
The Work Ethic of the Millennials

To many, the millennial generation is perceived as entitled and lazy. Throughout history, every generation evolves in various ways. Characteristics such as work ethic, adaptability, meaning of life, and social expectations change by each generation. Simply because millennials view work and goals differently in comparison to their generation X, their effort does not indicate laziness. Millennials are perceived as lazy and entitled solely because they do not abide to traditional ways of thinking. The work of preceding generations benefits the future of proceeding generations. Because of this, millennials are not required to work as hard as their generation X. Instead they work smarter than harder. Although millennials share a different style and attitude towards work, their attributes do not indicate laziness.

Millennials, also known as generation Y, approach work in a different way than their previous generation X. Their laziness is only a misperception in the eyes of generation X and baby boomers. Millennials have developed efficient work methods that previous generations are currently novel of, and therefore uncomfortable with. For this reason, senior working professionals who have low adaptability traits do not feel comfortable with workplace change. Millennial tech-savvy knowledge, and social media use are looked down upon instead of taken advantage of.

The tech knowledge that millennials possess cause them to approach work in a different manner as opposed to generation X. They choose to solve problems in the most flexible and simple way possible. With the use of technology, they hold the ability to obtain all the information in the world at their fingertips. Hence, of course they will take advantage of this efficient way of work and learning. In addition, technology limits office work hours because of the ability to work anywhere with technology, and expands the convenience of communication. Consequently, this savvy way of problem solving is misperceived as laziness according to older generations. Lindsey Pollak, author of *Becoming the boss: New Rules for the next Generation of Leaders* validates that, "The workplace is shifting to technology in general and this happens to be the generation where it changes. Overall, communication is changing in the workplace" (Downey).

Conversely, millennials do tend to lack focus and willingness to learn due to technology according to several professional workplace sources. Millennials are constantly distracted by social media, emails, texts, and news. Orun Bhuiyan, co-founder of SEOficial sates that "I'm a Millennial and I run a company where most of my staff consists of Millennials. The bad habit I'd like to mention is the lack of focus due to constant distraction. Generation Y grew up in front of a TV, bombarded with new stimulus every 15 seconds. As a result, it's an uphill battle for many to

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regain the ability to retain focus for a long period of time" (Murphy). This constant lack of focus towards work translates to laziness in the eyes of their seniority employers. However, one may argue that each individual responds to these distractions differently. Although millennials may seem to be incredibly distracted from work, they are also excellent multitaskers. Science claims that the brain is incapable of multitasking, yet studies show that this generation is requiring the brain with extensive multitasking. Evidence shows that the average teenager watches TV, completes homework, and plays video games simultaneously. Their brains are being trained to increase performance without deterioration of cognitive processing. This activity shows that our brains are evolving. (U.S. Chamber of Commerce).

Previous generations were forced to work hard and think excessively about money. The baby boomers lived in a time after WWII when finances were only recovering, therefore they were forced to work hard for money in order to survive. Similarly, generation X recently lived through The Great Recession which occurred during the 1930's and featured gross domestic product decline which resulted in unemployment rate, and often called the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression. As a result, our previous generations did not have time to live, but instead occupied their thoughts towards work and money. (Picardo).

Millennials appear to be incredible lazy is due to their satisfaction towards life. Millennials are a generation satisfied with their monetary means and work to live rather than live to work. Because every generation becomes wealthier, people no longer extensively stress about money unlike their previous generations who were forced to work their way up the socioeconomic ladder the difficult way. Millennials are more concerned about seeking a work life-balance and pursuing a career that they are passionate about. To the majority of millennials, high salary is only a bonus. (Chou).

Simply because millennials are not money hungry does not imply that they are lazy.

In fact, depending on their passions, they are highly motivated. In my personal perception, I see highly motivated individuals thriving at my university. I notice that pre-medical students spend hours on their studies in order to receive A's because they know that they are required to do so in order to be admitted to Medical school. These students are those passionate about helping others. In addition, I notice that other students, such as interdisciplinary studies majors, who are more concerned about personal development rather than grades. Such students are not interested or concerned about what a piece of paper has to say about them and are more passionate about other aspects of life. However regardless of grades, they work extremely hard in other areas of passionate interest. Conversely, I face students who dream of becoming investment bankers because they are motivated by money. These students are highly motivated and live to work rather than create meaning in their lives. Previous generations were overly concerned about money, therefore they placed additional effort into pursuing a career that

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promised a high salary without considering passion. For this reason, it is reasonable to argue that millennials are not lazy simply because they are motivated for different reasons. They are motivated by life and passion rather than monetary means.

It is reasonable to argue that millennials are not lazy because they approach work in a different way than previous generations. Previous generations view millennials as lazy because they are novel to their new way of attitude, motivation, and method of work. Just because millennials work extremely hard towards their passions rather than money, does not indicate that they are lazy.

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