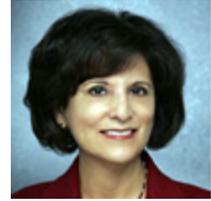


Jeanne Meister: Inside the Millennial Generation

According to alum Jeanne Meister, the world and the workplace are going to change dramatically as the Millennial Generation enters the workforce. Millennials also known as Gen Y or Digital Natives are folks born between 1982-2000. Essentially they are the 'Facebook' generation, having grown up with Facebook, MySpace, Twitter and YouTube.



Jeanne was motivated to research the Millennial Generation about a year ago while seeking out information and signing up for many innovative social networks dealing with aging parents. She quickly realized that social networking was an integral part of what Millennials will demand in the workplace. Thus her journey as an expert on the needs, expectations and demands of the Gen Y in the workplace began.

Attracting Millennials to the workplace

"I believe that when Millennials enter Fortune 1000 companies, they are going to demand the same set of social media tools that they have been using in their personal lives. In fact a research study conducted by Insurity, on behalf of the insurance industry, found that Millennials expect to use the most recent technologies in the workplace. This survey was conducted with a sample of 700 young professionals based in US and Canada.

Essentially, the survey found that Millennial expectations in the workplace are shaped by their experiences as consumers and as students. Because of this proclivity to using the latest technologies in their personal lives, Millennials expect employers to provide similar technologies in the workplace—such as opportunities for real time collaboration using voice, web conferencing and instant messaging. The statistics tell the real story: 40% of this generation expects access to social networking sites, 44% expect company virtual meetings, 49% expect access to sites like Wikipedia or access to company internal wikis. The question is, how many companies are really listening to the needs of Millennial workers and making the needed changes in their workplace to really accommodate some very serious expectations of these new hires," Jeanne explains.

Jeanne goes on to say "Research shows that it is important for corporations to understand that the value this generation gain from their social networks translates to increased speed to competence on-the-job. In fact, 85% of Millennials in the Insurity survey said that the opportunity to work with the most innovative technologies was important to them when it comes to considering a job opportunity. In the race to recruit the best talent and to retain this talent, companies need to develop a strategy for using social media for attracting, recruiting, developing and engaging Millennial talent. The goal, says Meister, is for companies to build their employer brand as an inviting workplace that leverages social software for increased employee productivity rather than just a place to experiment with the innovative technology tools."

"Moreover, attracting and keeping talented Millennials goes beyond companies having innovative technology. Flexible work schedules, including the option to telecommute or work from home are also a priority, as well as, collaborative team work environments and a community of their own peers. Companies that are adopting their recruitment, development and retention of talent to take into account the needs of Millennials will be the winners over the next decade." added Jeanne.

Millennials are driving change

According to Jeanne, "when Millennials are members of a global, virtual team they can easily work in a team environment with the use of a wiki rather than dealing with endless emails. The big advantage of internal project-based wikis is the dramatic reduction in the amount of valuable content that can potentially get buried in emails. This generation is going to expect that potential employers have figured out how to increase their productivity by using these tools."

The companies that are certainly the leaders in attracting and retaining Millennials are the ones in the Communications & High Technology space, like Accenture. But, there is a tremendous amount of interest in building a strategy on how to attract and retain Millennials in financial services and utilities companies where a large amount of the workforce will be retiring within the next 5 years.

Statistics show that starting in the year 2010, every 10 minutes a Baby Boomer will turn 60. This is becoming a key driver for change in corporations—a change driven by the tremendous shift in the talent leaving organizations

and the new and different set of expectations of talent entering organizations.

About Jeanne

Jeanne is a senior executive with more than 25 years of experience in corporate branding and marketing, human resources talent management and enterprise learning. She was Vice President of Market Development in Accenture Learning, which is part of Accenture BPO, from 2003 -2006. In addition, Jeanne has authored more than 60 articles, a number of book chapters and given numerous keynote speeches. She is also an active member of the Board of Directors of the American Diabetes Association.

"I came in as entrepreneur having sold my business, Corporate University Xchange, when I joined Accenture. I basically found in my heart that I wanted to write another book and start another entrepreneurial venture. Therefore, I left the firm. I'm thankful for my time at Accenture which resulted in a wonderful network of very smart people. I am constantly connecting with Accenture people, locally and around the world. I always feel that I'm part of the Accenture community," Jeanne explains.

Most recently Jeanne was featured in the *New Observer*, a regional newspaper operating in North Carolina. She is also the creator of a blog, www.newlearningplaybook.com, tracking innovations in recruiting, developing and motivating new employees and the co-founder of the Learning Innovation Network, a community of senior human resource and learning professionals operating "at the edge" in using the latest social technologies. Recently, Jeanne was nominated and selected by her peers as "one of the top 20 most influential training professionals," in Training Industry. Feel free to email Jeanne at Jeanne@newlearningplaybook.com to congratulate her, connect or reconnect.

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