

[THE MILLENNIAL WORKFORCE]

23 TIPS FOR MOTIVATING + CHALLENGING
EMERGING LEADERS



It's no secret that millennials get a lot of flak in the workplace. As one of the most scrutinized generations, they've been called everything from impatient and entitled to lazy and social media obsessed.

BUT ARE THESE STEREOTYPES REALLY WARRANTED?

While younger folks may lack some real-world experience that comes with age, millennials are hardly the caricatures that many believe them to be. In fact, they are arguably one of the most misunderstood generations to date. Heavily influenced by technology, economic and political uncertainty, and rising societal and environmental concerns, their approach to work is simply different from their predecessors.

Millennials consider their job an integral part of their lives. Not constrained by the "traditional" 40-hour work week, they expect their work to provide personal fulfillment and meaning. If they do not enjoy what they are doing, cannot see their impact, or aren't being challenged, they will move on. While this trend may paint them as job-hoppers, millennials are just as—if not more—loyal than Gen Xers. **If they feel they have the tools they need for career success and fulfillment, they'll be more dedicated to the company in the long run.**

For employees who say they have a great place to work, their likelihood of staying with the company varies by generation:



There are currently more millennials in the workforce than any other generation. From this, it is hard to deny the influence they will have on the future of business. From their communication styles to desire for transparency, we have a lot to gain from their ideas, hard work, and fresh perspective. As a result, now is the time to start facilitating a culture that embraces their preferences and prepares them for leadership roles.

Read on for 23 tips on how you can build a workplace that motivates, challenges, and satisfies the emerging leaders of the millennial workforce.

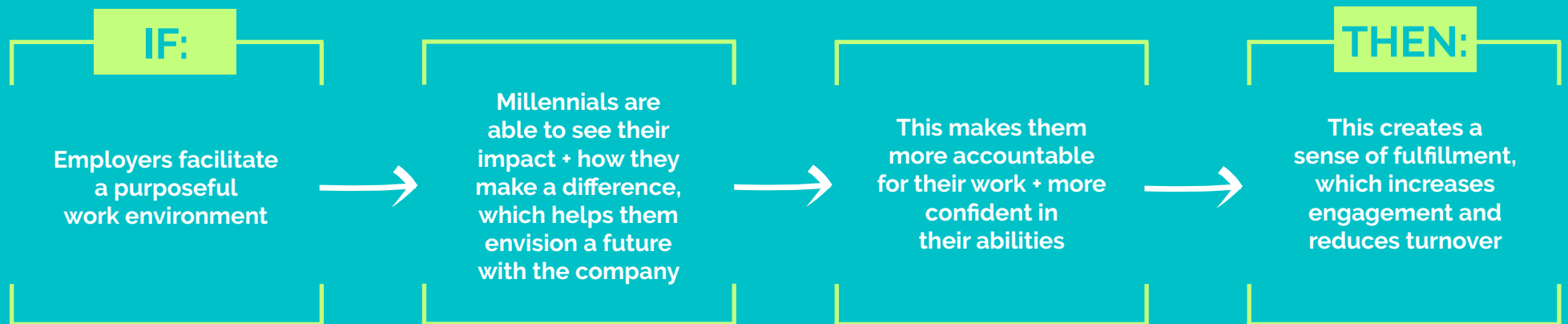
An illustration of a man in a dark suit and tie standing on the edge of a dark, jagged cliff. He is holding a long telescope to his eye and looking out over a city skyline. A briefcase sits on the ground next to him. The background is a solid teal color with faint, stylized city buildings and clouds visible in the distance.

MEANING + PURPOSE

It's the journey, not the job.

Most millennials are motivated by more than money. While they certainly care about their income, a job means much more than just a simple paycheck to many in this generation. **Wanting to be a part of something bigger than corporate profits, they are seeking meaning and purpose in their lives.** And, guess what? They view their job as a vehicle for delivering this fulfillment.

After all, work is typically where we spend the majority of our time. If millennials feel they aren't doing enough, can't comprehend the impact that their actions have, or don't know how they fit into the long term picture, the company will begin to look a lot less alluring. As a result, employers need to offer their employees a sense of purpose to not only motivate millennials to perform their best, but also help them feel passionate about their work and the company's mission.





88% of millennial employees who are satisfied with their sense of purpose at their organization plan to stay more than 5 years²

So, how can employers provide millennials with this sense of purpose?

