MANDEL

Make every communication count.

MILLENNIALS IN THE WORKPLACE

THE KEY TO UNLOCKING THEIR EFFECTIVENESS

The key to accelerating business performance is in helping a new generation of workers leverage their creativity and drive.

If you are responsible for equipping your company's employees to support accelerated business success, here's an important question for you:

Which generation of workers now represents the largest percentage of the U.S. workforce?
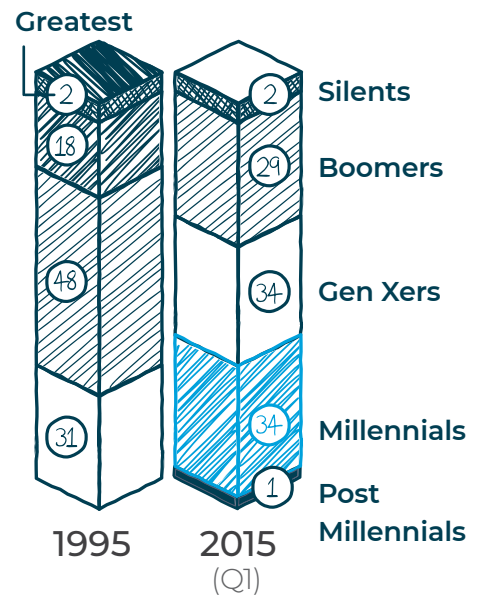
The answer: Millennials.

During the first quarter of 2015, Millennials (adults aged 18 to 34) surpassed Generation X to become the largest share of the American workforce, according to Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data.[1]

Because of the size and future impact of the Millennial workforce, every organization must find ways to maximize the contributions of this key group of employees.

Given the unique characteristics of Millennials, employers need to pay particular attention to nurturing the ability of this group to design, deliver, and defend their ideas.

Labor Force Composition by Generation

% of the labor force

Greatest

	1995	2015 (Q1)	
Silents	2	2	
Boomers	18	29	
Gen Xers	48	34	
Millennials	31	34	
Post Millennials		1	

Source: Pew Research[1]

Can Your Millennials Design, Deliver, and Defend Their Ideas?

A business achieves results when it can successfully bring forward, adopt, and implement its employees' best ideas.

As Millennials become a larger portion of your workforce, their ideas will be the ones driving profitable growth. The ability of your Millennials to design, deliver, and defend their ideas (especially to upper management) will be critical to your company's future innovation, growth, and profitability.

Here's the challenge: Millennials possess unique characteristics that may hinder their ability to get their
best ideas heard and adopted.

Research conducted by public and private institutions suggests that three of those characteristics are particularly important:

1. **Work style preferences** that could impede their contributions to company performance.

2. **Aspirations and expectations** that may be perceived as challenging by older colleagues and cause Millennials' input to be devalued.

3. **Job mobility norms** that make it difficult to retain Millennials to full career maturity.

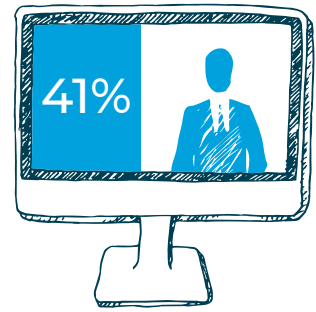Let's take a closer look at these characteristics.

> **The ability of your Millennials to design, deliver, and defend their ideas (especially to upper management) will be critical to your company's future innovation, growth, and profitability.**
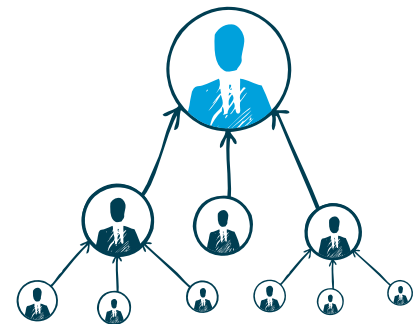
Work Style Preferences of Millennials

Millennials prefer to interact with people and with information differently than previous generations. Most significantly, they:

☑ **Prefer electronic to face-to-face communication.** Millennials may lack comfort or confidence when it comes to the face-to-face communication "moments of truth" that can make or break careers.

☑ **Prefer working in teams rather than as individual contributors.** Millennials may lack comfort with, or seek to avoid, the risks associated with individual decision-making. Because they are moving into higher-level management positions, it is critical that they become skilled at taking the lead in promoting their team's work projects and related recommendations to senior management.

☑ **Are more comfortable than older generations at managing large amounts of data using technology.** Millennials may not be as effective at translating that data into compelling, actionable recommendations as they need to be.

41% of Millennials say they prefer to communicate electronically at work rather than face-to-face or even over the telephone.[2]

Today...

27% of Millennials are already managers
5% are senior managers
2% are executives

In 10 years...

47% want to be managers or senior managers
7% want to be executives
15% want to be business owners[3]

Aspirations and Expectations of Millennials

Millennials have a strong desire to be creative, to make a difference, and to see their ideas executed. They may sometimes expect management to adopt their ideas without having presented them effectively, and then grow frustrated when nothing happens.

