

The Millennial Takeover:

How To Recruit, Engage, and Retain the Largest Generation Ever



Just the Fact. Who Are Millennials and What Has Shaped Their Lives



What Do They Want From Work, How To Recruit Them & How They Work Best?



How To Leverage an Intranet To Drive Millennial Engagement and Retention

The Millennial Takeover: How To Recruit, Engage, and Retain the Largest Generation Ever

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The Truth of The Matter...

The generation stands 54 million strong, the largest cohort in American history. A generation that's formative years were marked by The War on Terror, a tumbling economy, and a proverbial mountain of debt.

The truth of the matter is for an organization with 1,000 employees, the additional cost of replacing a millennial worker is over \$300,000.

Let's just get this out of the way: recruiting, training, and retaining millennials can be a chore; irritating, frustrating, galling, even. They are narcissists! Their Work ethic is highly questionable! They expect immediate, unearned, authority! Perhaps. But the generation stands 54 million strong, the largest cohort in American history. A generation that's formative years were marked by The War on Terror, a tumbling economy, and a proverbial mountain of debt.

But behind these quirks, today's young adults are also affable, generous, and eager. Perhaps this enigma is hard to square, how can a group filled with such hope and energy cause so much frustration among employers? Well, given the reality of their sheer size – A third of the workforce in 2017 – they are hard to ignore.

The truth of the matter is for an organization with 1,000 employees, the additional cost of replacing a millennial worker is over \$300,000.¹ And these costs add up, fast. That's what makes this so vital, the dollar and cents, the future of every organization hangs in the balance.

So, let's just get right down to it. Who are these young adults, what do they want, where do you find them, how do you engage them, and how do you keep them around? We'll answer that, we'll explore their relationship with technology, provide concrete truths, and just lay the facts bare. After all, if they want an engaged and eager workforce built for the future, employers really don't have much of a choice in the matter



Who Are They?

Roughly speaking Millennials are anyone you know born in the 80s and 90s. So approximately everyone between the age of 18-35.

Despite rumors to the contrary they aren't job-hopping nihilists.

This is a bit nebulous, but roughly speaking anyone you know born in the 80s and 90s. So approximately everyone between the age of 18-35. Their parents were mostly Baby Boomers; they are your kids, nephews, nieces, and grandkids. You likely already know them well.

They are the most educated generation in history. Though, while that stat is mostly commonplace, it's a bit misleading. Of those ages 25-29, 36% of millennial men and 46% of millennial women have attained a bachelor degree or higher.² So while some do have many, various, degrees, like the preponderance of their predecessors, most never graduated from college.

Despite rumors to the contrary they aren't job-hopping nihilists. Pew Research notes "in January 2016, 63.4% of employed Millennials... reported that they had worked for their current employer at least 13 months. In February 2000, somewhat fewer 18- to 35-year-olds (59.9%) – most of whom are today's Gen Xers – reported similar job tenure."³ Though this can be attributed to their higher propensity to have a bachelor degree (more education coincides with longer job tenures).

It is true, however, that they are living at home in larger numbers than previous generations. Though this is often a bit overblown. A total of 15% of all millennial adults live with their parents, up from around 10% of Generation Xers. As you can imagine, this number is closely correlated with educational attainment.⁴

They are the most diverse generation on record. Some 43% of Millennial adults are non-white. Compared to the 75% white majority of the Boomer generation.⁵

Despite everything, millennials are also an optimistic bunch. 80% say they either currently have enough money to lead the lives they want, or expect to in the future. This despite entering adulthood with a substantial volume of debt (66% of 4-year college degree recipients have outstanding loans, averaging \$27,000.)

The assertion that they are good (or at least highly experienced) with technology is well founded. 97% of millennials regularly use the internet compared to around 80% of Boomers. 88% have a smartphone, 90% use social media.

Lastly, the assertion that they are good (or at least highly experienced) with technology is well founded. 97% of millennials regularly use the internet compared to around 80% of Boomers. 88% have a smartphone, 90% use social media. That's why they are called "digital natives"—they are a generation for which these new technologies are not something they've had to adapt to. They were born in conjunction, thrived in each other's presence, and consequential to everyone's future.⁶

This use of technology, their natural inclination to use and leverage it at every opportunity, is key to engaging them! Their natural skill-set is perfectly aligned to benefit from a highly plugged-in work environment!