Recommit to your mission + values: Companies that do not live by the values they project will experience high turnover. Ensure all employees feel they are helping the company achieve its mission by reinforcing it on a regular basis. Publicly recognizing employees for their contributions, for example, is a great strategy for doing this.

Let them contribute: While many managers might have difficulty handing over the reins to a younger employee, this is the best way to show that you trust them. Doing so will also help them see how they fit into the bigger picture, which can be a great motivator!

Facilitate hands-on management: Since most millennials value collaborative work environments, a top-down leadership style will not be effective. By encouraging every employee to share new ideas and help make decisions, you can inspire professionals to take ownership over their work, which ultimately improves engagement.

Innovate in your industry: Millennials have grown up in a time where innovation leads, and it's pretty easy to tell if you're behind the times. When millennials see that they're changing the game with their work, it will be hard for them to feel like they don't have a purpose.





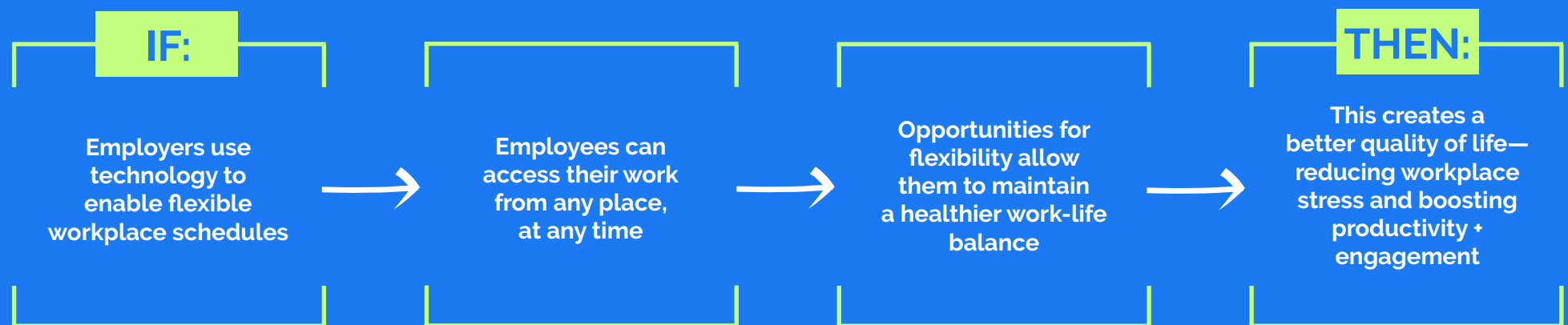
FLEXIBILITY

Focus on results, not hours.

As digital natives, millennials are never fully unplugged from work. Using the technology they grew up with as a catalyst for information, they are always checking emails—even on weekends and late at night. **Due to this constant state of connectivity, millennials are naturally drawn to companies that help them maintain a healthy work-life balance.** This trend will only grow stronger as more millennials begin raising families and taking care of their aging parents. Relying less on their partners to handle these personal responsibilities, they expect their employers to understand their need for a more balanced approach to work.

This doesn't necessarily mean that they want to work less. In fact, it's been found that millennials—many of whom entered the workforce during the Great Recession—will make more personal sacrifices to prove they are indispensable. However, they do tend to shy away from the traditional 9-5 office environment. Believing that productivity shouldn't be measured by hours in the office, but rather by results, they want to utilize technology to achieve greater flexibility in the workplace.

While these arrangements were a privilege in the past, today, they are becoming increasingly common. However, it isn't enough to simply offer this flexibility; employers need to show millennials that they trust them to take it. Here's why you should:



While the flexibility you offer will differ depending on the organization's needs, here are some arrangements to consider:

Alternative scheduling: This type of schedule can either require an employee to be present for "core hours" (i.e. 10am-3pm) but adjust their start and stop times, or work outside of "core hours" as long as they fulfill all of their responsibilities.

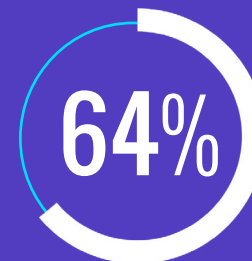
Compressed work week: If an employee needs an additional day off a week to devote to personal responsibilities, this schedule allows them to work four ten-hour days.

