

The Changing Workplace - Connecting with the Millennial Generation

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Members of the Baby Boomer Generation - those born from 1946 to 1964 - have dominated our workplaces for years, enjoying the benefits of strength in numbers. Generation X (now in their mid-thirties and early-forties) has caught up to be an equal force, and although different from the Boomers at work, has formed an unspoken truce. Both are making room

for the emerging worker - the Millennials - and are dazed and confused by the shift in work ethic. The commonly understood workplace rules and need for paying dues

has been questioned and challenged. Let's face it,

the workplace is changing.

The younger generation expects a fast track career path, lots of feedback and recognition, and a life/work balance.

They are hard working and dedicated, but only under the perfect conditions, and for the right kind of manager.

Is your workplace Millennial-friendly?



Here's why forward-looking companies are paying attention -

Between eight and ten thousand Baby Boomers

turn 60 every day. They are quickly making room for their successors, and are concerned

about a dramatic shift in the work ethic of their replacements. What has been commonly understood as the

dues to be paid, the rungs to climb, and the time to invest is being reinvented, leaving business owners

and managers wondering about what their workplace will look like in a few years. **The new**

generation is reworking work ethic. If their interests are understood and

adapted to their style, they will gravitate to your organization, contribute in significant ways, and perhaps

stay a bit longer than the average duration.

The number of months before an average mid-twenties employee leaves their job. Bureau of Labor Statistics

16

The number of people who quit their jobs each day in the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

83,000

The number of jobs held by the average U.S. worker between ages 18 and 34
Staffing Industry Analysts

9



What Millennials Want Most Seriously?



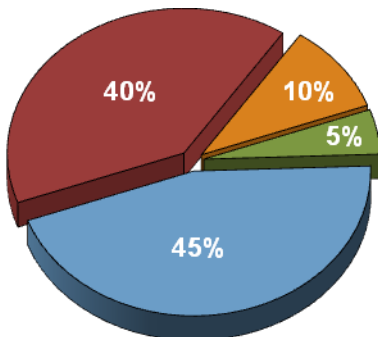
A Meaningful Job

In short, the Millennial employee (age 30 and under) enjoys a workplace that is similar to how they've grown up - **moving fast, having fun, and surrounded by "user friendly" devices.**

GenXers got the initial kudos for being the multi-tasking generation, but Millennials take it to the next level. They not only multitask, they do it fast! Certainly that can be seen as a desirable quality in an employee, if the work they are charged with doing is **action packed and constantly changing.** Let's face it though, most jobs that Millennials are qualified to cut their teeth on are not the thrill-a-minute joy ride they expect. They have been known to be hard working, contribute well, and be dedicated, but usually when working on the tasks they enjoy best, and that means most in supporting their lofty career goals. They want to know that the **work they do today will prepare them to move to the next level - fast.**

They have been involved in decisions and grown-up discussions all of their lives. Being denied information and a view of the big picture is a surefire demotivator on the job.

The Current Mix in the U.S. Workforce
Bureau of Labor Statistics



Thanks and Praise

Millennials are the children of the Baby Boomer generation, which is ironic since the Boomer generation is questioning the Millennial work ethic most. **Boomers set in place the Millennials' expectations by the way they raised them.**

Baby Boomers are the generation known as workaholics. Because of their commitments to their careers, they coined the phrase "quality verses quantity" with regard to the time spent with their families. **They doted on, tended to, and praised their children excessively to make up for any lost special moments.** They framed the kindergarten art and hung them as masterpieces in their offices, they cheered on their skills at running the field at the soccer game (it didn't matter if they scored), and they told them they could do whatever they wanted to do with their life. Even teachers focused on **valuing the attempt more than the results.** We created a generation that has been appreciated for its efforts, and thanked often for them.

A Mentoring Manager

The Millennial employee has grown up watching institutions disintegrate. What they have been exposed to with our government, military, corporations, and churches has made them cynical when it comes to latching onto the trustworthiness of an organization. **They don't care what the marquee on the building says about your company; they care about the culture and people working within it.**

They have had strong supporters growing up - involved parents, nurturing teachers, caring coaches - so they expect a "go to" mentor at work as well. **Someone who invests in their success and shows them the map to maneuver through the workplace labyrinth will be a valued individual for the Millennial.** And they will produce for and be loyal to them. **They are not interested in bucking the system; they are not interested in working the system either.** They saw their parents work too hard for their advancement and make sacrifices that might not have been rewarded.

Generation in the Mix	Work Ethic Trend
Veterans - 5% Born before 1946	Work hard, respect authority, follow rules, pay your dues, be loyal, the customer is always right
Baby Boomers - 45% Born 1946-1964	Work hard and long (workaholic), climb the ladder, be respected and rewarded, compete to get ahead, play later
Generation X - 40% Born 1965-1978	Work smarter - not harder, multi-task, work to live not live to work, don't micromanage me but thank me, lighten up
Millennials - 10% Born after 1978	Important and interesting work first, mentor me, I want goals and direction, what's in it for me, let me have fun, give me the skills to better myself

Millennials have different motivators, interests and expectations of their workday. Top companies that have learned to accept that, versus reject it, are reaping the benefits. A few that were named to the top ten of **Fortune's Best Places to Work** include Genentech, Qualcomm, Quicken Loans, and Edward Jones.

