

## MEET YOUR MILLENNIAL MANAGER A Survival Guide for Older Generations

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For the past 10 years, the world of work has struggled to make sense of the Millennial generation. Recruiting, retaining and managing Millennials continues to be a challenge for most Baby Boomer and Generation X managers. But what happens when Millennials *are* the managers, responsible for hiring and supervising older generations?

### **MILLENNIALS AS MANAGERS**

Millennials now comprise the largest generation in the U.S. workforce and are rising in rank. The world of management -- and all of its conventional wisdom -- is about to be turned on its head. Here is what human capital professionals must know about Millennial managers to be ready for this sea change.

#### ***Millennial Managers on Hiring***

Baby Boomer and Generation X candidates walk away from interviews with Millennial hiring managers perplexed, if not downright offended. Education and experience – the pillars of professional credibility and financial worth for decades – are not highly prized by Millennial recruiters.

Instead, the emphasis is on what you know, how you think, and whether you are the right cultural fit for the company and team. What Millennial hiring managers really want to vet during an interview is whether the candidate has a knowledge of current and emerging trends for the job, demonstrates an ability and willingness to learn new skills quickly, and relates well to them. Millennials will immediately tune out to candidates who tout degrees, long tenures, and past knowledge. Know-it-all's need not apply.



#### ***Millennial Managers on Communication***

Communication breakdowns between Millennial Managers and their older direct reports are often the result of a difference in the definition of "initiative." For Generation Xers and Baby Boomers, taking initiative means "figuring it out" on one's own, without having to rely on others. They have been taught that the best way to earn praise is to remove their boss from the weeds and any unnecessary details, meetings and decisions. In contrast, Millennials equate taking initiative with asking questions and collaboratively involving one's boss. As bosses, Millennials expect their direct reports to regularly (as in daily, if not hourly) update them on projects and involve them in decision-making. Older generation employees will have to learn to collaborate closely with their Millennial managers to keep them in the loop.

#### ***Millennial Managers on Scheduling***

Millennials believe that the 9-5 construct of work is dead. The workplace of the past is one where productivity is measured by the number of hours you sit at your desk. To Millennials, the future of work requires a high degree of flexibility – from the employee and the manager. This means fluid working hours, technology that enables remote work, and relationships that extend beyond the office. For Baby Boomer and Generation X employees who have spent their careers conforming to fixed hours and mindsets about performance, this will take an enormous adjustment in thinking and scheduling.

#### ***Millennials on Performance Management***

Millennials see the conventional annual or semi-annual performance review as static and one-directional. As managers, they will replace existing performance management processes with real-time goal setting and feedback loops using technology that allows for multi-directional, multi-level, and often transparent comments about the performance of an individual, team or manager. This will be challenging for both staff and HR professionals from older generations, who will have to adapt to new performance metrics, collaborative feedback channels, and different compensation and advancement protocols.

### **THE FUTURE OF WORK**

Most conflict between Millennial managers and older employees stem from generational differences in upbringing, work history and present-day expectations of the job. The future of work and the performance of businesses will depend on both sides flexing to the others' style and comfort zones to achieve common goals. Are you ready?