What

MOTIVATES MILLENNIALS

In The Workplace

About Author
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Catherine Palmiere is the President of Adam Personnel, a staffing/recruiting company based in NYC. She has worked with hundreds of corporations and thousands of applicants, and is a sought after speaker on hiring and professional development. She can take all the pain out of your hiring process – only sending the two or three BEST candidates for your position.

Catherine holds four industry certifications from Certified Personnel Consultant to Certified Behavioral Analyst along with an M.B.A. in Management. She is also a member of the Society of Human Resources Management, the American Staffing Association and The New York Staffing Association which she is a member of the Board of Directors on the Legislative Committee. She is listed in numerous editions of Marquis Who's Who. Catherine is a native New Yorker who enjoys exercising and making sure she laughs at least three times a day, both of which helped her complete two NYC Marathons..

Catherine has been quoted in numerous on-line and in print articles pertaining to staffing and recruitment. She is the author of the eBook: A Guide To Improving EMPLOYMENT RETENTION In The Modern Age. She is currently an Adjunct Instructor, in the School of Business at Manhattan College.

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Introduction

As in many cases, numbers set the stage for the story about businesses and Millennials. According to the [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#), Millennials will make up nearly half of the workforce by the year 2020. When Millennials leave their jobs, companies spend between $15,000 and $25,000 to replace them, [according to a survey](#) by consulting firm PwC. As Millennials become an increasingly integral part of the workforce, business need to change their hiring and talent management strategies in order to attract and retain top Millennial talent. The challenge is that Millennials are motivated somewhat differently than other generations, and this means that hiring managers and HR professionals need to take this into account.

When it comes to motivating Millennials, there are three things that companies need to focus on: engagement, flexibility and professional development. In this whitepaper, we will explore these three values and show how businesses can use them to attract and retain Millennials.

Engagement

Millennials are more likely than previous generations to leave a position if they are not engaged with your brand. If they leave, the result is the loss of a talented employee as well as the associated expense of finding a replacement.

Here are the key differences between Millennials and Baby Boomers when it comes to engagement:

Baby Boomers: Accustomed to predictable structures. Workers are patient, optimistic and willing to work long hours—sometimes at the expense of work-life balance.

Millennials: Energetic, engaged in the community, skilled in technology. Workers prioritize a work-life balance and seek out challenges. They derive pleasure from immediate results; they grew up in an era of instant search results online.

A company should use three major ways to increase engagement with Millennials.

1. Develop an Engagement Strategy

Plan with purpose. Give Millennials checklists, provide help and support, encourage healthy risk taking, and set them up with mentors.

Look at your engagement strategy at least once a year and keep your monitoring processes aboveboard and transparent. Set realistic goals, and have multiple approaches that consider other generations such as baby boomers and Generation X.

2. Have a Talent Brand

Having a strong talent brand is a great way to attract and retain Millennials. One major thing that raises a brand in the eyes of Millennials is social consciousness. More than other generations, Millennials value businesses that create positive change, be it through charity, environmentally friendly products, etc. Millennials are also attracted to brands that are known to encourage creativity in their employees.

3. Communicate Frequently and Clearly

Millennials prefer consistent, actionable feedback, more so than other generations. As such, you should look into ways to ensure that you are providing this feedback regularly. Focus on personal, one-on-one praise instead of impersonal awards. When giving constructive criticism, provide solutions for improvement. Feedback must be to the point and clear.

Flexibility

Providing flexible work situations is a great way to engage Millennials. The demand clearly exists; three out of five Millennials said on a [Cisco survey](#) in 2014 that they expect to be able to work remotely. A [Mom Corps study](#) in 2011 indicated that more than half of workers under age 45 want a job with an employer who offers flexible benefits, such as telecommuting, and [Badgeville survey results](#) in 2013 showed that 89 percent of Millennials want to choose when and where they work. Last but not least, a [survey from global firm Ernst and Young](#) in 2015 says that 38 percent of Millennials report they would leave the United States for another country with better parental leave benefits.

Flexibility encompasses a great host of factors, and employers can tailor each factor in many ways. Basically, flexibility comes down to encouraging and trusting employees to work from home some of the time (providing the logistics to make it happen), more vacation time and greater independence about selecting work hours. Enhanced benefits for parental leave and leave situations in general are also other attractive factors, but a business needs to be careful not to breed resentment and not to alienate workers without children. A business is better off establishing a generous leave policy that parents and nonparents alike can use as they want.

A business should enmesh flexibility into its corporate culture; this approach automatically bolsters its recruiting strategy. One way is to focus more on results rather than on the "hows". For example, "hows" include arrival time, lunch break, departure time, time off and the like. "Hows" skip over the two hours that many employees waste every day because they have time to kill or are disengaged. A focus on results grants workers the freedom to efficiently pursue projects and complete them on time; it's up to them when to arrive, when to leave and when to take vacation.

Professional Development and Growth

Millennials are hungry for change and growth. They strive to constantly improve themselves and they love challenges. For example, a [survey](#) in 2012 showed that 68 percent of recent college graduates prioritized chances for growth and development at their jobs.

Businesses can help develop Millennials in several ways, including sending them to training programs, leadership conferences and classes. Two other ways are to encourage them to take the time to work on personal projects and to create interim, in-between titles and positions to better recognize their career progression. Remember that Millennials typically prefer instant recognition and feedback. For example, if the gap between product manager and senior product manager in a company is five years, the company could motivate Millennials by adding one or two steppingstone titles to fill the gap, or modifying the titles hierarchy altogether.

Training programs and leadership conferences get Millennials out in the world more and help them network. If they have a personal stake, such as presenting a paper or a project, then so much the better. Even if they do not, the mere fact that a business is invested enough in them to help in that way is a powerful motivator.

Classes serve similar functions; they can be online college classes, in-person college classes or classes offered by businesses. Personal projects can be individual or collaborative; the point is to give workers something to be enthusiastic about that naturally helps foster their professional growth. Of course, a business is bound to make mistakes, but the point is to keep an open mind, experiment and to encourage an open atmosphere of respect and communication.

Conclusion

For a business to succeed, it cannot afford a one-size-fits-all approach to employees. Each generation of workers grew up with different historical influences and technology and so displays marked differences. Baby boomers tend to thrive in highly structured environments and can wait patiently for feedback and promotions. Millennials prize faster progression, creativity, independence, trust and personal recognition. They also change jobs a lot, which is costly for businesses.

Retaining even just a handful of Millennials at a company saves the business upwards of a hundred thousand dollars. Keep Millennials at your company longer by properly motivating and engaging them. Develop an engagement strategy that starts from within and embraces your company culture. Give employees flexible options to help with their work-life balances and challenge them with growth and development opportunities. When properly motivated, Millennials will be a powerful addition to your workforce.

Quality Millennial workers are everywhere

For help finding top Millennial talent, please contact ADAM Personnel.

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