Together, this short background paints the portrait of a generation uniquely suited to bring varied experiences and specific talents to the workplace. Their education, diversity, and commitment to employers, and natural talent with technology is an opportunity, not a burden. But in return for those talents, millennials have an asking price.

What Do Millennials Want?

At their core, “they yearn to work for managers who treat them fairly and respectfully, to form positive connections with colleagues and feel proud of what they do and its impact on the world.

Young people are people; they want what we all want. They want a job they enjoy, a steady income, a loving partner, a family of their own, a decent home, and a vacation once in a while. It’s nothing wild or eccentric. So, we won’t dwell on the existential. Yet, there are unique characteristics, demands, and expectations they have on the job. These desires are critical to understanding how to keep millennials engaged, productive, and a part of your team.

At their core, “they yearn to work for managers who treat them fairly and respectfully, to form positive connections with colleagues and feel proud of what they do and its impact on the world.”⁷ As recently noted in Fortune:

“The companies that top Great Place to Work’s first-ever ranking of the 100 Best Workplaces for Millennials stand out for their ability to engage this generation, recognize their talents and give them a significant role where they can make a difference. At these companies, pay, profit sharing, and promotion decisions are executed fairly; everyone gets a shot at special recognition; and workers have a say in decisions that affect them. These workplaces exhibit strong, open, two-way communication; a high tolerance for risk-taking; high levels of cooperation and support among employees; and reduced roadblocks to innovation, such as internal politics.”⁸

Those measured by Great Place to Work are fairly esoteric, and may come as a surprise. The top ten rounds out as:

1. Elite SEM
2. Quicken Loans
3. Kimley-Horn
4. Point B
5. Ultimate Software
6. Power Home Remodeling Group
7. Workday, World Wide Technology
8. World Wide Technology
9. Acuity Insurance
10. RevZilla⁹

So long as you embrace a certain ethos and equip your workforce with the right tools (computers, the right software, etc.) and right environment, they can and will flourish on the job.

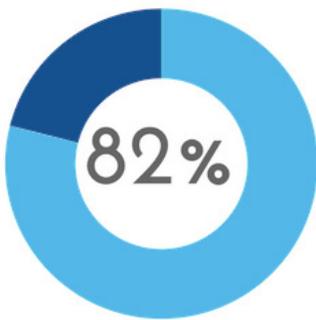
While a healthy mix of tech companies fill its ranks, the wide variety of industries on this list illustrates that millennials natural abilities with technology does not necessarily translate into a single-minded focus to work in the tech. Instead, it proves that so long as you embrace a certain ethos and equip your workforce with the right tools (computers, the right software, etc.) and right environment, they can and will flourish on the job.

Obviously, a happy career involves more than the work environment. The kinds of perks and benefits millennials desire is as important to consider as ensuring they have the latest iMac. Those companies in Great Place to Work are “more likely to offer flexible scheduling (76% vs. 63% for other companies), telecommuting options (82% vs. 74%), paid sabbaticals (15% vs. 11%) and paid volunteer days (46% vs. 39%.) More winning Millennial-friendly companies offer perks like massages (65% vs. 26%) and fitness classes (70% vs. 24%) to their workforce.”¹⁰

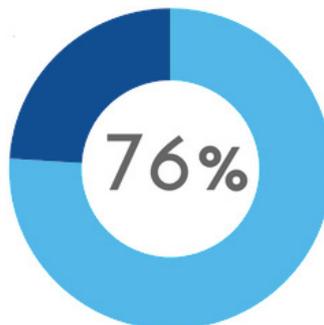
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Together, this information shows a generation that simply wants to have an impact, that cares about what they do, that is happy to work for a broad cross-section of industries, whom want some flexibility in how and where they work (resulting from their use of computers to work!), and that wants to leverage their native, digital, advantages to benefit their employer and their colleagues.

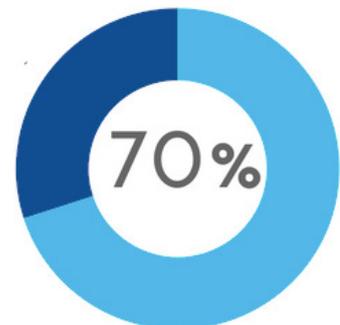
The Top 100 Best Workplaces For Millennials Are More Likely To...