Millennial Wish List	Why They Expect It	What You Can Do About It (it may not initially be palatable, but consider the positive outcome)
Interesting work	They have been exposed to a world of information at their fingertips before they were in junior high. Their dotting parents exposed them to fine dining, culture and travel during their "quality time" together. They have been able to pick a box of cereal from literally hundreds of choices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Mix it up a bit. Let them make suggestions to be more creative, efficient, and engaged at their job. ▶ Let them know how their work affects the overall goals of the company; show the big picture. ▶ Show them the financials; they want to understand the economics of their business, and their role contributes to the overall success.
A fast moving day	They've managed a busy schedule since grade school, multi-tasking to the extreme. They need to be kept busy and have a lot of options to alternate their responsibilities. Doing repetitive and transactional tasks will bore them to death and they will move on to something else.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Realize that doing data entry all day is the equivalent of water torture. Break up the day to allow for more interesting and important tasks to be integrated with the mundane. ▶ A little fun and/or allowing for a social environment seems like a ridiculous suggestion, but a few doses of fun and peer interaction throughout the day keeps them tuned in, not checked out.
High tech equipment	They grew up with talking, moving, and blinking toys in the cradle; computers in their home, and devices attached to their bodies since puberty (cell phones, iPods, and Gameboys to name a few). They expect to be surrounded by high-tech.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Invest in good computer equipment and software; it will pay off in their level of interest in using it. ▶ Have Internet stations set up in the break room for some quick surfing and message checking. ▶ Allow for a few "off the clock" quick breaks in the day to check and send text messages.
Quick results	Boomer parents have set high standards for their children, creating a goal oriented and driven Millennial. Fast moving technology also adds to the mix of raising their expectations to speed-of-light results. Decisions get made in the time it takes to microwave a Hot Pocket.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Give them quicker (short term) goals and reward results more often. ▶ Consider faster advancement opportunities and title changes as well as raises based on merit, not time. ▶ Understand that they want resume building experience, so give them a few bullet points to add to it. They'll stay longer if they are learning.
A balance of work and life	Actually, it's life/work that they are interested in; work is something they do between weekends. They are busy socialites who expect time to enjoy themselves. They have been exposed to the finer things and like having fun.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Consider allowing for some flexibility in schedules when possible. They don't care if it's unpaid; that's how important free time is. ▶ Get to know them as a whole person, not just as a worker. They'll value your interest in them. ▶ Understand that they have had enriched lives, so offer enriched work experiences as well.
Constant feedback	Millennials have been encouraged and praised throughout their lives, so when they enter a workplace of no-news-is-good-news, they pack their bags and move on. They want to know when they're doing well, but they also desire to hear where they can improve and grow - in a gently delivered tone.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Give good training up front, and check in frequently. ▶ Assign a mentor as a go-to person; preferably of the Veteran generation (60+ years old) in a top management position or a peer that has been successful - not someone their mother's age. ▶ Schedule one-on-one time to give career track advice and keep the communication open and honest. Be prepared for mutual feedback.
A corporate lattice (not ladder)	They have seen their parents struggle and work long hours to climb the corporate ladder. Millennials are interested in advancement, but not in a linear fashion. They want to move up, down, or laterally as it suits their life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Break broad job titles into smaller roles and move Millennials up quickly. ▶ Allow for lateral moves to other departments so they can build a well-rounded skill set and resume. ▶ Give them more opportunities to advance by cross pollinating jobs and creating something new.

“Welcome aboard, we’re very lucky to have you as part of our team. Let me introduce you to the people you will be working with.” If this is not your opening statement when you greet your new Millennial employee at the door, it should be. Like it or not, the red carpet treatment is the expectation, and a disappointing orientation (on-boarding) sets the stage for a less-than-positive work experience. **Our 25 and under employees have enjoyed more attention in their lives than any generation before.** Doting and involved parents, who exposed their children to the finer things in life, have raised the expectations of our younger employees. They need to feel special.

Let’s admit it, we typically welcome a new employee with a stack of forms to complete and policies and procedures manuals they need to read. Often, they are left alone for the majority of the first day to complete the process. They started the day curious and excited and left it feeling bored and annoyed. Consider having no forms or policy reading to complete on the first day. What’s the harm in waiting until the following day, and spreading the work throughout the week?

Instead, make the first day a memorable experience by making introductions and having detailed discussions about their role and how their work affects the company and the bottom line. Be honest about the career path options and what needs to be accomplished in order to be successful in the current role, and to promote. **Millennials are goal-oriented, so be specific with the timelines and rewards so expectations are clear.** If a stellar employee needs to be on board for a year before being considered for a pay increase, tell them. Talk about the “resume building” experience they will gain, and how this experience is education they are getting paid for.

As your Millennial employee settles into their role, check in often - personally. Don’t wait for them to come to you. A brief visit a few times during the first week will demonstrate your interest in their learning and progress. Millennial employees want feedback. Make sure they have regular one-on-one time with their supervisors to discuss performance, development and opportunity. A recent survey gleaned surprising results: their expectations for such meetings are quarterly. **Yes, their expectations are high, but primarily of themselves.** They want the tools and resources to work independently, and well, and don’t intend to waste anyone’s time to get there.

The Red Carpet Treatment

On-boarding Checklist for Your Millennial Employees

- ▶ Save the new employee forms for mid-week, not the first day
- ▶ Make formal introductions and assign a buddy
- ▶ Discuss their role at the company and how their work impacts the company
- ▶ Outline the career path and timelines for advancement
- ▶ Provide them with a great workstation with the tools and resources they need
- ▶ Check in often during the first week, and then set a regular schedule to touch base

To learn more about Millennial friendly work places, or to share your own best practices, contact:
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Dedicated to my Millennial staff
who I learn from every day.