Telecommuting: This allows employees to work from home (or wherever they feel most productive), as needed.

Considerate time off policies: Employees shouldn't worry about missing out on a promotion or raise if they need to take a vacation or sick day for their overall well-being.

On + off-peak schedules: If employees put in longer hours during a peak period, giving them a reduced schedule during a slower time of year is a good way to reward them.

Freelance work: An increasing number of millennials are participating in the gig economy to advance their skills. Offering freelance or project-based work is a great way to engage with millennial talent, while offering them the flexibility they need for professional development.



64% of employers of millennials have adopted flexible location policies, allowing employees to have the option to work from home or wherever they feel most productive²



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Loyalty is a two-way street.

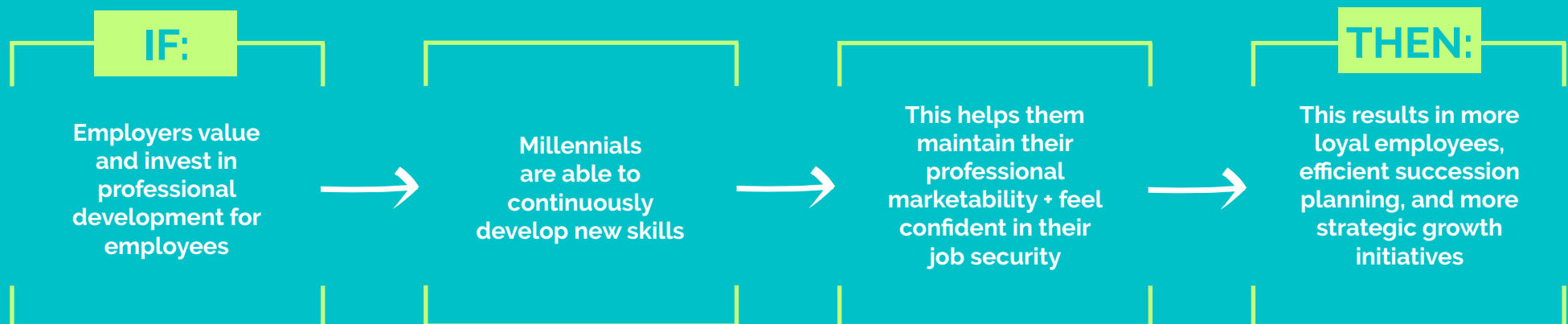


Traditionally, professional development has come in the form of a promotion. Millennials, however, have a slightly different take on what professional development means for their career. Rather than aiming to quickly climb up the corporate ladder, **they are focused on identifying opportunities that allow for continuous skills development and ensure their long term employability.**

This isn't to say that millennials are the job hoppers that many people believe them to be. They will be loyal to their company as long as they feel their employer demonstrates the same level of commitment to them. In return for a job well done, this generation expects to be able to expand their skill set and scope of responsibility, while earning trust and authority over time.

Simply put, this generation isn't afraid to take their professional development into their own hands. Growing up in an age of rising student debt and job insecurity, millennials tend to prioritize their own marketability when making career decisions. If they've stopped learning or don't feel their employer is providing them with the tools they need for career progression, they'll find a job that will.

However, if given the opportunity, many millennials would be happy to advance with the same employer. Here's why they're worth the investment:





76% of millennials said that professional development opportunities are one of the most important elements of company culture³



To provide the professional development millennials need for success, incorporate these practices into your culture:

Offer employee mentorship opportunities: Having more experienced employees serve as role models is a great way to develop millennial employees in a 1:1 environment. A mentor can help younger employees learn the ropes and make valuable contributions, while serving as a sounding board for new ideas and concerns.

Start a leadership development program: As future business leaders, millennials should have the opportunity to develop these leadership skills before they are given the title. This type of program can provide them with the tools they need to move up within your organization and grow in their career.

Give them more responsibility: While you may not be able to give them the title bump they desire, you can give them new responsibilities that allow them to cultivate new skills on the job.

Encourage them: Once you identify their goals, ask them how they want to go about it. By giving them the responsibility to decide how they learn, they'll be more empowered to actually complete a course or a new project.