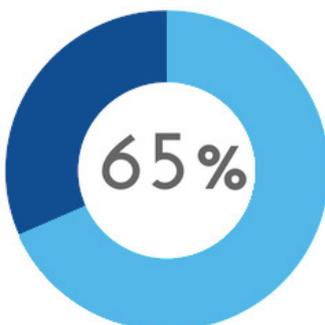
More Likely To Have a Telecommuting Options



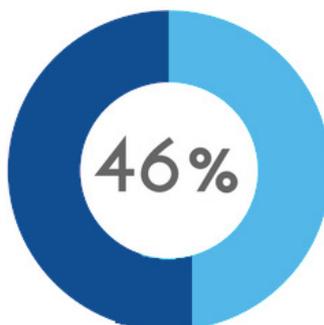
More Likely To Have Flexible Work Schedules



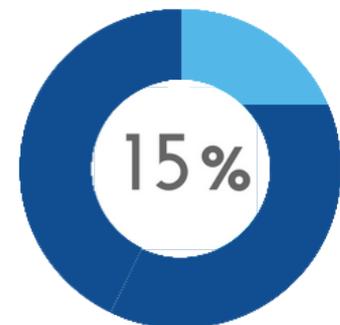
More Likely to Have a Fitness Center



More Likely to Offer Massages



More Likely to Have Paid Volunteer Days



More Likely to Have Paid Sabbaticals



How to Recruit Millennials

You likely already know how to hire an employee. Whatever your vetting process, whatever interview process you've set up (or not), however you vet your next generation of employees, there's some common themes that have emerged on how to construct a workforce prepared for the future.

First, the best and essentially only place to recruit the young is through the internet: LinkedIn, Indeed, Monster, and the plethora of other job seeking websites. Sure, recruiters are still a principal source, but most young people simply lack the long-term credentials to attract the notice of headhunters.

Second, when creating job listings, be explicit about title and responsibilities. Workable suggests that "Millennials are looking... for clarity in their job titles and job responsibilities. Even though titles like "ninja," "rockstar" and "guru" are popular choices to attract younger talent, they are on the decline as companies tend toward being more explicit with their titles when hiring millennials." Moreover, "When writing job descriptions tailored to hiring millennials, highlight anything that's special within the position and your company, and how it can contribute to overall career goals."¹¹

Thirdly, while it was fashionable (if a bit puzzling) during the Great Recession to filter candidates by demanding entry level applicants carry significant years of experience. Today, with the economy humming near full-employment

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it's important to have more reasonable expectations. If you're asking for significant experience for entry and mid-level positions, you'll just be filtering out many talented and bright prospects.

Lastly, be open to training. 87% of millennials surveyed by Gallup said that professional development was an important part of their job. Be open about advancement and training opportunities. Leverage tools like a **New Employee Onboarding** platform or a **Learning Management System (LMS)** to enrich your training programs and help with certifications. An LMS can help set career goals and streamline employee training while streamlining compliance audits.

How to Engage and Retain Your Millennial Workforce

Gallup report revealed “that only 29% of millennials are engaged at work, with the remaining 71% either not engaged or actively disengaged. What’s more, six in 10 millennials say they’re open to different job opportunities, and only 50% plan to be with their company one year from now.”

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There’s clearly no shortage of variety and breadth of jobs that exists, so when it comes to engagement it’s necessary to paint in broader strokes. While an analyst will need excel, a writer Word, and a designer Photoshop, we won’t get that granular. Instead, the focus will be on overall solutions that keep millennials plugged in, collaborating, thriving, and sticking around your workplace.

Troubling, a recently published Gallup report revealed “that only 29% of millennials are engaged at work, with the remaining 71% either not engaged or actively disengaged. What’s more, six in 10 millennials say they’re open to different job opportunities, and only 50% plan to be with their company one year from now.”¹² This is obviously a problem, but not one without a solution.

And we’ll just say at the outset, every bolded item is part of our OnSemble Employee Intranet solution. A platform for employees to just do their best work, without distractions, without the help of IT.

As we considered building a platform to drive employee engagement, it was useful to conceptually break engagement down into smaller, more manageable, concepts: Feedback & Communication, Data & Analytics, and Time and Resource Management.

Feedback & Communication

Recall that the companies listed at the top 100 organizations for Millennials to work excelled at “exhibit[ing] strong, open, two-way communication.” This doesn’t occur in isolation, but is instead ingrained in the culture. It’s an ongoing process that is central to those organizations success. There’s no shortage of ways to actually communicate, but each way strengthens the others.

