



## Achieving Peak Performance from Millennials: Optimal Blend of Expectations

**Calvin Nyachoti**

## Human Needs...?

Human  
Needs



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# Introduction

- According to the UN Commission on Population and Development, as of December 2016, there were over 2 billion young people between the age of 10 - 24 years, the youngest youth population ever and with the highest concentration being in the developing world.
- Similarly, the average age of employees within organizations is growing younger. In the coming years, it can only go lower.
- The largest product consumer segment across the world is the youth and these influences and determines emerging consumer trends.
- Even in public sector, where the average age is generally still higher, the average public servant is younger today than it has ever been.
- With the rise of social media as a source of news and shaper of public opinion, the youth are shaping the business world in ways previous unanticipated.



# The Millennial

- So who is a Millennial or Generation Y?
- Generations are analytical constructs where there is popular consensus that mark one boundary with distinct features from the next.
- According to Howe & Strauss, the millennial cohort consists of individuals born between 1982 – 2004 i.e. 18-34 years.
- Generation X consists of individuals between 35-50 years of age.
- Baby boomers consist of individuals between the age of 51-69.
- Except for countries like Japan who are experiencing a population winter, other countries with low birth rates and similar population trends are replenishing populations through immigration e.g. the US.

# Distinct Characteristics

- Millennials are used to working in diverse groups
- They make friends with people at work;
- Grew up with diverse children
- Have a can-do attitude and frequently look for feedback about how they are doing;
- They want a variety of tasks and they expect that they will accomplish every one of them; ready to take on the world;

## Distinct Characteristics, cont...

- They seek leadership early but still expect the structure to be drawn for them by the older managerial coworkers;
- They seek a challenge and don't want to experience boredom;
- They want flexibility in scheduling and life away from work;
- They have a need to see where their career is going and know how they will get there;
- They are the most connected generation in history and network right out of their current workplace if there is no diversity (emails, instant messages, texts, internet, job search engines etc.)

# Getting the most out of Millennials



# Getting the most

- **Provide structure but make it flexible** – Clearly stated goals, reporting deadlines, regular hours, scheduled activities, meetings with clear agenda and minutes, define assignments and success factors etc. but allow flexibility;
- **Provide leadership and guidance** – they want to look up to you, learn from you and receive regular feedback. They need a lot of time investment but also clear growth and promotion plan;
- **Encourage their can-do attitude and positive personal image** – they are ready to take on the world, their parents told them they can do it. Encourage, don't contain them, Allow them to input ideas to voice their opinions and ideas;
- **Take advantage if their comfort levels with diverse teams** – stress teamwork in the work environment;

## Getting the most, cont...

- **They are up to the challenge and change** – boring is bad. Always seeking ever-changing tasks. What is happening next...
- **They are multi-taskers** – they thrive on running multiple tasks concurrently. They can email, talk on the phone, listen to music, browse social media sites, send messages on their phone all in one meeting. It is a way of life;
- **Take advantage of their computer, cellphone and electronic literacy** – have amazing electronic literacy levels;
- **Capitalize on networking abilities** – they like to network around the world electronically, sell themselves. Insist they sell your business as well;

## Getting the most, cont...

- **More transparent organizations** – radical transparency about the business. Where you are, where you want to be, how to get there, financials etc.;
- **Listen to the millennial employee** – their parents did and structured their activities around their children;
- **Provide life – work balance workplace** – They are not into sixty hours a week as the baby boomers. Home, family, interests, sports provide for balance;
- **Introduce a level of fun, employee centred workplace** – They want to enjoy their work, bring friends along, plan company events etc.



# Conclusion

- Millennials have gotten a bad reputation over the years.
  - Portrayed as entitled, lazy and in search of instant gratification;
  - Contrary to popular belief, millennials are actually well-educated, adaptable, ambitious and flexible.
  - As millennials slowly begin to take over the workforce, it is important to learn how to properly manage them and encourage growth by working *with* their work style rather than against it.
  - The preferences are more of intergenerational differences rather than limitations.

**PS. Typical of the Millennial, I've asked to be understood rather than to understand.**



*The illiterate of the 21<sup>st</sup> century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn – Alvin Toffler*

