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## Flash in the Pan

By Don Belisle, Sr.

The converter market is quite a bit off the highs of recent years; however, it is somewhat stabile. Most of us have adjusted to the new norm of converter prices

being what they currently are. At least a lot of the volatility is gone and prices have remained within a certain "range" for the past year or so. There is a lot to be said for stability, where you know what the prices will be.

A lot of suppliers have lost thousands of dollars in volatile markets. It was very tough for the supplier to buy scrap cars thinking that their converters were worth X and after processing, they were worth .75X or even less. Some of you would call us and ask to hedge your pricing, for example, saying that you had 100 converters coming next week, so please lock in the price. This is something we are very glad to do, and it creates the ideal situation to cover the risk to the supplier. Surprisingly though, in reality, most do not lock in. This exposes them to significant risks and in some situations, this is difficult to watch.

In the volatile markets, if you were lucky enough to catch a price jump, a few would win, but your timing had to be perfect. Many, however, lost significant sums and that could have been avoided. Well, the volatility is not here now, but don't be lulled into a false sense of security

because this can change in a moment without any notice. Remember the markets are driven by fear as much as they are by supply and demand. If you see a controversial automotive market headline anywhere in the world, check in on its effect on the precious metal converter market. Doing this could save you thousands. EV car headlines are especially critical to watch!

Having been in the converter business continuously since the beginning of the converter business, we have witnessed certain cycles time and time again. When prices are high it seems as though everyone and their brother jumps into the converter business. Naturally they have unrealistic claims of having the highest prices, the best terms and blah blah, blah. The truth is that as newbies in the business, they can't possibly have the things they claim. It just doesn't make sense. Then when the markets go south, they usually disappear. We have seen this many, many times in our 35 years

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## Flash in the Pan

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processing converters.

What we are seeing now is somewhat new. We have a new startup or two trying to make a go of it in this down market. Of course, they have a lot of the same claims as the other startups have which is what you would expect. We have found that their foot in the door prices have been all over the place, with no rhyme or reason. The thing that we hadn't seen before is that these new startups are using some of the former employees of previously

failed startups as buyers! This really makes no sense since these buyers drove their previous startups out of business. We've seen them come, and we've seen them go. The cycle continues. We ask all suppliers to please be careful and not fall for the latest BS. We very much appreciate and reward our loyal suppliers with consistently high prices and security, knowing that we will be here long into the future.

Until next month, be profitable and stay in touch



## Recycled Vans for Homeless Veterans

By D.J. Harrington

We, as an industry, have joined ranks together to give two vans to the Tunnel to Towers Foundation. On April 11, 2025, in Orlando, Florida, URG, Team PRP and ARA are presenting two 6-8 passenger vans during the URG, Team PRP Annual Training Conference in Orlando, Florida.

The Tunnel to Towers Foundation, along with all of us in the recycling industry, want to eradicate veteran homelessness. They can't do it without all of us doing our part to help. Tunnel to Towers also has Veterans Villages in Houston Texas, Riverside California, and Phoenix Arizona. They have broken ground in Bradenton, Florida and Mableton, Georgia. The Mableton location is located approximately an hour's drive from my home in Georgia.

Before the end of this year, Tunnel to Towers will start additional Veterans Villages in Denver, Colorado. Nick Daurio, Past President of ARA is working on a van with a ramp and disabled person's lift is already installed. Okay, helping others will sometimes require extra effort. So, here's my next challenge. I discovered that installing wheelchair ramps isn't cheap these days. Therefore, I need to raise \$15-\$20K dollars to make two vans wheelchair accessible. If some of you have been looking for an opportunity to help but didn't have a van to donate, here's how you can help today. Give me a call at 770-301-4122 or email me at [dj@djsays.com](mailto:dj@djsays.com), and I will be happy to give you the name of the company for which you make your check payable. If all of us give something towards this goal, we can get it done very easily. Nothing would give

me more pleasure than to meet this monetary goal well before April. We plan on getting bids from three different companies that can install disabled ramps and lifts into these vans.

