Destroying the Myths about Millennials

Time Honored Techniques for Working with Young People

Presented by David Snyder, ICP
Senior Leadership Consultant, ASPE, author
How to Hire a Champion
Basis Definitions in Case We Forgot

Here are the birth years for each generation:

- iGen, Gen Z or Centennials: Born 1996 and later.
- Baby Boomers: Born 1946 to 1964.
- Traditionalists or Silent Generation: Born 1945 and before.
Why a Stereotype is Wrong

Assigning a definition or generalities about the traits or work habits of 75 million people across varying degrees of education, interests, personality, background and values is dangerous and ill-informed. It leads to the same type of labeling and misguided misperceptions that any stereotyping leads to, period.
So Why Make a Stereotype?

Money.

“The fascination with Millennials has given rise to a new consulting industry. Hundreds of firms, speakers, authors and individual experts are vying for a share of the ‘Millennials are Different’ segment of the $150 billion-a-year global HR consulting market. A dizzying array of books, seminars, and articles such as Ties to Tattoos and ‘Dude, What’s My Job? Managing Millennials in Today’s Workforce’ promise to help turn generational differences into an asset. There’s even a consultancy that specializes in helping other consultants hone their message to tap into this lucrative market.”

Cited in Harvard Business Review, April 2016
What Do Millennials Really Want at Work? The Same Things the Rest of Us Do
Bruce N. Pfau, Ph.D., partner, KPMG
Myths

“While pithy descriptions of what makes Millennials unique are presented as self-evident and seem to have a ring of truth to them, very few are supported with solid empirical research. On the contrary, a growing body of evidence suggests that employees of all ages are much more alike than different in their attitudes and values at work.”

Harvard Business Review (ibid)
What Does a Millennial Look Like?

Many typical traits can be seen in one of “Those Millennials” from a fashion standpoint, however.
A Typical Millennial

What to Watch Out for:

• Argues with parents
• Up to No Good
• Rides a Motorcycle
• Complains about Old People
• Doesn’t Want a Real Job
• Dresses Like a Hoodlum
• Short Pants
Warning!!!

Millennials’ friends can be even more dangerous!
Millennials in Packs
Warning: These People Also Are Up to No Good

- Hanging out at the coffee shop or soda shop
- Often speak to members of the opposite sex
- Smile and laugh a lot
- Wonder why old people are so uptight
- Wonder why everybody can’t just relax
- Prefer that their boss make sense and not be a total idiot
IBM Study Says We Are the Same

IBM’s Institute for Business Value released a report titled “Myths, Exaggerations and Uncomfortable Truths: The Real Story Behind Millennials in the Workplace.” (2014)

Reported in Harvard Business Review, April 2016 (Ibid)
IBM Study Results

“Based on a multigenerational study of 1,784 employees from companies across 12 countries and six industries, it found that about the same percentage of Millennials (25%) want to make a positive impact on their organization as Gen Xers (21%) and Baby Boomers (23%). Differences are uniformly minimal across nine other variables as well.”

Cited in Harvard Business Review, April 2016

What Do Millennials Really Want at Work? The Same Things the Rest of Us Do

Bruce N. Pfau, Ph.D., partner, KPMG
# Values Across Generations

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<th></th>
<th>Millennials</th>
<th>Gen X</th>
<th>Baby Boomers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Make a positive impact on my org.</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>23%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Help solve social/environmental</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>24</td>
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<td>challenges</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work with a diverse group of people</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work for an org. among best... in</td>
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<td>25</td>
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<td>industry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do work I am passionate about</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Become an expert in my field</td>
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<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manage work-life balance</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Become a senior leader</td>
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<tr>
<td>Achieve financial security</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Start my own business</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
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Source, IBM Institute for Business Value, 2014
What Engagement Looks Like

Wow!! A Crisis!!!

Source: Most Recent Gallup Survey Data
As of April 2017
More Myths Debunked

One study from George Washington University and the Department of Defense, 2012. The researchers:

“[...Analyzed ]more than 20 published and unpublished studies examining generational differences and concluded that meaningful differences among generations probably do not exist in the workplace. The small differences that do appear are likely attributable to factors such as stage of life more than generational membership. The researchers go on to say, “targeted organizational interventions addressing generational differences may not be effective.”

Cited in Harvard Business Review, April 2016 [Ibid]
“The findings suggest that meaningful differences probably do not exist on the work-related variables we examined and that the differences that appear to exist are likely attributable to factors other than generational membership. Given these results, targeted organizational interventions addressing generational differences may not be effective.

Originality/Value: This is the first known quantitative review of generational differences in the workplace.”

*Generational Differences in Workplace Attitudes: A Meta-Analysis, Costanza, et al*

Hey, Stop Calling Me a Millennial!!!

