Communicating and Motivating Your Millennials

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Disclaimer

- During the course of this presentation, I promise I am going to offend somebody in this room....For that I am sorry.
- I’d rather be informative than politically correct.
- I will try to make it interesting and we will try to have some fun.
WHAT THE HECK IS A MILLENNIAL

- Born between 1980 and 1995
- Raised by over-protective parents
- Were told they were all winners
- Were told they could be anything they wanted
- Technologically savvy
- Multi-task (if it suits them)
What does one look like?
Their Background

- Been to more places than their older counterparts
- Have used computers since they were small
- Didn’t take typing, took "keyboarding"
- Childhoods were filled with trophies—just for participating
- Constantly told they were special
Just be thankful this is not your new shop foreman
Then and Now

- 22 yr. old in 1978
- Most were married
- Were buying a house
- Children were either on the way or being discussed
- Stayed at the same job for most or all of life
- Had to be forced to learn how to operate a computer

- 22 yr old in 2008
- Single, still living at home
- Using a computer since they were young
- May have never had a full time job
- Will not stay at the same job for whole life
- Grew up where everybody is a winner
We wish we could have this back
What they expect

- Responsibility
- Entertainment
- More time off
- Public recognition
- Immediate Feedback
- Answers to questions
- They want everything NOW
  - Instant gratification
  - “Microwave Society”
What do we have to do?

- CHANGE
  - No more “Pay your dues like I did”
  - Let them ask questions
  - They will question you
  - That is a good thing...sometimes
  - Let them be “free thinkers”
- Rewards
  - No more long term incentives, make them shorter with small rewards
What we have to do (cont’d)

- Make work fun
- Entertain them
- Give them immediate feedback
- Coddle them
- Tap into their enthusiasm
- Accommodate their schedules
- Let them fail and make mistakes and learn from them
- Become interested in them and what is important to them
HOW do I talk to that....thing?

- Find the balance between therapist and boss
- They want to feel as if they are on the same plane
- You cannot be harsh with them
- Cannot tell them you are disappointed in them
- And don’t ask them to eat and breathe the company....they don’t have time for that
Communication techniques that don’t work.....anymore
What we have done

- Dangled a carrot in front of them for a small reward
- Given awards they want
- Recognized them in front of others
- Communicating with them about things important to them
- Having an “open door” for their suggestions/complaints
- Allowing them to broaden their horizons
- Keeping them up-to-date with new technology
- Meetings with apprentices to allow them an avenue to discuss things away from work
Ideas for Motivating The Unmotivatable

- Keep them up-to-date with cutting edge technology
- Rewards and incentives with immediate gratification
- Let them know what is going on
- Give them what they need to know in bullet points/bite sized portions
- Provide them with prompt feedback
- Allow them flexibility at work
- Get involved
This is truly the first “computer generation”—meaning almost all of them have had computers since they were born.

They grew up with IPODS, Playstations, X-Boxes, Laptops and Cell phones that do it all.

Allow them to use the technology they possess, i.e., communicating with customers via text messaging and email.
This is their comfort zone
Rewards with Instant Gratification

- Instead of long term programs, try one with shorter duration and less reward
- Maybe job specific incentive
- Rewards they want
- Do it publicly
Letting them know what is going on

- They are accustomed to getting their information through the internet, podcasts, and instant messages from their peers.
- They want the information immediately.
- Give them the information through their means of communicating.
- And use multimedia avenues when training.
Bullet points

- They respond better to small bits of information
- Let them pick and choose what they want to do
- Let them pick what interests them
- Entertain them—short, strong, and flashy presentations
Prompt Feedback

- They have grown up with video games with instant results
- They order from a box and pull to the second window and get a hot meal
- They want it all....and they want it now.....and that includes feedback
- Let them know it is ok to fail
- Talk to them as an equal, not as a dictator
- Feedback must be clear and prompt
Flexibility

- They will not eat, breathe and sleep the company.....they are too busy with their lives
- They want to fit work in around their schedules
- They want to get the most done in the least amount of time...they have things to do
- This is by far the most difficult for managers
- They are used to having a say so in the scheduling of their lives
Get Involved

- Know what is going on in their lives
- Sitting behind a desk to manage them will most likely be unsuccessful....they want to see you in the daily routine
- Do what you expect them to do
Just some ideas

- Talk to them
- Listen to them
- Work with them
- Train them
- Challenge them
- Reward them
- Try to break the cycle of the “Everybody is a winner” mentality