

MILLENNIALS—COMING TO AN OFFICE NEAR YOU!

For the first time ever, there are four generations together in the workplace: Matures, Boomers, Gen X and, the newest addition, those who don't even have a definite name yet—Gen Y, Echo Boomers, Nexters, Millennials.

This generation, born between 1980 and 2000, is over 80 million, larger even than the 78 million Gen Xers, and a rival to the Boomer generation in sheer size. They have been adored, coddled, overscheduled, and have never experienced really tough economic times. And of course, they are the generation that grew up with technology and are the most comfortable using it “my way.” Why buy a packaged CD when you can customize your own CD or download MP3 files directly to your own player?

They are just beginning to enter the workforce, already comprising 21% or 32 million workers. And they are changing the old ways of doing things.

Of course, all workers want pretty much the same things—to make a valuable contribution, to have opportunities to grow, and to be fairly compensated and rewarded for a job well done. Each generation brings a unique set of characteristics to work and the Millennials are no exception. Millennials excel at multitasking, are easily bored, used to getting lots of feedback and having many choices. They are ambitious, respectful (especially of Matures), goal oriented, possess a “can do” attitude, value diversity and are looking for work that is interesting and meaningful. And they live and breathe technology.

How will these traits influence the workplace? Since they value work/life balance they are seeking a greater flexibility than previous generations and won't hesitate to ask for it. When the work is done, they want to go home. Managers need to focus on results, not hours at a desk.

Email and instant messaging are the preferred communication methods of Millennials. Because they are direct in their communication, they may be perceived as rude. Employers need to choose their words carefully and be precise.

The once or twice yearly performance evaluations won't be nearly enough for Millennials, who need and expect constant feedback. Managers should provide plenty of reinforcement throughout the year—the more detailed the better.

They won't tolerate boredom and can easily manage more than one project at a time. Employers should take advantage of their “can do” spirit by offering responsibility and by showing that opinions are valued.

Make the workplace fun to keep Millennials coming back each day.

Employers will have a treasure trove of talent with this technology savvy, goal oriented, hard working and self assured generation, IF they take the time to understand what make this latest generation tick.

MORE MILLENNIAL MUSINGS

The website www.generationsatwork.com gives “3 Cool Ideas for Managing Millennials”:

- Design office space to encourage sharing of ideas. Get rid of the cubicles!!
- Assign projects to groups who are in turn evaluated as a unit.
- Consider reverse mentoring in technology. Jack Welch of GE fame says that “e-business knowledge is usually inversely proportional to age and rank.” Match millennials with boomers and let the young tutor the older employee in the ways of the Net.

For more information on Millennials or multi generations in the workplace, contact MAGIC.



WORKPLACE LOYALTIES CHANGE, BUT THE VALUE OF MENTORING DOESN'T

The workplace of today is not your grandfather's workplace. Few employees work for the same company for 40 years and retire. So one might logically ask are mentors relevant today? The scholars at the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania believe that mentoring is just as important now as it was in the 50's, 60's and 70's.

Seventy-one percent of the Fortune 500 companies currently have mentoring programs and academic research reported by the Wharton School shows that the mentor and mentee benefit.

In a 2006 study of the effect of mentoring at Sun Microsystems, researchers determined that mentors and mentees both were promoted more often, had greater productivity and had higher retention rates than those employees not in a mentoring program.

Mentors benefit in other ways—not only do they know more of what is going on in the lower levels of the organization but mentees often help mentors learn about efficient ways to use technology and sometimes introduce mentors to emerging technologies. Mentees gain sound career advice and a greater understanding of the organization.

If a mentoring program is formalized, senior management should encourage managers to “step out of your comfort zones and provide support and advice for a broad section of employees”, advises Wharton management professor Katherine Klein. According to Klein some women and minorities might find it difficult to reach out to a mentor and therefore may need more encouragement. The Wharton management scholars also suggest that younger employees in a new job need to find a mentor quickly so that they can take advantage of all that a mentor-mentee relationship provides.

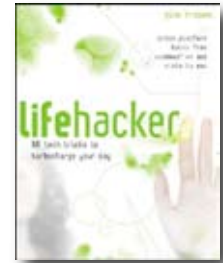
Read the entire article at www.hreonline.com/HRE/story.jsp?storyId=14080390 and contact MAGIC for more resources on mentoring.

FROM THE TRENCHES

Interested in being more efficient when handling your email? The book *Lifehacker: 88 tech tricks to turbocharge your day* has many great ideas for streamlining your life.

The chapter on “Control your Email” presents some wonderful ideas for being more productive with email such as

- Use informative subject lines: make the subject line specific
- Break down messages—send separate messages for each question or request
- Be succinct—you could even send a subject only message for very short messages: “Quarterly report due tomorrow EOM” in the subject line with EOM indicating End of Message.
- Use bullets and line breaks to make your message easy to read



Ever want to see only those e-mail messages sent just to you (and not those messages where you were copied or message sent to several people including you)?

You can set Microsoft Outlook to display these messages in blue—

Click on **Tools**

Click on **Organize**

In the **Using Colors** section, click the **Turn On** button next to **Show Messages Sent Only to Me in Blue**.

Now only those emails sent just to you will appear in blue.

Contact **MAGIC** if you would like to read all 88 tricks in *LifeHacker*.

YOUR OPINION MATTERS

We want this newsletter to meet your needs so we encourage you to send your comments and suggestions to magic2@pwcgov.org.

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