In 2015, the Pew Research Center also conducted research regarding generational identity. It was discovered that Millennials, or members of Generation Y, are less likely to strongly identify with the generational term when compared to Generation X or to the baby boomers, with only 40% of those born between 1981–1997 identifying as part of the Millennial Generation. Among older Millennials, those born 1981–1988, Pew Research found 43% personally identified as members of the older demographic cohort, Generation X, while only 35% identified as Millennials. Among younger Millennials (born 1989–1997), generational identity was not much stronger, with only 45% personally identifying as Millennials.

--Source, Wikipedia
Attitudes and Potential

“On top of Millennials being the most ethnically and racially diverse compared to the generations older than they are, they are also on pace to be the most educated. As of 2008, 39.6% of Millennials between the ages of 18–24 were enrolled in college, which was an American record. Along with being educated, Millennials are also very upbeat. Regarding their economic outlook, about 9 out of 10 Millennials feel as though they have enough money or that they will reach their long-term financial goals, even during the tough economic times, and they are more optimistic about the future of the U.S.”


• Wikipedia (Ibid)
Key Characteristics

- Confident (and Optimistic)
- Connected
- Open to Change
High Performer Traits

A few validated traits of high performing business professionals include:

• Optimism
• Dependability
• Self Reliance
• Preference for Objective Measures
• Work Ethic
• Resilience
• Process Focus
• Accommodation and Sociability
• Acceptance of Diversity
• Energy and Influence

Source, David Snyder, How to Hire a Champion (Career Press)
Hey, That’s a Millennial, I mean Young Person!

Accountability

“A common misconception is that Millennials feel entitled -- that they expect advancement on Day One in the workplace, even in the absence of performance.

This isn't necessarily true. In reality, Millennials want to be held accountable for their performance. In fact, nearly six in 10 Millennials (56%) who report that their manager holds them accountable are engaged in their work.”

--Source, Gallup
And that means…

“To put this in context, if only 29% of Millennials are engaged at work, then these findings suggest that managers can *double the likelihood of engaging millennial employees* by doing something many would consider simple and intuitive: holding them accountable. Millennials, like all employees, seek and desire accountability. When leaders and managers consistently hold employees accountable, they get the most out of employees' performance *and* make them happier and more likely to stay.”

--Source, Gallup (Ibid)
Part II

How to Mentor a Millennial

(I mean high potential young person)
## What Young Workers Want

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From Manager</th>
<th>From Organization</th>
<th>Learning and Training</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Help in career path</td>
<td>Developing skills for future</td>
<td>Technical skills in areas of expertise</td>
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<td>Honest feedback</td>
<td>Strong values</td>
<td>Self-management and personal productivity</td>
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<td>Coaching and mentoring</td>
<td>Options in benefits/rewards package</td>
<td>Leadership Training</td>
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<td>Sponsorship for development programs</td>
<td>Work/Life Balance</td>
<td>Industry training</td>
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<td>Flexible schedules</td>
<td>Direction on career path</td>
<td>Creativity and innovation training (collaboration)</td>
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Sources: Mentoring Millennials, Harvard Business Review, May 2010, Jeanne C. Meister, Karie Willyerd; David Snyder, How to Hire a Champion (Composite Chart)
The Agile Personality

- Creativity
- Problem Solving
- Championing Change
- Prioritization
- Driving for Results
- Process Orientation
- Customer Focus
- Teamwork

IT Professional Competencies (High Performers)

We have “Artists” here, folks...

X=Do…(Actions)

Y=WHY?
IT “Agile” Competencies

- Creative Solutions: 100%
- Analysis and Problem Solving: 88%
- Championing Change: 90%
- Prioritization: 100%
- Driving For Results: 100%
- Process Orientation: 100%
- Customer Focus: 88%
- Resilience: 83%
- Teamwork And Collaboration: 70%
- Organizational Awareness: 75%
- Communicating Effectively: 83%
The Agile Leader

How did that rehearsal sound?

Best answers. (Pick.)

1. It was horrible, let’s do it again.

2. It was ok. We compromised, but Carnegie Hall can live with our mediocrity.

3. We were awesome. No Compromises man!!

The Visionary is the Conductor. The “artists” are in the orchestra.

Leadership Competencies

(High Performers)
Qualities of Creative People*

**Getting Focused**

- Sensitive
- Obsessive over Details
- High Need for Attention
- May Be Easily Offended
- Would Never Compromise Excellence
- Excel when Focused
- Need Peer Support
- Need a Team

**Leader**

Must constantly be aware of and mediate all of these

* The list is much longer than this, but this directly ties to Agile...
A Few Cutting Edge Tips in Mentoring

It’s all about the two-way conversation.

Step one: get to know your mentee. Take the pulse, using the key points defined earlier (what these young workers want.)
Get to Know their Talents

**Engagement Survey - SI 1**

**Section name:** Your Interaction with Work

**Question Group:** Section 4 (cont'd): Talents

**About Talents**
For this survey, the term talent will be defined as a competency magnified. A talent is something you are absolutely the best at. In this survey, you may identify your talents by referencing the competency lists we provided in the earlier questions of this part of the survey, or identify something in your own words.

