



Facet: Interactivity

What Millennials Want in a Leader

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I'm one of three millennials working at my company, and I'm smack in the middle of the pack. As I've attended conferences over the last 5 years and talked to leaders and professionals in organizations large and small I've heard, with ever more frequency, "oh yeah millennials, that's a big issue" or "we're talking about that a lot". Millennials outnumber baby boomers making them the world's current largest generation at a whopping 75 million strong. As the topic of millennials in the workplace has become more and more discussed I've begun to identify a few key issues:

- Anytime a new generation breaks through into the realm of adulthood, they're perceived as mysterious, misunderstood, and fickle.
- Millennials have strong opinions about leadership and the type of company they'd care to work for. They're not willing to accept any position or any leadership style with open arms.
- Leaders today have not cracked the code in terms of identifying what kind of leader makes millennials tick.

Over the past several years thousands of leaders have worked with us to better understand the way they are showing up within their organizations. We've delivered the [ExPI assessment](#) to leaders in hundreds of organizations with unique industry specific and culturally relevant challenges. What we've learned – no two leaders are exactly alike. Leadership doesn't exist in a vacuum, after all. That said we can develop ideas about the qualities of leadership that lead to success in different situations. Leading millennials is certainly a situation we're equipped to speculate about.

The Keys to Unlocking Millennial Leadership



Here are the qualities of leadership I think will bode well for leaders shepherding teams of millennial employees:

Authenticity: Millennials grew up in an environment where they were close to the authority figures in their lives. A leader who tries to connect them to the larger vision, tells personal stories, and makes an effort to mentor teams and individuals, will be well received.

Inclusiveness and Interactivity: As you're checking the boxes to keep your millennials happy at work, diversity and inclusion are essential. Millennials appreciate collaborative work environments and want their voices and the voices of their peers to be heard. Leaders who listen and stimulate dialogue amongst diverse teams will resonate with these twenty and thirty-somethings.

Concern: Millennials have a strong social agenda and care deeply about fostering a world **where relationships are valued. They were raised by very involved "hands-on" parents, and are used to being close to authority figures. As a leader, demonstrating concern is crucial to keeping your millennial employees from job hopping away from your organization. While concern for individual employees is paramount, concern for larger social issue and creating a corporate culture that "gives back" will resonate with their hearts as well as their minds.**

As millennials continue to rise through the ranks at your organization, perhaps see it as an opportunity to grow as a leader. Every cohort is different and every organizational culture is different. When you have the opportunity to learn about a new group, you also have the opportunity to start fresh and motivate, align and inspire the next generation to rally behind your vision and change the world.

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