

Millennials Go To Work

Students in Transition Conference

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Generational Differences

Me Generation (Baby Boomers)

- Born between 1946-1964
- Free love
- Taught by gray-suit wearing teachers and thought that *Father Knows Best*
- Raised by parents who didn't take any lip
- Parents worried about sex in high school
- Duty before self
- Did everything in groups, from seminars to yoga
- Age of average bride: 21
- DINK (double income, no kids)

Generation Me (Millennials, Generation X/Y, Net Generation, IGen)

- Born in 70's, 80's and 90's
- Love of self
- Taught by teachers whose focus was on making the child feel good; got a sticker for trying
- Parents allowed children to be themselves
- Parents worry about sex in middle school
- Want to make a difference (volunteering)
- Obtained piercings and tattoos to express self
- Expects to marry in late 20's
- YO-YO (You're on your own)

Who are Millennials?

- Born between 1980-2000, they are variously called the Internet Generation, Echo Boomers, the Boomlet, Nexters, Generation Y, the Nintendo Generation, the Digital Generation, and, in Canada, the Sunshine Generation.
- Sociable, optimistic, talented, well-educated, collaborative, open-minded, influential, and achievement-oriented.
- They've always felt sought after, needed and indispensable.
- They're so well connected that if an employer does not match expectations, they can tell thousands of their cohorts with one click.

They were shaped by their Times

- Focus on children and family
- Scheduled, structured lives
- Multiculturalism
- Terrorism
- Heroism
- Patriotism
- Parent Advocacy
- Globalism

Messages which shaped them...

- Be smart – you are special
- Leave no one behind
- Connect 24/7
- Achieve now!
- Serve your community

“This is the time of soaring expectations and crushing realities: The gap between what they have and what they want has never been greater.”

Joan Chiamonte, Roper Youth Report

Myths/Realities of Millennials:

Myths:

Today's kids are violent

Teen pregnancy is up

Kids' use of drugs is up

They're like X-squared

Realities

In the last two decades, the volume of serious teen violent crime declined dramatically

Teen pregnancy is falling at the fastest rate ever recorded

Compared to adults, modern adolescents use milder drugs, in lower quantities, less frequently, in less risky settings, and not likely to mix them with alcohol or drive after using

They have more in common with Baby Boomers and members of the WWII Generation than they do with Generation X-ers

College Graduates' Perceptions of Differences between College and Work

<u>College</u>	<u>Workplace</u>
Frequent, quick, and concrete feedback (grades and so on)	Infrequent and less precise feedback
Highly structured curriculum and programs with lots of direction	Highly unstructured environment and tasks with few directions
Personally supportive environment	Less personal support
Few significant changes	Frequent and unexpected changes
Flexible schedule	Structured schedule
Frequent breaks and time off	Limited time off
Personal control over time, classes, and interests	Responding to others' directions and interests
Intellectual challenge	Organizational and people challenges
Choose your performance level (A, B, and so on)	A-level work required all the time
Focus on your development and growth	Focus on getting results for the organization
Create and explore knowledge	Get results with your knowledge
Individual effort	Team effort
"Right" answers	Few "right" answers
Independence of ideas and thinking	Do it the organization's way
Professors	Supervisors
Less initiative required	Lots of initiative required

The Millennials are Coming!

Here's a glimpse of who's coming to work...

DVD Reference:

The Millennials are Coming

60 Minutes – Morley Safer

Airdate: 11/11/07

CBS Broadcasting, Inc.

Workplace Attitudes:

Boomers (1946-1964)

- Competitive and think others should pay their dues

Generation X-ers (1965-1977)

Generation Y-ers (1978-early 1990's)

- Likely to be skeptical and independent-minded
- Like teamwork, feedback and technology

Generation Z-ers/ Homeland Generation (Mid 1990's-present)

- TBD (grew up with influence of Disney)

How we view each other....