**What are your top three (3) talents?**
*(please enter a brief description of a talent in each of the boxes provided below)*

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**Previous** **Next** **Return to Dashboard**
## Get Real Feedback

**Source:** EngagementView Survey, Todd Kasenberg and David Snyder. Contact ASPE for More Information 877-800-5221

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### Section name: Your Interaction with Work

**Question Group:** Section 4 (cont'd): Environmental Impressions

Evaluate your agreement with the following statements. (Please select one value on the scale for each statement. Values range from 1 [not at all] to 11 [fully]).

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<th>Statement</th>
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What do you need that you are not getting now in order to more successfully utilize your competencies (as you have identified them) in the workplace? (Please record, in your own words, your top three answers, one per box.)

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What do you need that you are not getting now in order to more successfully utilize your talents (as you have identified them) in the workplace? (Please record, in your own words, your top three answers, one per box.)
Reverse Mentoring

- Companies are increasingly using reverse mentoring where a younger team member is assigned to help mentor an executive, in say, better use of social media.

- The young person will then “interview” the executive, using similar questions we showed in preceding slides. (In order prepare for knowledge transfer.)
Get Real Feedback

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Source: EngagementView Survey, Todd Kasenberg and David Snyder. Contact ASPE for More Information

877-800-5221
Reverse Mentoring Question Example

Young person asks executive (as part of social media training)

• What are our key messages this year?
• Where are we trying to improve communications?
• What elements in our SWOT analysis strengths can we leverage in social media?
• Do we need to do a better SWOT analysis of strengths?
• What if I help using social media?
  (Note: good exercise for your team.)
Reverse Mentoring Question Example—Step 2

- Executive Says—”Great questions. Why don’t you go survey your team and come back to me with answers.”

- Young person comes back with answers and says:

- “I have your answers, and I know what to do on social media, but how do we explain this to the board?”
Reverse Mentoring Question Example—Step 3

Executive Says: “Great question. This is tricky, but I have been doing it for 20 years. We need to make it really simple for them. Let me show you how to give it to them in a language they will understand.”

Young person says:

“Notepad open m’am. I am all ears. Give to me.”

And so the relationship continues, as a circle, experience learning from you, youth learning from experience.
Micro Feedback

Mentoring with “Microfeedback”

Many organizations now employ technologies that allow for “micro feedback” with limits put on the amount of words or characters that can be used in a response to a feedback item.

Using their own internal messaging tool, or third party instant messaging tools, they invite entire teams to give quick feedback on areas of concerns, or group solutions to a problem.

Often younger workers who are experts at using these tools are asked to help create the platforms and scenarios for driving and implementing these “micro feedback exercises.”

Think of an exercise you might deploy using an instant messaging, another platform or even your own on demand feedback tool.

AT&T Leadership Circles

AT&T has tried a mentoring process that takes place in self-organizing, topic-based groups, which AT&T calls leadership circles.

The self-organizing approach of “leadership circles” allows them to reach far more employees than programs run by HR.

“Using an online platform, one mentor can work with several mentees at a time—sometimes in different locations—on skills like generating sales leads or leading teams. The circles take advantage of platform features such as community forums, document-sharing spaces, group polling, and calendars that announce events and mentor availability.”

Leadership Circles Process at AT&T

• Since the supporting software has some built-in social-networking capability, mentees are able to connect to others with very little hands-on assistance from HR.

• Managers frequently share mentoring responsibilities within a circle—as an example, three executives might work together to advise a group of nine employees.

• Face-to-face meetings, conference calls, and webcasts supplement the online coaching.

Exercise/Homework

• Reverse Mentoring: Plan?

• Micro-Feedback: Plan and Tools?

• Leadership Circles: Plan and Tools?

• Other idea for Improving learning and mentoring?

See next page for steps. Gather feedback from team and let them help you plan it.
FRAMEWORK FOR LEARNING IMPROVEMENT

Build Case
- Build a Case for Change in Learning and Training: What Do We Need to Improve?

Vision
- Articulate The Vision and Need for Increased Learning, Define Strategy, Engage All

Leverage Talent
- Leverage Talent Management: Focus on Specific Resources, Leaders and Team That Can Help Propel the Effort

Solidify Culture
- Solidify Culture: Use All of the Above Steps to Solidify and Reinforce the Company Brand, Values and Value Proposition
David Snyder Biography

Author of the critically acclaimed book, *How To Mind Read Your Customers*, David Snyder works with clients nationwide in the implementation of employee assessment, development and selection models across many industries. His specialty is competency-based management assessment and organizational alignment. He is considered a national thought leader in using a competency-based approach to building and developing stronger teams.

*How to Mind Read Your Customers*, Mr. Snyder’s first book, was listed among the best books of the year by *Sales and Marketing Management Magazine* in the year of its publication and has now been translated internationally. His latest book, *How to Hire a Champion* outlines the character traits of high performing individuals, and shows how corporations can use best practices in selection and development to find top performers and keep them.

He is Senior Leadership Consultant for ASPE. Contact ASPE for more information or for booking.

David is ICAgile Certified in Business Value Analysis and voraciously pursuing expert certification.