



## The Leading Edge

3rd Quarter 2016 Manager Newsletter



### Millennials: How much do you know about them?

Call them millennials or call them Generation Y, chances are you're seeing more of them in your workplace. Born between 1980 and the mid-1990s, this group outnumbers baby boomers by 11 million people.<sup>1</sup> **More...**



### Five ways to help your team have more fun at work

It's true, work is work and fun is fun. Granted, not all activities are suitable for all environments. For instance, window washers would be well-advised to whistle rather than dance. **More...**



### Five minute quiz: What kind of leader are you?

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# Millennials: How much do you know about them?

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Call them millennials or call them Generation Y, chances are you're seeing more of them in your workplace. Born between 1980 and 2000s, this group outnumbers baby boomers by 11 million people.<sup>1</sup> And it's likely millennials will make up almost 50 percent of the national workforce by 2020.<sup>2</sup>

## Millennials 101

Millennials can get a bad rap. People sometimes say they're self-centered, entitled and impatient. But then again, it seems like they used to say the same thing about Generation X and Baby Boomers. So what sets millennials apart?

- **Diversity.**<sup>1</sup> Millennials are the most racially diverse generation in U.S. history. In fact, 43 percent of millennial adults are nonwhite.
- **Marriage.**<sup>1</sup> Millennials overall aren't in a hurry to get married. They wait longer to tie the knot. They're more likely to move in with their partners (or even buy a house together) before getting hitched. And a Pew analysis predicts that 25 percent of them won't marry at all.
- **Education.**<sup>1</sup> Maybe you've heard that millennials are over-educated and under-employed. And while 66 percent of them lack a college degree, millennials are still more educated than prior generations.
- **Finances.**<sup>1</sup> Many millennials carry student loans. In fact, student loan debt has reached record highs, quadrupling over the last 10 years. Having less money to spend may contribute to the fact that many still live at home and have delayed marriage and family.
- **Employment.**<sup>3</sup> Millennials often expect to be promoted faster than prior age groups. Why? They have high expectations, lack knowledge about how long other generations had to work for promotions and they want more than a promise of career progress.<sup>4</sup>
- **Communication.**<sup>4</sup> Millennials grew up with the internet and they're highly visual. So they like to learn with videos and prefer to communicate via text, email and social media.

## Millennials at work

So what does this generation of workers look like when they show up to the office? Millennials value a few things in the workplace:

- Flexible work schedules and the chance to work from home<sup>5</sup>
- Professional development opportunities<sup>5</sup>
- Meaningful work that makes the world a better place<sup>5</sup>
- Frequent feedback and recognition<sup>6</sup>
- Collaborative cultures instead of competitive ones<sup>7</sup>

## Managing millennials

Millennials don't have to be a mystery. They look at life stages a little differently, like technology and prefer to use it for communication. And they're figuring out what it means to be an adult. But ultimately, they're not that different from the rest of the workforce.<sup>7</sup>

Millennials want management that's ethical, fair and trustworthy. They want to make a difference. And they want to be recognized for their efforts. But don't we all appreciate those things? Managing people is about understanding them. Because once you understand who they are, you can inspire them to achieve great things, no matter when they were born.

<sup>1</sup> [www.npr.org/2014/11/18/354196302/amid-the-stereotypes-some-facts-about-millennials](http://www.npr.org/2014/11/18/354196302/amid-the-stereotypes-some-facts-about-millennials)

<sup>2</sup> [www.entrepreneur.com/article/242507](http://www.entrepreneur.com/article/242507)

<sup>3</sup> [genhq.com/millennials-gen-y-in-workplace/](http://genhq.com/millennials-gen-y-in-workplace/)

<sup>4</sup> [www.forbes.com/sites/hbsworkingknowledge/2016/04/08/how-to-hire-a-millennial/?ss=executive-edge#5df3fcbb73da](http://www.forbes.com/sites/hbsworkingknowledge/2016/04/08/how-to-hire-a-millennial/?ss=executive-edge#5df3fcbb73da)

<sup>5</sup> [www.entrepreneur.com/article/242507](http://www.entrepreneur.com/article/242507)

<sup>6</sup> [www.forbes.com/sites/robashghar/2014/01/13/what-millennials-want-in-the-workplace-and-why-you-should-start-giving-it-to-them/#575dea1f2fdf](http://www.forbes.com/sites/robashghar/2014/01/13/what-millennials-want-in-the-workplace-and-why-you-should-start-giving-it-to-them/#575dea1f2fdf)

<sup>7</sup> [www.entrepreneur.com/article/243133](http://www.entrepreneur.com/article/243133)



# Five ways to help your team have more fun at work

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It's true, work is work and fun is fun. Granted, not all activities are suitable for all environments. For instance, window washers would be well-advised to whistle rather than dance. Unless, of course, they're safely on the ground. But if you think about it, you can probably find ways to add a little fun to your team's day.