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The cornerstone of communication is an **Instant Messenger** platform, a way to Instantly collaborate with anyone across a secure companywide channel. Equipped with features like an expert locator to find a specialist in your organization. The upshot of an instant messenger is the substantial decrease in email fatigue: there’s no better way to lose engagement than for your younger workers to feel like all they are doing is responding to emails.

Similarly, an ingrained **Employee Recognition System** excels at providing direct and immediate positive feedback. When someone does something amazing, goes above and beyond the call, or helped you finish a project, they deserve a little recognition. A little thank you goes a long way towards keeping millennials engaged.

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Again, returning to the Top 100 organizations for millennials to work at, they found success when millennials felt that they “have a say in decisions that affect them.” Tools like **Polls**, **Blogs**, and **Company Announcements** are vital in establishing, communicating, and executing your organizations strategy with the buy-in of your workforce.

Data & Analytics

Thriving on the job demands that you actually have a measurable goal. Millennials especially want to feel like they are making a difference, they want a quantifiable metric to demonstrate their value. Consequently, tools like **Dashboards** and **Reporting and Analytics** creates a visually rich environment to understand exactly where you or your team stands. Providing your team the metrics needed to gauge the performance of your organization, to track goals, and set strategic objectives.

Time & Resource Management

Finally, nothing does more harm to employee engagement than feeling like you've wasted time. There's no shortage of productivity hacks out there, but concrete solutions to time and resource management are critical for a thriving workforce.

Forgetting where a document is and forgetting what-in-the-world your password is for specific solution are two the easiest ways to sap enthusiasm from a millennials day. With an Employee Intranet teams and departments have their own page, there place to showcase their work, a central location to keep **Important Documents Listed**, and immediately accessible. Similarly, a **Single Sign-on** integration that extends your on-premises Active Directory login into the cloud ensures your employees will never forget a password. Millennials may be digital-natives, but their memory is as fallible as everyone else's.

Ensuring "high levels of cooperation and support among employees" means that when your millennials are invited they attend meetings and events. An Integrated, company-

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wide, **Calendar** can be simply filtered to see what the day has in store for everyone on their team. Just as importantly, finding and booking meeting space needn't demand a convoluted solution, OnSemble's **Rooms and Reservations** app allows rooms to be booked when meetings are created.

Interacting and keeping track of the various details of a vendor's contract and obligation can be, frankly, tedious. A **Vendor Management** app can reduce the headaches involved while freeing up the time needed to focus on more pertinent work.

A Small Bit of Advice for Management

Finally, while some outside what outside the scope of what our intranet solution delivers, Gallup's review of engaged Millennials in the workplace reveals some concrete management advice:

“Employees need to know what’s expected of them in the workplace. It’s extremely stressful for any worker to lack an understanding or awareness of job responsibilities. In fact, Gallup finds that 72% of millennials who strongly agree that their manager helps them set performance goals are engaged.”

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Setting performance goals is one major necessity; of similar importance is knowing how to prioritize work responsibilities. Employees require job clarity so they have an understanding of what to do. They also require direction in establishing priorities -- knowing the order in which tasks should get done. Prioritizing is a distinct need for millennial employees: Just 54% of millennials strongly agree that they know how to prioritize responsibilities at work, compared with 71% of those from older generations.

Organizations need great management to overcome this obstacle.

When managers get involved and help with prioritization, it greatly improves employee engagement. Nearly seven in 10 millennials who strongly agree that their manager helps them establish priorities are engaged, compared with 27% of millennials who do not strongly agree.”¹³

OnSemble Employee Intranet It can do a lot. And So Much More.

The image shows a laptop displaying the OnSemble Employee Intranet for People's Trust. The interface is clean and modern, with a green and white color scheme. The main content area is divided into several sections: 'Human Resources' with a 'New Wellness Program' announcement, 'Benefits' with a 'Know Your Benefits' section, 'Forms' with a list of documents, and a 'Winners!' announcement. On the right side, there are logos for ADP, Office 365, and KRONOS. The laptop is a MacBook. Surrounding the laptop are six circular icons representing various features: Content Editor, Employee Recognition, Document & Forms, Custom Themes, Single Sign-On, and Help Desks.