TRANSPARENCY

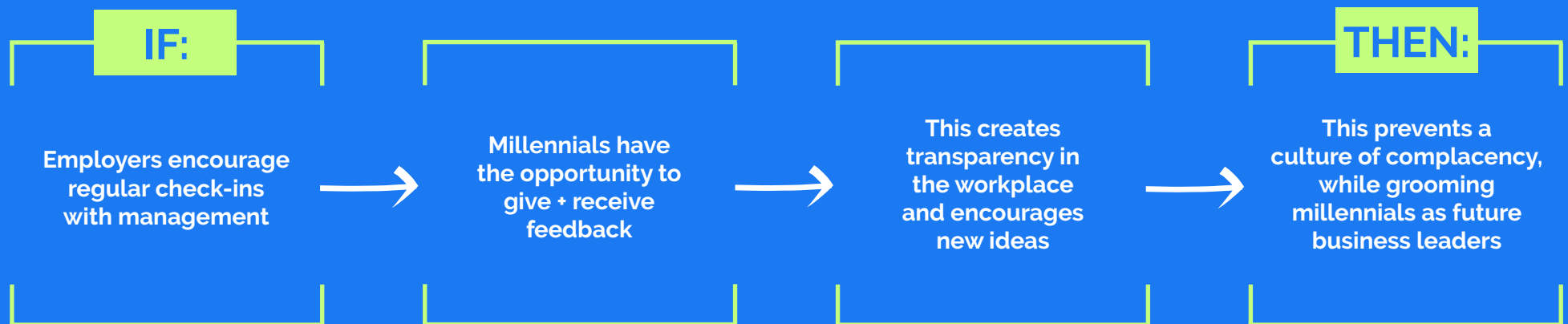
Millennials have engaged in a constant feedback loop from an early age.

Millennials have been conditioned for continuous feedback from an early age. Growing up, their parents and teachers cultivated relationships that encouraged them to speak up, ask questions, and stay connected. Then, for their entire adult lives, access to the internet has made them grow accustomed to instant information.

Given this, it's not surprising that millennials expect transparency in the workplace. **Since most of their lives revolve around open and direct communication, one formal review isn't going to cut it.** While they aren't seeking constant praise from their managers, they do require more "real time" feedback and greater access to leadership than their predecessors did.

To put it into perspective, many of these employees have gone from receiving feedback almost daily to once or twice a year. If they don't have the opportunity to learn about their accomplishments (or short comings) and how their work adds value to the organization, how can they begin to make improvements or set goals for growth?

Rather than viewing these millennial traits as a burden, their desire for increased communication and feedback can have many positive implications on companies:



Create a more transparent workplace for millennials through these steps:

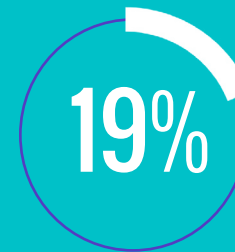
Listen: With a desire to be part of the decision making process, millennials have a lot of ideas. Show you take them seriously by being forthcoming with new initiatives, listening to their feedback, and taking their voice into account when making decisions.

Ask: Whether they'd like a more flexible schedule or to learn a new skill, taking the time to ask about their needs is a great way to develop each employee in the way that's best for them.

Set goals + recognize triumphs: Implementing a milestone program that is tailored to every specific employee is a great way to recognize your millennials' significant accomplishments.

Be honest: Honesty is the best policy for building trust with millennial employees. Give them clear, constructive feedback on their performance and be transparent about where they stand regarding a promotion or a raise.

Say thank you: While millennials' significant accomplishments should be acknowledged, their need for recognition is more about being kind and friendly toward one another. As a result, a simple 'thank you' or 'great job!' can go a long way.



Only 19% of millennials say they receive routine feedback. Even a smaller percentage of millennials (17%) say that the feedback they do receive is meaningful⁴



SOURCES:

1. CNBC
2. Deloitte
3. The Execu|Search Group's 2017 Hiring Outlook
4. Gallup

ABOUT THE EXECU|SEARCH GROUP

The Execu|Search Group was founded in 1985 as a recruitment firm focused on serving accounting firms, boutique hedge funds, and private equity funds. Over time, our firm has evolved into a full-service firm integrating a broad range of industries. We're proud to say that we've helped over 26,000 companies find talent and have connected over 60,000 people with new jobs.

Headquartered in New York City with additional offices in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Florida, we've become one of the largest privately-owned recruitment, temporary staffing, and workforce solutions firms. Today, we serve the following practice areas:

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