Here are some ideas that can help boost your team's morale:

- 1. Get to know each other.** Using a simple ice-breaker such as, "What was your first job?" can help your team learn more about each other's interests and skills. Try asking a different question before each team meeting and budget enough time for everyone to answer.
- 2. Host regular potluck lunches.** They could be once a week or once a month. But sharing meals can bring people closer together. It gives them time to bond and even talk out work-related issues together. Be sure to ask if anyone on your team has any special dietary restrictions. And you never know; the next great time-saving idea could come from a casual comment over a cronut®.

**3. Break up into smaller teams to solve a challenge.** You can see who can think of the most new ideas to grow your business. Or look for the best idea to overcome an obstacle you've been facing. Working on problems together can build professional relationships and yield new solutions to try.

**4. Share some music.** If your workspace allows for a few quiet tunes now and then, it can help bolster the team's mood. See if there's a radio station or type of music everyone likes.

**5. Make every day employee appreciation day.** Who doesn't love a good employee appreciation day? Games! Carnival rides! The CEO scooping mashed potatoes in the lunch line! But it doesn't have to be just once a year. And it doesn't have to be elaborate or pricey. Encourage your team to encourage each other. And err on the side of being too generous with your own praise, too.

Some managers may feel that fun gets in the way of work getting done. But fun in the workplace is about enjoying the company of your team and sharing goals. Fun can increase productivity, morale and employee retention. And it can help the day go by faster, too.

# Five minute quiz: What kind of leader are you?

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There are probably as many ways to lead as there are leaders in the world. But certain aspects of leading might come more naturally than others.

How do you tend to lead? You can take this short quiz and see if it brings you any new insights into your leadership style.

Generally speaking, choose the response that comes most naturally to you. Keep track of your answers so you can check your results.\*

## 1. When my team's on a tight deadline, I \_\_\_\_.

- a. Bring snacks and/or offer encouragement
- b. Watch closely to make sure everything gets done right and on time
- c. See what part(s) of the project I can do to help speed things along
- d. Make sure everyone knows what the penalty is if we fail
- e. Remind the team how succeeding will align with our goals and strategy

## 2. When someone lets me know about something great my team member did for him or her, I \_\_\_\_.

- a. Share it with the team – a victory for one is a victory for all
- b. Check to make sure it's true
- c. Pass it along and add my praise to it
- d. Thank the person for the feedback but don't pass it along
- e. Hold it up as an example of our culture

## 3. When one of my best employees calls in because of a family situation, I \_\_\_\_.

- a. Thank him or her for letting me know and express my good wishes
- b. Look to see if there's a pattern to his or her absences
- c. Ask if there's anything that needed to get done today that I can reassign or help with myself

- d. Let him or her know what might happen if there's not enough coverage
- e. Tell him or her to take the time needed without worrying; these things happen and our team's ready for anything

## 4. When a customer complains about something minor that one of my trusted team members did, I \_\_\_\_.

- a. Say I'll look into it even though I don't believe it and/or may forget to follow up
- b. Check to see if we've received similar complaints in the past and document everything
- c. See how we can work together to head off similar situations in the future
- d. Show my team member what the consequences will be if it happens again
- e. Challenge the team to find new ways to meet all our customers' needs better and faster

## 5. When a new employee starts on our team, I \_\_\_\_.

- a. Make sure he or she feels welcome
- b. Let him or her know about our various employee tracking tools and practices
- c. Take an active role in making sure there's nothing else he or she needs to get acclimated
- d. Go over the demands of the job and what happens if it's too much for him or her to handle
- e. Show the new team member how his or her role fits into the team's work and the organization as a whole

[Simply click here to view your results.](#)

\*This quiz has not been scientifically validated. It's intended for general educational purposes only.

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