



HERO Forum17 Campfire Chat

Millennials: Waking Up Wellness in the Workforce

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Date/Time: Tuesday, September 12, 4:40-5:15 p.m.

Abstract

Employers are looking for ways to attract, engage and retain millennials in the workforce. Amenities such as fitness facilities, healthy food options and an onsite health clinic are necessary to hire and keep the future of the workforce engaged. But are those amenities enough for this generation? Millennials do their research and approach both their health and work from a holistic approach. Not only do millennials want to have access to a state of the art fitness facility upon hire, they want to work with a supervisor that fosters an engaging and collaborative environment at an organization that encourages a work-life balance. An onsite clinic is an amenity they are looking for to stay healthy, but they crave opportunities for personal growth and recognition. If employers want to hire the best candidate from a pool of millennials, it is time to evaluate health-related amenities and new forms of supervision.

Discussion Summary

Question 1: How are the needs, interests and expectations of millennials different from other generations? What are the strengths and learning opportunities millennial age employees bring to a work place?

The Millennial generation has very specific values around work life balance, and they voice what they would like to see from the companies they are employed by. Communication tends to come via text messages at any hour of the day, and an employee that is considered within the Millennial generation may prefer to know why certain things are done in the manner they are done. Knowing this provides context in most situations as they want to understand the environment. This can be perceived as disrespectful to other coworkers/supervisors yet it is merely a characteristic many possess.

Providing vision for their work is valued, yet the Millennial employee prefers flexibility in how the work is completed, and at what hour of the day. Coming from a flexible environment in college they often will look for similar boundaries in the companies they come to work for.

Strengths come in talent around technology, leveraging its use, and the value of relationships with coworkers and supervisors. This generation trusts their supervisors, and the assumption that they are likely to leave their positions because they aren't loyal is just that, an assumption.

Question 2: What are your companies/organizations doing to engage millennials? How does your employer evaluate amenities and benefits to meet the needs of the entire workforce?

Companies are researching this generation, holding focus groups, and building community to keep individuals engaged and feeling welcomed. Attendees at this session shared several examples of companies fostering community engagement. One example came from Phillips 66 which has a new-hire network (first 5 years you are a new hire) that intends to engage employees with volunteer opportunities, recreation and mentoring programs, as well as hosting forums with the CEO to educate their employees about company culture. Another example is Unite, (millennials and non-millennials) a program for new-hires allowing them to ask questions of management so they're better informed about the company. Whereas one business hosts teleconferences (everyone in the company is invited), and yet another will hold regional town hall meetings, all with a similar purpose, to create a sense of community with their employees.

Some tactics also being used are early conversations about career paths, discussing annual goals in performance reviews, and offering transparency as it relates to next steps since this generation is already looking 5 years ahead.

Question 3: What programs, benefits or onsite amenities do you offer to the employee population to target millennials?

As the group discussed programs many were similar in platform, using apps, video messaging, emails and texts to communicate. Several companies were implementing health and wellbeing programs and challenges, furthering worklife initiatives, as well as offering programs for student loan repayment. This discussion was brief and sequed quickly to Question 4.

Question 4: How do we respond to individuals who come into our organizations? How does your employer overcome the limitations of budget restrictions, lack of facilities and lack of staff while still meeting the expectations of the diverse employee population?

This group was interested in learning more about our experiences with individuals who may be considered millennial generation and how assumptions can be harmful and oppressive to groups of individuals.

We dug deeper into how the Millennial generation is being perceived and addressed some misconceptions. A group member was brave and shared the feeling that she felt the term millennials is being used negatively and with a lot of stigma associated with it, and that the group was using terminology referring to Millennials as a group with a lot of assumptions/labels associated with it. The discussion led us down a path of greater understanding as we linked to inclusion and diversity work. Age is one factor and maybe the the way to think about this is that things in the world are changing; this gives us the permission to not stereotype groups of

individuals. As we provide learning opportunities to new coworkers, we too can learn from individuals who see the world from a differing perspective.

Sources

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