

Employer's Guide to the Millennial Generation:

Your Six Keys to Maximizing Millennial Performance



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Hello, I'm a Millennial

There are 100 million Millennials that now make up over one-third of the workforce in the U.S. The oldest are in their mid-thirties yet Boomer and GenXer managers are still perplexed about the best ways to manage them. The old saying goes, "demography is destiny" and regardless of your views on this generation, they will be the future leaders of your company.

Here are six simple strategies every employer can use to attract, manage, and retain your best Millennial talent.

1

MEET THEM WHERE THEY ARE



4

KEEP FOCUSED ON THEIR GOALS - Short/Long-Term



2

NURTURE TEAMWORK



5

SCHEDULE FREQUENT FEEDBACK



3

CREATE A POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT AT WORK



6

SYSTEMATIZE AND PRACTICE PERFECT MENTORING



1

MEET THEM WHERE THEY ARE



To understand any generation, you need to understand how they were raised. Millennials were raised to feel special by their parents in a collaborative and high achieving environment, where they learned that societal goals were more important than

the individual. They also learned to trust technology and thrive in a transparent, information-intensive world. Your company's very first communication with Millennial prospects should reflect the values that have been a part of them from their youth.

Ask yourself, are you meeting them where they are?

2

NURTURE TEAMWORK



Millennials grew up with group projects in the classroom, team sports, and a club for every hobby. Facebook, founded by Millennial Mark Zuckerberg, tapped into this Millennial need to connect 24/7 with friends and family. The words “social” and “network” were two words that never went together. Now, ‘social network’ defines the Millennial generation.

“Allow them to stay connected through social media—this digital traffic nourishes their collaborative preferences”

Take advantage of these close bonds with friends and strong team orientation in the workplace by recruiting Millennials with and through their friends. Tech sector companies “team hiring” recruit classmates as a group package and the Army Buddy Team Enlistment option let’s friends enlist at the same time and go through basic training together. In the workplace, allow them to stay connected through social media—this digital traffic nourishes their collaborative preferences. Finally, the Millennial team ethic puts a high priority on contributing to the community as a whole. Millennials want to work for a company that contributes positively to society.

3

CREATE A POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT AT WORK



Confidence and optimism are defining traits of Millennials, and they gravitate towards positive work environments where managers focus on strengths, not weaknesses.

Millennials were raised to feel special by their parents and the adults around them. As kids, they were told they could do anything. Raising self-esteem to instill confidence was a priority for parents on Millennials, and as adults, Millennials carry the same expectations.

In the workplace, managers often detest this “VIP treatment”, assuming that a tough-love approach to managing is the best way to slap them into reality. But the tough-love approach does not work for Millennials.

In order to motivate these confident Millennials at work, give them positive job titles and encourage them to meet higher standards, and avoid the urge to tell them to “pay their dues” by doing menial work—just because that’s what you did once. Instead, show them how these tasks are an essential part of your team’s mission.

Leverage their high expectations to inspire higher performance, participate proactively in the special relationship most of them have with their parents, and foster a positive work environment.

“The tough-love approach to management does not work for Millennials.”

4

KEEP FOCUSED ON THEIR GOALS



Millennials have been pushed to plan for the long-term and take full advantage of their opportunities. In this “trophy kid” pursuit for achievement, Millennials have been measured and monitored incessantly—through grades, test-score, credentials, badges, and various rankings. As kids, it was always an expectation that they’d be measured on how you were progressing toward your goals. Unlike young Boomers and Xers, Millennials believe that achievement should be measured, monitored, and assessed according to objective benchmarks.

In the workplace, managers should harness this need to be measured by establishing clear benchmarks on performance and rewards for positive outcomes. Set-

ting a clear path for long-term advancement, while establishing frequent, measurable short-term goals will not only improve your Millennials’ performance, but allow you to assess the effectiveness of the task.

Because Millennials are digital natives, use technology tools to measure and track their performance. And consider using gamification—the application of game mechanics to ordinary workplace scenarios—into both training and performance measurement. Creating incentives like points, badges, and discounts can nudge Millennials toward better performance. Consider using looking into gamification platforms like Badgeville.com, BeeBlock.com, or mambo.io

“Harness their need to be measured by establishing clear benchmarks on performance.”

5

SCHEDULE FREQUENT FEEDBACK



Millennials were raised in an era where a Google search could get you almost any information you want, instantly. Apple's Siri or Amazon's Alexa serve as a digital concierge with on-demand service. In this era of instant feedback, is it any wonder that Millennials see "annual reviews" as inefficient and archaic?

Millennials want formal feedback from their managers as often as once a quarter and informal feedback everyday.

"Nearly 7 out of 10 Millennials say they like their supervisor to provide them with "hands-on guidance and direction"

That's right... everyday. Nearly 7 out of 10 Millennials say they like their supervisor to provide them with "hands-on guidance and direction," almost double the share of older generations who say the same thing.

Older managers may resist this notion of spending so much time with their Millennial employees, but providing frequent, tight cycles of feedback will pay huge dividends in their productivity. Furthermore, the daily interaction may just be a simple, one-minute conversation starting with the question, "What are your goals today/this weeks and how can I help?"

6

PRACTICE PERFECT MENTORING



In the 1970's and 80's, young Boomer and Xer employees were famous for distrusting authority and relying on their own instincts when making life choices. Not for Millennials. Unlike older generations, Millennials actually trust authority figures and rely on them for guidance and advice. Their parents serve as a role model, and most Millennials have strong bonds to their parents, in contrast to the hostile youth movements of the past.

Companies can take advantage of this new relationship toward authority by establishing formal, structured mentoring programs. Unlike mentoring programs in the past that are ad-hoc and informal, it is important to feed Millennials'

natural preference for structure and formalization with clear timelines, training activity, milestones, and goals. The notion of "let them just do their own thing" may have been a good management practice for young do-it-yourself GenXers, but is not a good strategy for Millennials.

Not only should you have formalized mentor programs, but as a manager, make sure you serve in mentor-like role. Millennials respond better to a manager who serves as a "coach", rather than a "taskmaster".

"Unlike older generations, Millennials actually trust authority figures and rely on them for guidance and advice"



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Warren Wright is one of the top speakers on the Millennials generation

Warren Wright started Coaching Millennials in response to an overwhelming demand by companies to help hire and manage Millennials. He educates, teaches, and coaches leaders about Millennials and all generations. He is one of the leading authorities on the Millennial generation, speaking and consulting frequently on their influence in the workplace and society at large.

“Warren was by far the most popular presenter of the year; people are still talking about the speech months later.”

-- Jan Schiff, President, Welcome Club of Northern Virginia

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