Conclusion

Integrating a collaborative platform into your workplace like OnSemble is a concrete and easy step to increasing millennial engagement and retention. Increased communication, strong feedback and recognition, helping employees do their best work, and eliminating distractions, that why we built OnSemble

It's worth circling back one final time do the defining characteristics of companies that are thriving with millennials: everyone gets a shot at special recognition; and workers have a say in decisions that affect them. These workplaces exhibit strong, open, two-way communication; a high tolerance for risk-taking; high levels of cooperation and support among employees; and reduced roadblocks to innovation, such as internal politics.

Those organizational features don't simply materialize. They are the product of concrete decisions, culture, and the tools you provide to your millennial employees. Integrating a collaborative platform into your workplace like OnSemble is a concrete and easy step to increasing millennial engagement and retention.

Increased communication, strong feedback and recognition, helping employees do their best work, and eliminating distractions, that why we built OnSemble Employee Intranet.

Yet, we know that deploying a new solution is rarely an enjoyable affair. We've been doing this a long time, and there are some secrets we picked up along the way to make the whole experience delightfully easy. Our extensive Support and Customer Community are always ready to lend a hand. A Dedicated Customer Success Manager will guide you through your implementation, roll out, and will be there every single day – at least until the end of time.

So, let's get going, you have everything to gain and nothing to lose. Call us at 765.535.1882, email us at more@passageways.com, or just take closer look at our website (though unlike a lot of millennials we do love talking on the phone). We promise a more engaged, happier workforce that will be around for the long haul. Building a future we can all be proud of.

The Millennial Takeover isn't something to be afraid of, but it certainly helps to have a partner dedicated to making it easy to manage.

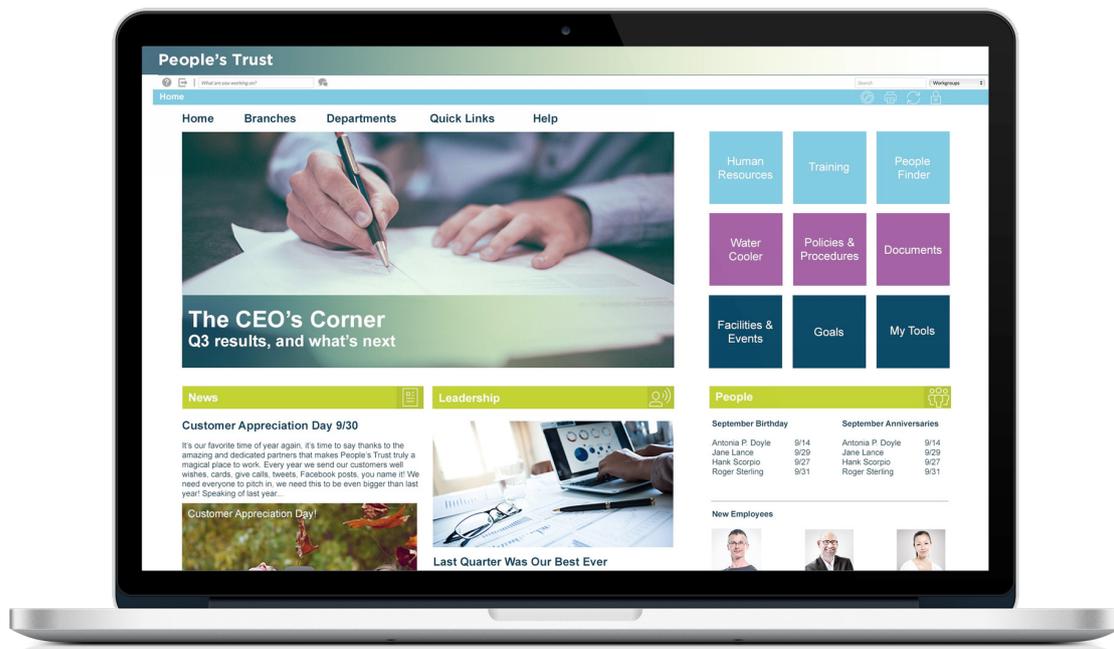


End Notes

1. <https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/originals/bb/3c/1c/bb3c1c8dead81d32141f3a7038a4630f.png>
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6. <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2014/03/07/millennials-in-adulthood/>
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13. *ibid.*

About Us

Imagine an intranet you can manage yourself. That is ready to be deployed and loved, right out of the box. Without the need for IT or expensive consultants. If you can make a PowerPoint, you can create a beautiful intranet with OnSemble. OnSemble doesn't need a morning coffee to get going. A drag-and-drop, no programming needed, document co-authoring, one-stop-shop collaborative suite. Let's get going.



More Than an Intranet

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