If by chance you already know a company that can do this, let us know soon. Also, it certainly would help if

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## Recycled Vans for Homeless Veterans *continued from page 2*

you would talk to as many people as you can on our behalf. You might know someone outside the industry who's looking for a way to help homeless veterans. Tunnel to Towers will be opening 5 to 7 centers each year. Therefore, we need to talk about this need to as many people as possible so they can also get involved

Now, get ready for the best conference that is just around the corner. URG and Team PRP are moving forward with their largest training conference ever. Remember, you don't have to be a member of URG or Team PRP to come to Orlando, Florida on April 10th-12th for this premier event of the year. This year, URG and Team PRP, along with ARA, are presenting these two vans to Tunnel to Towers. It will be a joyous occasion as our gifts will help homeless veterans move about in their areas with the transportation they so greatly deserve. Speaking of what they deserve, you deserve to participate in this conference too. This Number #1 Conference has award-winning speakers, authors and coaches that know this industry inside and out. You don't want to miss this time to educate your team.

There will be a full schedule of training sessions by industry experts on a wide range of topics from team building to sales, from compliance to marketing and many other topics. The Annual Golf Tournament will help raise funds for the URG Scholarship Foundation which is a certified, 501(C3). This foundation focuses on supporting education for the automotive recycling professionals and their families.

If you own a company and want to have the ear of lots of decision makers within the automotive recycling industry, you need to be there. And your team needs to be there too. Don't forget to bring something we can auction off which will help raise money for the URG Scholarship Foundation. So, mark your calendar now and be there in April. April is only a few short months away! Call me or go to URG online at [u-r-g.com](http://u-r-g.com) and learn all about the best industry conference of the year.

See you on the next podcast.



## Generation Z Productivity: What to Expect from the Newest Worker Demographic

By by Laura Stack, MBA, CSP, CPAE

*"...A new generation is on the rise, and the first step to communicating with them is understanding they aren't just another Millennial."*

— Pamela La Gioia, American business author.

The post-Millennial generation of workers, born from about 1995 -2010, has now entered the American workplace in earnest. Some 74 million strong, this diverse cohort comprises about one-quarter of our population, and almost 40% of the workforce. They're more plugged into the digital world than any generation before them and have never known any other lifestyle.

Although Generation Z's oldest members have worked steadily for a decade, some business pundits still don't know what to think of them or



how to handle them. And as with Millennials, many of the experts' expectations regarding Gen Z have proven mostly wrong.

### The Entitlement Refrain

It's amusing, sometimes, to look at early opinions of changing business paradigms. As Millennials

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# Converter Chronicles



## Individual Assay

Newer vehicles are being recycled and or repaired all of the time. When it comes to the value of those catalytic converters, there may be some guessing involved.

But not at RECORE TRADING. We offer individual assay for any unknown or new catalytic converter that we have not seen. This is something we offer to assure the customer they are getting full value for that catalytic converter. Here are some from 2024:



Please submit all questions on our website under contact form!

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## Generation Z Productivity *continued from page 3*

were still getting firmly established, older business generations often misconstrued their independence and lackluster corporate loyalty — fueled by the ways businesses treated their parents during the dotcom bust and Great Recession — as lack of focus and laziness. Some observers initially assumed the newest generation of workers would wind up acting even more entitled, self-indulgent, and self-centered than they thought the Millennials were.

Fast forward ten years or so, and there's still little consensus about what to expect of Gen Z overall. However, there *are* a few things that most observers agree on. It turns out Generation Z is more conservative than Millennials, moving back toward the Baby Boomer/Generation X idea of business, though they still have an entrepreneurial mindset. Some experts are disturbed by the perception that Gen Z's devices seem grafted to their hands and think this will certainly diminish productivity, but that doesn't seem to be the case.

Here's what you can expect of Generation Z workers in terms of productivity:

1. **They're not just a bunch of geeky kids.** They're just more tech-savvy than older generations, since they grew up with the technology. Some view their reliance on social media as distracting and isolating, though Gen Z members themselves see it as a way to connect with people all over the world. To them, it's a form of global networking — which can become productive indeed as they make connections with potential business partners, the worldwide audience, and the global workforce. They often see their devices as extensions of themselves. All they need to do is harness and channel these interconnective tendencies to leverage them productively. Furthermore, they're comfortable with digital data and analytics and tend to be creative and design oriented. In most ways, their digital competence serves as a strength; and smart managers, no matter their generation, will take this into account.
2. **They're motivated to make contributions to the world,** and by extension, to their organizations. If they get the feedback they crave, they'll give freely of their time and energy. They enjoy volunteering and participating in community work the company gets behind.

