

### **Realigning work style expectations for Gen M**

Mobile is as much an HR program as a technology initiative, and companies must establish policies that are aligned with the way employees want to work and live.

Employers need to think about how to make it easy for employees to mix work and personal activities efficiently and without guilt while maintaining a high standard of work and fairness.

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The action plan starts with three principles:

### **Accept shifting work styles.**

To support or improve the employee experience, companies should map the daily workflows of representative employees to understand the decisions they are making to be productive. This is the raw input into the design of new policies. While these policies may need to vary by geography, due to regulation, or by employee, due to function and job status (hourly vs. salary), understanding today’s actions will better align tomorrow’s policies with both employee and company needs.

### **Revisit cultural norms.**

Connectedness done well results in employee empowerment and productivity. Connectedness done poorly results in exploitation and guilt. Open conversations around the role of shadow tasking in company culture will create transparency and encourage the feedback that is essential to refine work policies.

### **Secure data selectively.**

Almost all mobile devices will be used by employees for both work and personal tasks because, in many countries, employees are not willing to carry two phones. The company should design an information security architecture that protects business data on the mobile device without compromising the privacy of personal data, regardless of whether the phone is owned by the individual or by the organization.

### **Connected culture is a defining trait of the modern enterprise**

We are in the midst of a fundamental shift in work style thanks to mobility. This shift is not just the ability to do work tasks away from work but also personal tasks at work. Such shadow tasking can improve productivity and allow us to maintain important connections to our personal lives during traditional work hours. But company policies and norms are lagging behind this transition to a connected culture and are, as a result, creating mobile guilt across the workforce. To attract the best and brightest employees, businesses must provide the flexibility for their people to define their own balance and then do everything in their power to support those individual choices. Workplace policies that encourage responsible use instead of mobile guilt provide a foundation for the connected culture of the modern enterprise.