More specifically, they:

- ☑ **Want to see their creative ideas adopted and executed,** but often lack the essential skills to promote their ideas effectively.

- ☑ **Want to "make a difference"** at work, but may not have the skills and tools to put forward ideas in ways that accomplish their goals.

- ☑ **Are more likely to question authority and challenge management** in ways that might irritate older bosses. One expert put it this way: "The Millennial has been raised in an environment in which she's encouraged to engage and question authority; why would she accept a lesser bargain in the workplace?"[5]

In a *Harvard Business Review* article, one Millennial shares his workplace disappointment this way:

> " **I guess I just expected that I would get to act on more of my ideas... and that the higher ups here would have figured out by now that the model's changing. Sarah [the boss] just didn't get it.**[4]
> "

Job Mobility Expectations of Millennials

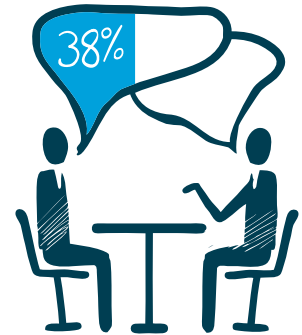Can you retain your best Millennial talent?

Millennials have proven much more open to changing employers quickly. This is partly driven by their high expectations of employers and desire for rapid career growth.

At a time when they are becoming a more important part
of your middle management team, Millennials are more likely than older employees to:

☑ **Put career advancement above money,** looking for positions where they can make a real difference.

☑ **"Jump ship," changing jobs quickly based on high career expectations,** enabled by easy-to-use job search technology.

Any organization facing this unique employee retention challenge should ask:

"Would we be able to better retain our high-potential Millennials by helping them to more successfully design, deliver, and defend their innovative (yet, sometimes controversial) ideas to management?"

38% of Millennials currently working said they were actively looking for a different role and **43%** said they were open to offers.
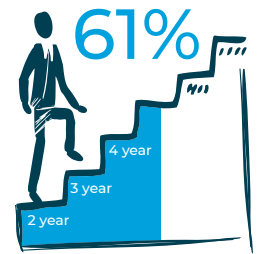
Only **18%** expect to stay with their current employer for the long term.[6]

The Millennial Opportunity

Retaining the "best and brightest" Millennial talent has clear and obvious business benefits. The benefits don't stop there. By providing essential skills and tools to help your Millennials turn their creative ideas into winning business recommendations, they are more likely to become:

☑ **Innovation champions.** Millennials will be better able to channel their creative ideas into actionable recommendations and projects and, at the same time, challenge an organization's ingrained philosophies and processes in more effective ways.

☑ **Leaders in technology adoption.** Couple the Millennial's technological fluency with a newly acquired ability to communicate ideas with conviction and credibility, and your organization could make huge strides in adopting new technology and technology-driven solutions more quickly and easily.

☑ **Successful collaborators.** With newly acquired skills, Millennials should be able to strike a healthier balance between teamwork (which they love) and individual contributions to thought leadership (where they may need help).

The bottom line? Millennials are a large and growing portion of your workforce. If you want them to drive future innovation, teamwork, and business performance, you can't afford to neglect the key catalyst to their effectiveness: their ability to present their creative—and sometimes status-quo-challenging—recommendations with credibility and impact.

61%

2 year · 3 year · 4 year

61% of Millennials agree with the statement "You should be promoted every 2-3 years if you're doing a good job" vs. **43% of baby boomers.**[7]

Mandel Can Help You Motivate the Millennial Workforce

Mandel Communications has helped more than 500 organizations and 100,000+ individuals learn how to transform their best ideas into motivating leadership messages, credible communications, and engaging customer conversations. Companies like Cisco, CIGNA, BMC Software, EMC, Expedia, The Hartford, Hewlett Packard, IBM, Microsoft, Oracle, Standard Insurance, and Verizon have deployed Mandel's proven communications framework to improve bottom-line business results.

Notes

[1] http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/05/11/
millennials-surpass-gen-xers-as-the-largest-generation-in-u-s-labor-force/

[2] http://www.pwc.com/gx/en/managing-tomorrows-people/future-of-work/
assets/reshaping-the-workplace.pdf

[3] http://www.forbes.com/sites/danschawbel/2014/10/29/

the-top-10-workplace-trends-for-2015/2/

[4] https://hbr.org/2009/02/gen-y-in-the-workforce-2

[5] http://www.cbsnews.com/news/are-millennials-too-spoiled-for-the-workplace/

[6] http://www.pwc.com/gx/en/managing-tomorrows-people/future-of-work/
assets/reshaping-the-workplace.pdf

[7] http://www.forbes.com/sites/jacquelynsmith/2012/09/13/

how-millennials-work-differently-from-everyone-else/

Want to train your Millennials to design, deliver, and defend their best ideas with credibility?

Contact Mandel.

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