



Managing Millennials

4 Key Strategies for Becoming an Employer of Choice

Summary

Millennials—those born between the early 1980s and the early 2000s—are a growing generational workforce. Estimates say Millennials will comprise 50% of the nation's workforce by 2020. But their differing values, career paths and technology styles make them an unknown to some employers. What do Millennials value? What do they want from an employer? How do they view and use technology? And how can employers use these generational insights to attract top talent in the coming years?

Who Are Millennials?

Although there's no agreed upon date range that defines the Millennial generation—the generation following Generation X—rough estimates suggest Millennials were born between the early 1980s and the early 2000s.¹

Currently, Millennials make up 33% of the U.S. workforce. By 2020, it's estimated they'll comprise 50% of the workforce, making it crucial for employers to understand this generation's values as a departure from the traditional views of work that prevailed in past generations.

Millennials at Work

So, what makes an employer attractive to Millennials? How do they use—and expect to use—technology in the workplace? And how does technology affect their communication?

Work-Life Balance and Employer Loyalty

Unlike past generations, Millennials value leisure over money, prioritizing flexible working hours over cash bonuses. They also expect to change jobs and career paths more frequently than previous generations. A survey conducted by PwC revealed that a quarter of Millennials expected to have six or more employers during their career.² Some researchers attribute this tendency to coming of age during a long recession, watching their parents struggle with a lack of job and retirement security.³

Technology and Communication

Having grown up in a digital world, it comes as no surprise that 41% of Millennials in the PwC survey prefer to communicate electronically at work instead of face-to-face or over the phone. They are also comfortable using their own tech devices at work, and more than 75% of respondents said technology increases their effectiveness in the office.⁴ Comfort with technology—and multitasking—also has another upside for employers: Millennials are likely to be more collaborative, more comfortable working in teams, and potentially more productive.⁵



¹ Heathfield, Susan. "11 Tips for Managing Millennials." About.com. No date available. Web. Accessed 9 Jun 2014. <http://humanresources.about.com/od/managementtips/a/millennials.htm>

² PwC. "Millennials at Work: Reshaping the Workplace." PWC.com. No date listed. Web. Accessed 9 Jun 2014. <http://www.pwc.com/gx/en/managing-tomorrows-people/future-of-work/key-findings.jhtml>

³ Hartman, Mitchell. "Millennials at Work: Young and Callow, Like Their Parents." NYTimes.com. Web. 24 Mar 2014. Accessed 9 Jun 2014. http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/25/your-money/millennials-at-work-young-and-callow-like-their-parents.html?_r=0

⁴ PwC. "Millennials at Work."

⁵ Hartman, Mitchell. "Millennials at Work."

4 Strategies for Becoming an Employer of Choice

So, how can employers make themselves more attractive to top Millennial candidates? Consider four key strategies:

Flex Time

Flexible work arrangements are a key benefit for Millennials due to their prioritization of work-life balance. (In fact, flex time is such an attractive benefit that many companies today use it to increase their competitive recruiting advantage and enhance their employee benefit package.)

The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) defines flexible work arrangements as offering greater flexibility in three areas: (1) the workplace in general, (2) the scheduling of hours worked, and (3) the number of hours worked.⁶ This definition allows employers to build flex-time programs that best suit their industry and the type of work conducted by their employees.

Why aren't more employers rolling out flex-time programs? The real challenge to employers isn't defining their program, it's managing the day-to-day realities. How can employees' schedules be managed? How can hours worked be accurately captured? How will scheduling rules and boundaries be maintained? And how will benefits and leave time be accrued?

Time and attendance systems offer a successful way to manage and monitor flex time, especially if they feature configurable rules that reflect the organization's scheduling policies. Also, customized reporting on flex-time data allows management to refine their program by identifying trends, opportunities and abuses.

Mobility

Millennials value mobility in the systems they use and the devices they access them with. Even if an employee's position does not require travel or significant time out of the office, the flexibility, security and convenience a mobile app offers encourages employees to interact with systems more often, resulting in more accurate, up-to-date information and increased system-assisted productivity.

Not all mobile apps are equal. The most effective apps are easy-to-use, maintenance-free and configured for multiple devices. They're also tied directly to the parent system to ensure all information captured by the app is available for real-time reporting through the central system. Design is also an important component—the app's interface should be clean, contemporary and intuitive.



⁶ Society of Human Resource Management. "SHRM Research Spotlight: Workplace Flexibility in the 21st Century." SHRM. com. Oct 2010. Web. Accessed 9 Jun 2014. http://www.shrm.org/Research/SurveyFindings/Documents/10-WorkFlexFlier_FINAL_Spotlight.pdf

Employee Self-Service

Growing up in a digital world means Millennials are comfortable using systems to manage their personal information. Employee “self-service”—that is, a system that allows employees to interact with personal information in real-time—supports and empowers employees to better manage their time, information and productivity.

For instance, a time and attendance system with an employee self-service portal allows workers to log in whenever they want to check vacation balances, sick time or upcoming work schedules. If the system includes communication features—such as requesting leave from managers through the portal—it is even better as Millennials prefer digital communication (and managers can easily track the exchanges).

Alerts and Notifications

Alerts and notifications dovetail with Millennials’ ability to multitask—and their preference of digital interaction over face-to-face communication.

When multitasking pulls attention in several directions, push notifications and alerts facilitate employee action when it’s required. Automated alerts can also streamline the communication cycle between employee and manager. Instead of a cumbersome email exchange, automated alerts ping the employee and encourage an immediate response. The manager can then receive an automated alert from the system notifying them the action has been completed.

Conclusion

As a growing percentage of the U.S. workforce, Millennials have values and expectations that will factor prominently in organizations looking to stay competitive through the next decade. Flexibility, mobility and technology are key areas where organizations can begin tailoring their operations, positioning themselves as employers of choice and attracting top talent in the coming years.

About Attendance on Demand, Inc.

Attendance on Demand supports the labor management needs of thousands of companies and more than a half million employees across North America. Launched in 2006, Attendance on Demand is a rapidly deployed, cloud-based solution that minimizes a company’s risk and technology investment while providing advanced features for securely managing labor data—calculating pay rules, scheduling employees, budgeting labor, and automating recordkeeping for labor law compliance. With standard uptime over the industry average of 99.995% and above average customer retention rates, Attendance on Demand removes the worry of maintaining expensive infrastructure. An extensive North American distribution network helps organizations use Attendance on Demand to reduce labor expenses and improve decision making.



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