- They are criticized for being another indulged generation like the Boomers: self-absorbed and Pollyanna-ish
- We are criticized for being cynical and aloof: people who throw wet blankets on their fresh ideas and idealism

The 'Trophy Kids' Go to Work

- Employers feel millennials have 'outlandish' expectations
- Concern about their desire to shape their jobs to fit their lives rather than adapt their lives to the workplace
- Research studies indicate nearly half of 18-28 year-olds surveyed had moderate to high superiority beliefs about themselves
- Employers must be careful when making a critique and need to spell things out clearly
- About 2/3 indicated they would "surf" from one job to the next; about 44% stated they would renege on a job-acceptance commitment if a better offer came along
- If they don't get their way, they may become 'student stalkers' and drop out of corporate world to be entrepreneurs
- Often "the grumbling baby-boomer managers are the same indulgent parents who produced the millennial generation"

Adapted from "The Trophy Kids Grow Up: How the Millennial Generation is Shaking Up the Workplace" by Ron Alsop, 2008, Jossey-Bass

Millennial Work Ethic:

- Confident
- Hopeful
- Goal- and achievement-oriented
- Civic-minded
- Inclusive

How do employers cope with Millennials?

According to Fortune magazine, do what their parents have done for them:

- They are used to being carefully observed and rewarded for their performance.
- They are attuned to money, and expect to be paid for their services accordingly.
- They are willing to work hard, especially so if they understand how it fits into organizational goals.
- They like to bond with fellow workers, so offer things that make the organization feel small: softball teams, happy hours, group lunches, onsite-gyms.
- Mentoring them will show the expectation that they also sponsor a younger employee.
- Parents can influence career decisions so invite them into the process.

Why bend over backwards to recruit them?

Because we are going to desperately need them over the next decade:

- Average age of a nurse is 47
- Half of all certified teachers plan to retire within five years
- Sixty percent of all Federal Workers are Baby Boomers say they are on the verge of retirement

Millennials and the Workplace:

- They are always working out so they will opt for companies who have fitness centers; more than a 1/3 have a tattoo; 30% have a piercing somewhere besides their earlobe
- Top five job search mistakes:
 - MySpace misjudgments
 - Forgetting to say a simple “thank you”
 - Bad voice-mail greetings
 - Failure to network
 - Allowing helicopter parents to contact employers

Strengths and Challenges

Characteristics that bring value to companies (and percentage cited):

- Enthusiasm/Excitement/Drive (17%)
- Communication skills - oral and written (13%)
- Technological aptitude (11%)
- Fresh perspectives/new ideas (10%)
- Teamwork (5-7%)
- Willingness to Learn (5-7%)
- Work ethic (5-7%)
- Analytical thinking (5-7%)
- Adaptability/ability to embrace change (5-7%)

Challenges employers face from new hires (and percentages cited):

- Entitlement attitude/unrealistic expectations (23%)
- Lack of work ethic/laziness (17%)
- Loyalty/commitment issues (12%)
- Appropriate work-life balance (5-8%)
- Immaturity (5-8%)
- Lack of confidence (5-8%)
- Inability to understand work required (5-8%)
- Communication skills (5-8%)
- Need for instant gratification (5-8%)

Millennials at Work

Liabilities:

Distaste for menial work

Lack of skills for dealing
with difficult people

Impatience

Lack of experience

Confidence

Assets:

Multitasking

Goal orientation

Positive attitude

Technical savvy

Collaboration

What Millennials want from a job:

- To work with positive people
- To be challenged
- To be treated respectfully
- To learn new knowledge and skills
- To work in friendly environments
- To have flexible schedules
- To be paid well

Millennial Learning Preferences

- Teamwork
- Technology
- Structure
- Entertainment / excitement
- Experiential activities

Where employers go wrong with millennials:

- Not meeting their high expectations
- Discounting their ideas for lack of experience
- Allowing negativity
- Feeling threatened by their technical knowhow

Communicating with Millennials:

- Be positive and respectful
- Act in a respectable way
- Motivational and inspiring comments are best
- Electronic forms of communication are preferred
- Articulate objectives that goal-focused

Treating your millennial employees like customers:

- Where do our employees tend to come from and where can we get more like them?
- How can we attract them?
- What kind of experience and environment are they looking for?
- Once we've gotten them here, how can we keep them coming back?
- What kind of perks can we offer that will have them stick with us?
- How can we reward the most loyal of them?

