



The Millennial Manual

Four Methods To Maximize Participation

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edition

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“Millennials are on track to be the least entrepreneurial generation in recent history”

– John Lettieri, the co-founder of the Economic Innovation Group



01

Introduction

It's hard to know what to make of the Millennials. Gallup tells us, "People often ask, 'Are millennials really that different?' The answer is yes — profoundly so." On the other hand, a study in the Harvard Business Review concludes that "companies pursuing Millennial-specific employee engagement strategies are wasting time and money."

So which is it? Are they the same as previous generations, or should management cater to their uniqueness? We may be reluctant to believe that human nature changes much from one generation to the next. But it's probably prudent to wonder how management might leverage two unique experiences Millennials had in their youth.

First, they are "digital natives." The oldest began using the internet when they were in middle school, and the youngest had tablets as infants. Their parents and grandparents became digitally native right along with them, of course, but Millennials have never known a physical world that didn't have a digital counterpart. Now that they make up 38% of the workforce, that fact has become critical, from management's point of view.



Second, as Deloitte explains, Millennials are “acutely aware of the impact of the Great Recession and...recognize the importance of ensuring the long-term success of a business.” Millennials search for the spot where they can buy-in. Study after study has shown that they thirst for mentors and guidance and that they are deeply driven to contribute. And since they identify with their careers, they will do so only on their own terms. Deloitte found that 56% have “ruled out ever working for a particular organization because of its values or standard of conduct.” The converse is also true. When their managers and mentors fully explain how their job and their company contribute to society, they happily give their all.

Engaging a Millennial’s participation in your enterprise challenges you to adopt a modern approach to management. In our experience, companies that succeed in maximizing a Millennial’s participation succeed in maximizing the participation of employees of all ages. Doing it comes down to four fundamental methods.



02

Method #1: Mind

Last year, more than one out of every five Millennials changed jobs. One in four say they would quit this year if they found something better.

Four years from now, two in three expect to be working somewhere else. “This remarkable absence of loyalty,” Deloitte explains, “represents a serious challenge to any business employing a large number of Millennials, especially those in markets—like the United States—where Millennials now represent the largest segment of the workforce.”

The cost of turnover is well known; the cost of having people on payroll who are thinking about their next job is not. And in today’s economy, where almost every industry lays open to some Uber-like disruption, management not only needs everyone thinking about their current job at this company, they need everyone thinking about it proactively, and even creatively.

Millennials would like to work proactively and creatively “in the flow.” The fact that they keep moving around means they are searching. Deloitte found that “Millennials are not anti-profit and recognize that money making is a vital component of...success.” Post-recession, Millennials want to find an employer where they can buy-in and make something happen. “Purpose and development drive this generation,” Gallup explains, adding that Millennials may be the most socially conscious generation since the Sixties. They want to help build companies that make a contribution, and they’ll keep looking until they’re given the chance to do so.

Executives who handle this willingness skillfully will retain the best of them. Before turning to the method itself, note that the rate at which Millennials changed jobs last year was three times that of anyone else. When you decide to invest in a new hire, you'll want to convey a complete understanding of why your company exists and, how this particular job contributes to it, in the shortest time possible. The sooner they "get it," the easier it will be for them to engage.

Accomplishing this requires a one-page strategic plan. (Create one here for free.) As Mark Twain famously said, "it takes an extremely long time to write a short letter." Creating a one-page strategic plan requires ten thousand pages of effort, but it's well worth it. It enables everyone, from a new hire to a veteran stalwart, to appreciate your core values, your place in the market, your ambitions, and your challenges.

Millennials need to understand that big picture in order to engage. But the method that keeps their engagement fresh relates the big picture to their daily activities. Aspects of your strategic plan ought to come up in your company's discourse all the time. When managers tie a task back to a core value or strategic goal, they engage Millennials, and practically any person, with a respectful invitation to succeed at the common purpose. That is exactly what a Millennial wants to do at work.

Best Practice One: **Cascading Company Strategy**

When your strategy cascades down through company projects, metrics and tasks, individuals become focused, knowing exactly how their work contributes.

<https://www.results.com/cascading-strategy>

03

Method #2: Measure

If the one page strategic plan satisfies the Millennial's need to get the big picture, measurement is the key to satisfying their desire for professional advancement. Millennials have no patience for anything less than measurement. They have been, after all, tallying "Likes" on Facebook for most of their lives. Their expectation for that type of digital counterpart to the physical world can be leveraged by modern managers, eliminating many toxic risks at the same time. If measurement underlies practically every aspect of management, then Millennials and others will feel that it's fair, and that makes management itself much easier.

More importantly, it also creates a culture of accountability. Millennials thrive in an environment like that. They want to see everyone else's numbers, and they want to know where they rank. In fact, Gallup found that not only do Millennials want to be held accountable, when they are they have a significantly higher level of engagement.

Deloitte found that Millennials are actually more loyal when they are held accountable. "We see this demonstrated by Millennials' alignment with their senior leadership teams," they report, "with respect to...increasing efficiency, ensuring organizations' long term future, continuous improvement, and a desire to be the best businesses in their specific area of activity."

The “desire to be the best” drives many Millennials, and tapping into it is a critical element of modern management. Deloitte found that “While Millennials wouldn’t wish to work in a highly regimented and controlled environment, they understand the need for people to be held accountable for their actions and performance.” They want to prove their worth and to be acknowledged for it. Price Waterhouse Cooper (PWC) found that “Millennials have a greater expectation to be supported and appreciated in return for their contributions” than previous generations.

Measurement plays to this by providing frequent updates, giving management opportunities to show appreciation for performance. This, too, must be done skillfully. “Giving out toys and entitlements,” Gallup explains, “is a leadership mistake, and worse, it’s condescending.”

