

January 2015

---



## **Mission Impossible?**

### ***How to Manage the Millennial Generation***

Kellie Campbell, Firm Administrator

[kcampbell@dmlo.com](mailto:kcampbell@dmlo.com)

With millennials (the roughly 77 million Americans born during the 1980s and 1990s) composing an increasing share of the workforce, effectively managing them is critical. It helps to examine their work habits and attitudes, separating fact from fiction.

### **Perceptions and misperceptions**

Millennials might not be as entitled and antibusiness as they're often portrayed. Nearly two-thirds (65%) of respondents to a survey of millennials by Bentley University say being successful in a high-paying career or profession is an important goal. Most are willing to sacrifice to achieve these goals; for instance, 68% would relocate.

Like most employees, millennials are concerned about pay; after all, many graduate with hefty student loans. Most millennials responding to a 2014 study by Business Insider and News to Live By, a career advice site, ranked pay as the most important factor in a job.

### **Management tips**

To be sure, a few practices may resonate more with millennials than with older workers. Some can be put in place without turning the workplace upside down:

***Feedback.*** In a survey by Achievers, a provider of employee success software, 71% of millennials said they expect immediate, rather than annual or semiannual, feedback. That sounds daunting and unrealistic. However, the feedback can be as simple as a quick e-mail or a brief conversation about their progress on a project and its relation to the company's mission.

***Involvement with causes.*** Knowing a company was involved in "cause work," or programs that help people and communities, influenced job decisions for more than half of millennials, according to another survey by Achievers.

So consider communicating how your company contributes to the world through its products and services — a catering company, for instance, can discuss how its services help clients celebrate milestones in their lives. You also can implement manageable volunteer initiatives, such as team outings to local food pantries.

***Multiple ways to the top.*** Millennials aspire to succeed both at work and at home; nearly 20% of fathers in the Bentley study said an ideal career would provide time off to be with their children. Creating varying paths and time frames for advancement may help retain these workers. That might mean, for instance, allowing parents to reduce their hours while their children are young, yet remain eligible for promotions.

### **Mission possible**

Millennials, like every generation, will leave an imprint on the work world. At the same time, their goals often are similar to those of their older colleagues. Distinguishing truth from hype and, when appropriate, implementing policies to engage and retain these workers can boost your company's overall performance. •