### 3. **They're more conservative than Millennials.**

Gen Z workers are more likely to follow older generation's' ideals of structured work and hierarchies than Millennials. Despite their digital orientation, they value the human connection with their teams and prefer facetime with their leaders, with frequent feedback. As a group, they're less prone to expect validation, and view failure as a chance to learn — the old “fail forward” concept older work generations will find familiar. They're also very competitive and driven by financial and career goals.

### 4. **They prefer personalized work experiences.**

In this, Gen Z workers do resemble Millennials. More than a third of them (fewer so far than Millennials) see work/life balance as a priority and take this into account when choosing jobs. While more are loyal to their employers, they still want to have things their way — and in many cases they can get that, with remote working and by leveraging the gig economy. They're also quite entrepreneurial and like their “side hustles,” though perhaps less so than Millennials. They value independence, though prefer job security more than Millennials.

### **Engage, Engage, Engage!**

For the foreseeable future, Generation Z will comprise a significant portion of the workforce, and within a decade, may well dominate it. If you can engage their drive to achieve and contribute, you'll enjoy fantastic productivity from them... but isn't this true for every generation? Business insiders suggest mentoring and managing them with Millennials, letting them try and fail if necessary, and encouraging them to think on their feet. Let them use their devices for research and connection and take advantage of their familiarity with technology in any other way than benefits your business.

© 2023 Laura Stack. Laura Stack, MBA, CSP, CPAE is known as The Productivity Pro®. She is an award-winning keynote speaker, bestselling author, and noted authority on personal productivity. For 30 years, she has given keynote speeches and workshops on increasing workplace productivity in high-stress environments. Stack has authored eight books, including the bestselling *What to Do When There's Too Much to Do*. She is a past president of the National Speakers Association and a member of the exclusive Speaker Hall of Fame. To book Laura speak at an upcoming meeting or event, contact her at <https://theproductivitypro.com>.



# Work, Life, and Illness Balance... Does it Exist?

By Becca Skowyra

Balancing work and life is a challenge for everyone, and that challenge amplifies when children enter the picture—especially young children. As the saying goes, kids take the “you” out of yourself. Now, throw sick kids into the mix, and the difficulty level skyrockets.

Right now, my household is in the thick of sick season. Since November, we’ve dealt with pneumonia, strep throat, bronchitis, a stomach bug, the common cold, and now the flu. It’s like running a relay race where the baton is replaced with germs. One child falls ill, and within weeks, the sickness inevitably makes its way through the rest of the family.

Surviving this is no small feat. It’s mentally, emotionally, and sometimes physically exhausting. I often find myself thinking about single parents and how they manage—I got a glimpse into that world when my husband went on a work trip this week. Just an hour after dropping him off at the airport, my son started complaining of not feeling well. Initially, I chalked it up to car sickness or missing his dad. But as the night progressed into early morning, his fever shot up from 101 to 104.5, and I knew we were in for a long haul.

That night, I felt a wave of panic. How could I possibly manage everything if I got sick too? By early morning, I was juggling a feverish child, disinfecting every surface in sight, making breakfast for my daughter, packing lunches, and trying to keep the rest of the household running. I had called the doctors in the early morning (which a 20 minute phone call was incredibly challenging when I only had a few minutes to do everything else) and when the nurse suggested we might need a trip to the ER, I felt overwhelmed, but fortunately, the medication began to work, and we avoided the hospital.

Then came another dilemma: How do I get my daughter to school? They don’t go to their town schools so there are no buses. My son was barely able to get out of bed, and I didn’t want to leave him alone being so sick. With no family nearby to help and friends understandably hesitant due to

the possibly contagious nature of my son’s illness, I had to make a tough call. Ultimately, I decided my daughter would go in late so I could focus on my son and then get her to school before his doctor’s appointment.