How Companies are Treating Generations Differently

Novo Nordisk

Young sales force drives jeeps; keeps traditional sedans for others

Highlights team sales over individual sales so that young workers can feel part of the group

Hires consultants to train managers on generational issues and asks managers to discuss their experiences at meetings

International Business Machines

Offers managers and employees classes and mentoring to recognize generational differences

Lockheed Martin

Noticed that boomers preferred Power Point presentations while younger workers favored more interactive learning methods

Ernst & Young/Aetna

Offer workshops on generational differences to all of their employees

GenTrends

Scenario:

I always have to tell my teenage and twentysomething employees to do a task – they don't take the initiative to get the work done. They just don't seem to have the work ethic that my older workers to. What's the secret to motivating them?

Most of these employees are in the 'no fear' category rather than being motivated by intrinsic values or due to self-image. Key is getting to know the individuals: Why are they working? What do they want to get out of their jobs? Enlist their help in teaching you how to motivate them. Set goals for them to accomplish within the next 60 days with a reward at the end.

There's no place like home!

- Nearly half of 2008 college graduates will move back home
- Numbers have remained constant since dot.com bust, a result of social or financial pressures
- Though economy is better, the wages for new grads have not kept pace with inflation
- Rising student-loan and credit card debt (avg. is \$2169) and troubled housing market also contribute
- Many graduates are reluctant to compromise on the expensive lifestyle they've come to enjoy
- Many college dorms today indulge these students by offering private bathrooms, house-cleaning services, fitness centers, and 24-hour cafeterias; they're hard to live without

Source: *Mom, Can I Move Back in with You? A Survival Guide for Parents of Twentysomethings*, Susan Shaffer and Linda Perlman Gordon

Moving Back In....

- 28% of 18-34 year-olds live with their parents according to US Census Bureau
- Univ. of Michigan Inst. for Social Research reports that parents give children \$2,200/year in help
- Primary motivation is economics: high rent, debt from education (avg. \$21,000/student), weak labor market
- Also due to the nature of parent and kid relationships – closer than ever
- Becoming more mainstream – used to be called boomerang kids

When 20-somethings move back home

- Causes tension for parents and kids
- Living with parents reduces young adults' life satisfaction
- While young adults get 'cabin fever', there's no shame in it anymore
- In Europe, as many as 60% of young adults live at home and half of European adults think living longer with one's parents is a good thing
- Empty nest now becomes an open nest!

Challenges for parents...

- No ground rules
- Subsidizing children puts their own retirements and financial well-being at risk
- If enabled, adult children never learn to establish their own self-reliance and good financial habits

Failing to Launch

Current research indicates that social and cultural factors are also at work:

- Perhaps today's working parents have less time for their children when they're small – and thus are in no hurry to have them depart
- US families are engaged in a cultural shift toward more extended, more egalitarian bonds with children
- Rather than cutting back time with children, parents are bypassing housework, civic activities, personal time, and time with spouses

Recommendations:

- Use a document of understanding – a family contract that outlines parent and child responsibilities
- Encourage financial responsibility – charge rent which helps kids budget (some parents give this back to kids in lump sum upon moving out to help with down payment)
- Talk about wants vs. needs – evaluate how child spends money (living above means)
- Set time limit

Letting go....

- Kid Sickness: A condition attributed in large part to today's more involved style of parenting
- Exacerbated by our ability to be in constant contact by cell phone and computer
- Perception by parents that the world is a more dangerous place
- Result is kids who are self-confident that they can rely on their own resources

Source: *'Kid-sick' parents have a hard time letting go*, The State, Thursday, July 10, 2008

Helicopter Parents in the workplace:

- Writing their kid's resume
- Showing up at job fairs with their child and answering questions for her
- Calling an employer to ask why they did not hire their child
- Calling an employer to discuss his first performance review

To find out if you are one, take the quiz at

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/12746612/site/newsweek/>

What's the Future of Work in the US?

- Work should be more sophisticated as less difficult tasks are outsourced (both clerical and professional positions)
- 34% of Americans now have a bachelor's degree; 47% are satisfied with their jobs today
- While workers prefer people-centered thinking, economists think 'systems-centered' systems will win out
- Workplace will do more to accommodate women who want career and family
- Scientists are studying how to improve human brains to help them remember things longer

“The gut-level value systems are, in fact, dramatically different between the generations...the focus should not be so much on how to change other people to conform to our standards, our values. Rather, we must learn to accept and understand other people in their own right, acknowledging the validity of their values, their behavior.”

Morris Massey, popular speaker on generations

Questions?

- Thanks for allowing me to share these thoughts with you today.