
September 2011 *LifeSolutions* Corner

“The kids I work with are driving this baby boomer crazy! Members of the millennial generation are constantly texting and seem to think they deserve special treatment just for showing up for work! I have to admit I envy their ease with technology, and they do come up with good ideas at times. Can *LifeSolutions* help me survive working with this ‘totally wired’ group?”

We most definitely can. First, it may help to understand a little about how they got to be the way they are. Raised by Baby Boomers, and continuously shown positive reinforcement in their actions, Millennials can be overly confident and optimistic, and expect to move ahead quickly and easily in the workplace. Born between 1980 and 2000, this generation has grown up with technology and considers it necessary in the workplace. They are savvy users, connected 24/7, and adept at accessing information through the global network, which can be an asset to workplace teams.

So how do we tap into their enthusiasm and connect with these innovative, resourceful colleagues?

Claire Raines and Arleen Arnsparger in their book, *Millennials@Work*, offer these tips:

- ◆ **Help them learn** – share your knowledge of the organization, how to get things done, where to get information, and whom to go to with ideas.
- ◆ **Let go of the idea that we all need to work in the same way.** Millennials work differently. They can crank out a ton of work in an hour and then need a Starbucks break to regenerate those brain cells.
- ◆ **Tell them how they’re doing.** They thrive on frequent, specific feedback. Balance your criticism: provide positives that equal or exceed it. Negatives will be better received if coupled with suggestions on how they could have done it differently or how to improve next time around.
- ◆ **Don’t buy into the myth that these employees are lazy and self-centered and have no work ethic.** That may be true of some, but get to know your Millennial colleagues as individuals and try to find the strengths in both your similarities and differences.

Call *LifeSolutions* at 1.800.647.3327 and schedule an in-person or telephone coaching appointment for more information on how to connect with all the generations. It’s free and confidential, with convenient hours and locations.

Find more information online at www.lifesolutionsforyou.com. Click on the *WorkLife* Portal log in and type in your company code. (Call us if you do not know your company code.)

Source: Millennials@Work, Engaging the New Generation. Claire Raines & Arleen Arnsparger, 2009 Claire Raines Associates

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