The appointment, prescription pickups, and caring for my son took up the entire day. By evening, I realized I had accomplished nothing else—no work, no personal tasks, nothing beyond survival mode. It made me wonder: How do other parents manage? What about those with inflexible jobs like teaching or nursing? My flexible work schedule is a blessing, but not everyone has that privilege.

Even the following day was consumed by cleaning and disinfecting the house, ensuring the illness didn’t spread further. And let’s not forget the extra challenge of caring for a “man cold” sufferer in a child’s body—just kidding, he was tough!

The experience has been a humbling reminder of the unseen struggles parents face. It’s easy to feel like you’re barely keeping your head above water when sickness takes over your household. The unpredictability, the juggling of responsibilities, and the sheer exhaustion—it’s a lot. And yet, we keep going because we have to. We find a way, even when it feels impossible.

For me, the key has been embracing imperfection and letting go of guilt. My daughter was late to school—so what? We got through the day, and that’s what matters.

What does “success” look like for you on these types of days? If you’re in the trenches of parenting during sick season, know this: you’re not alone, many others are sharing in the misery. Take it one day at a time, give yourself grace, and remember that this, too, shall pass. In the meantime, celebrate the small wins—even if it’s just getting through the day with everyone fed (thank goodness for delivery!) and somewhat cared for. Sometimes, survival is the victory.





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## Laughter is the Best Medicine

### Not All Seniors are Senile

An elderly couple was celebrating their sixtieth anniversary.

The couple had married as childhood sweethearts and had moved back to their old neighborhood after they retired.

Holding hands, they walked back to their old school.

It was not locked, so they entered, and found the old desk they'd shared, where Jerry had carved I love you, Sally.

On their way back home, a bag of money fell out of an armored car, practically landing at their feet. Sally quickly picked it up and, not sure what to do with it, they took it home. There, she counted the money: \$50,000!

Jerry said, "We've got to give it back."

Sally said, "Finders keepers".

She put the money back in the bag and hid it in their attic.

The next day, two police officers were canvassing the neighborhood looking for the money, and knocked on their door.

Pardon me, did either of you find a bag that fell out of an armored car yesterday?

Sally said, "No."

Jerry said, "She's lying, She hid it up in the attic."

Sally said, "Don't believe him, he's getting senile."

The agents turned to Jerry and began to question him.

One said: "Tell us the story from the beginning."

Jerry said, "Well, when Sally and I were walking home from school yesterday ..."

The first police officer turned to his partner and said, "We're outta here!"



### The Good Old Days

A husband and wife are sitting in the diner having breakfast.

The husband leans over and asks his wife, you remember the first time we had sex together over 50 years ago? We went behind the Village Tavern where you leaned against the back fence and I made love to you?

Yes, she said. I remember it well.

Okay, he says. How about taking a stroll around there again and we can do it for old time's sake.

Oh, Jim, you old devil. That sounds like a crazy but good idea.

A police officer sitting in the next booth heard their conversation and having a chuckle, he thinks to himself, I've got to see these two old timers having sex against a fence. I'll just keep an eye on them so there's no trouble. So he follows them.

The elderly couple walks along, leaning on each other for support, aided by walking sticks. Finally, they get to the back of the tavern and make their way to the fence. The old lady lifts her skirt and the old man drops his trousers. As she leans against the fence, the old man moves in. Then suddenly, they erupt into the most furious sex that the policeman has ever seen. This goes on for about 10 minutes while both are making loud noises and moaning and screaming. Finally, they both collapse, panting on the ground.

The policeman is amazed. He thinks he has learned something about life and old age that he didn't know. After about half an hour of lying on the ground recovering, the old couple struggled to their feet and put their clothes back on.

The policeman is still watching and thinks to himself, this is truly amazing. I've got to ask them what their secret is. So as the couple passes, he says to them, excuse me, but that was something else. You must have had a fantastic sex life together. Is there some sort of secret to this?

Shaking, the old man is barely able to reply. Fifty years ago, that wasn't an electric fence.



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