There’s an art to knowing what to measure and how to define a goal for it (our KPI Success Kit will show you), but this method bridges the gap between the big picture and a daily task. That’s all that’s needed. Millennials are satisfied to know that their contribution to the company’s strategy has been tallied, and they’re happy to amass an elegant record of individual performance that can be used to manage advancement and to make sure that everyone on the team understands how advancement decisions were made.

Best Practice Two: **Metrics That Matter**

Engagement skyrockets when everyone can see how their effort contributes to their team and their company. In RESULTS, Live Data creates dashboards for teams and individuals.

<https://www.results.com/metrics-that-matter>

04

Method #3: Mentor

A HBR study found that while previous generations thought about “balancing” their job and their life, as if they were separate, Millennials “view work as a key part of life.” They want professional mentors to help them develop. And yet, according to Gallup, more than half of them meet with their manager less than once a month.

For Millennials accustomed to receiving and providing near constant feedback on social media, a manager who checks-in so seldom will seem non-existent. Many of the negative statistics we’ve looked at, such as disengagement and job-hopping, may stem from this lack of guidance.

And guidance matters. Managers who met with their Millennials regularly more than doubled their engagement. That’s a huge payoff, but we understand that many executives might roll their eyes at the idea of holding still more meetings, since, worldwide, employees already spend two out of every five workdays in them.

This method helps you make better use of existing meeting time, and pulls together elements from the first two methods to do so. PWC found that Millennials “place a high priority on workplace culture and desire a work environment that emphasizes teamwork and a sense of community.” Enhancing the quality of your meetings can address all of those.

When your team understands the company's strategy, a sense of community and common purpose arises naturally. Measurement enables each person to know that they're contributing.

You close the loop by publicly acknowledging both at meetings. This goes a long ways towards creating a culture of teamwork and excellence. PWC discovered that "in order to foster a greater sense of commitment among Millennials...it will be necessary to transform the core dynamics of the workplace," and meetings where individuals are spotlighted for their contributions can have an electrifying impact along those lines. Since Millennials are so accustomed to social media, where everything they publish is acknowledged, often by hundreds of people, being acknowledged at work fits their expectations and capitalizes on their life experiences.

Best Practice Three:

Meetings With Impact

Meetings put the spotlight on performance as people review team tasks and company projects. The traffic light metrics highlight who's performing well and who needs a hand.

<https://www.results.com/meetings-with-impact>

05

Method #4: Media

PWC found that Millennials “are more likely to report high levels of satisfaction where there is a creative, inclusive working culture rather than a more authoritarian, rules-based approach.”

Every method we’ve discussed so far contributes to an inclusive, creative work environment. In it, we hope, Millennials will thrive, free and empowered, committed to seeing their enterprise succeed. But, as every executive knows, it’s easy for this pendulum to swing too far.

Management needs to exert some control, and the best method to accomplish that with a Millennial is to text them about their priorities. Prioritization is the perfect entry point for directing a Millennial’s behavior. Half of them will readily admit that they do not know how to prioritize their work. When they look to managers and mentors for guidance, this is one of the main things they want. Gallup found that managers who help them in this regard engage three out of four.

Ideally, we want this guidance to enter the workplace gracefully, and what we find is that providing it frequently, interactively, and in real time, produces the deepest understanding and the best long-term results. It’s best if it’s incorporated into the normal flow of business communications.

An employee’s interactions with management, of course, are only a small part the overall work experience. Millennials “place more importance on being part of cohesive teams – and less on pay – so we need to encourage them to connect, collaborate, and build their networks,” PWC explains.

Millennials and managers alike look immediately to technology to meet that need. PWC says that, for Millennials, technology “is an absolute must—they expect to have access to the best tools for collaboration and execution.” For them, all of the interactions described in these methods would naturally pass in a thread, on a social media platform, on their phone.

Providing your company with one optimized for the execution of strategic goals accomplishes two fundamentally important objectives simultaneously. First, it facilitates an extraordinary depth of collaboration, and does so without training. And second, it gives management an unobtrusive means to provide ongoing guidance.

Best Practice Four: **Collaboration In Context**

Numbers alone don’t influence people, or change behaviors. In RESULTS CONNECT anyone can chat and collaborate in tasks and projects helping the team achieve their targets.

<https://www.results.com/collaborate-in-context>

06

Conclusion.

Gallup's most stunning discovery in its study of Millennials is that they don't want to fix their weaknesses. They want to develop their strengths. Because weaknesses can never be made into strengths. But strengths can develop infinitely.

"This is arguably," they conclude, "the biggest discovery Gallup or any organization has ever made on the subject of human development in the workplace."

Post-recession Millennials have mature, positive views regarding the role of business in society. They want to make substantive contributions to enterprises that serve a constructive purpose. They want a reality check from their peers all day, every day.

They want a digital version of their job and their company on their phone. And they want to know that you are as fully committed to it as they are.

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About RESULTS.com

In a world where there's an app and a dashboard for every team in your organization, departments can become isolated and people can lose sight of the larger strategic picture.

RESULTS puts them in touch with each other and gives them a broader vision. It shows users how their teams work together and how they're strategically aligned. It pulls real-time data from other applications to create business intelligence views of performance on Metrics and Projects. It's the only platform with a Meetings interface. It makes collaboration easy because communications are organized around clearly defined objectives, with a texting thread attached to every Goal and Team.

RESULTS gives the C-suite unprecedented visibility into operations and personnel. It includes world-class consultative onboarding, Quarterly Strategic Reviews, and hands-on support from a dedicated Account Manager. Find out what it can do for you today.



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