Generational conflict: creating a welcoming company culture for millennials

Sociology

Millennials in the workplace's numbers are growing rapidly fast per capita and are now also the largest since the generation – Baby Boomers. Although they are the biggest portion in the workplace as well as the fastest growing therein, managers find Millennials difficult to work with for various reasons. A list of various resources have been consulted to compile this critical reaction towards millennials in the workplace and how managers should approach them. Millennials themselves find it easy to start conflict, but in the same sense also difficult to manage, as they always feel their view/ feeling is the correct one. Are they correct or arrogant to stand up for unfairness and transparency in the workplace? The loyalty and heart that millennials contribute to their workplace can be questioned, because of the fact that they focus firstly on themselves, their growth, recognition and salary, before they start thinking about the workplace and its implications whatsoever. Is it wrong to invest in their own growth first?

Millennials expect to be handled with care, as they were treated their whole lives. The millennial parent build their kids self-esteem, fed them the believe that they can do anything and become whomever they want to, nobody ever loses because everybody is a winner. The consequences of these actions are what managers have to handle in the workplace on a daily basis. The confidence boost on a regular basis created a " me, me, me generation" that can be narcissistic in their actions, and feels deeply hurt when something goes south for them. Generation Y is equipped with a long list of credible degrees and education, but no experience, they demand frequent training and learning but does not have the insight yet that the previous generations already have to offer. Can they bring something other than insight and

practical experience to the table? In every workplace teams have to work together in order to reach a common goal, the millennials can work in teams, but only when their own terms and conditions apply. Will the fact that they are a game changer when it comes to technology, substitute for that they do not have? Millennials are the future of companies, managers should bend the tree while still young, and embrace what the newcomers have to offer.

Introduction

The world is constantly turning, constantly changing and so are the people within it. Generation after generation we seek for changes, who they are, what they do, how they do it and how will it influence the previous generations inhabited on planet earth. In this critical reaction we mission to find a deeper understanding of the millennial generation, characteristics they consist over, how they react and how they think all within context of the workplace. Managers in the workplace share how they experience millennials, can the negative components be turned into positive? Why are managers struggling to break through to this generation, and will millennials someday contribute to our ever changing world? How can managers manage to understand this generation now entering and rapidly growing in the working environment?

Review of Literature

The literature reviewed consist over various resources used to identify a few of the issues encountered with millennials in the workplace.

Millennials

Millennials, this generation are focused on detail, they soak up as much information as possible even before they started a project and can be satisfied by feeding all the organizational feedback, updates and planning possible, habitually. They want to investigate, learn and search about everything and everyone that is relevant to them, this create a constant learning curve, leaving them restless and forced to learn something on a daily basis, continuing until they work their last day. Millennials can also be called Generation Y, Baby Boom Eco, iGeneration, the Trophy generation as well as Generation Me, they are believed to be born from 1982 up until the early 2000'.

Millennials VS Conflict, can they manage?

" Conflict is serious disagreement and argument about something important. If two people or groups are in conflict, they have had a serious disagreement or argument and have not yet reached agreement". Conflict between millennials and coworkers including: supervisors, seniors and colleges, are a given. The reason therefore is that millennials very easily feel hurt or upset due to various reasons. Generation Me have a strong rebellion against unfairness in the workplace. When they feel they that they are treated unfair or that a certain situation, even way of working within the organization is unfair towards others, they will take an aggressive stand against the unfairness in progress. Millennials initiate conflict with their managers because they feel that generations older than them are not fair towards them, this unfair treatment is hurtful, but why would millennials feel that they receive unfair treatment? The hurt felt by millennials are formed

through one or a series of unfair events including: superiors that snip credit for ideas or work done by the millennial, bullies in the workplace environment, the frequent lack of respect due to their generation within the workplace. Generation Y are not likely to go down in silence, they are willing to fight for everything they believe in, even if they are wrong, they believe that they are right, should something go wrong they are likely to blame someone or something else for the problem. The Generations views are self-absorbed and driven to create " good" for humanity as a whole, self-important as well as progressive, clearly these are not aligned characteristic. Their different views, strong self-believe and willingness to fight for what they believe is right creates conflict easily.

Millennials, Loyal or Undependable

" I felt angry and it made me want to quit and get a different job" – this was the feedback received in a study done by Avan Jassawalla and Hemand Sashittal (2017: 650) on Millennials, how they handle conflict and why they get aggressive in the workplace. Can managers rely on millennials that threaten to leave the workplace over feeling angry? Concerning emotional and behavioral commitment, there are only three out of ten millennials that are truly loyal and committed. Contributing to the question of loyalty is the findings that millennials do not value work ethics higher than the Baby Boomers, they value climbing the ranks and a work-life balance much higher.

Millennials seek meaningfulness within their work, they want to feel they make a difference within their workplace and see the impact in a very small time period, they also want to receive the compensation therefore. Older

generations are not use to seeing long run results happening in the short run, so why would they implement and fund a millennial's idea of doing so. Generation Y tend to be needy, not loyal, entitled and show a casual approach towards their work. The School to Work transition theory shows that they enter the work environment full of anticipation, they are willing to go through a short adjustment period and wants achievement shortly after, this theory states that millennials that feel they do not connect with their workplace are likely to leave the orgaization within two years.

The philosophy of injecting

Managers have to handle the Trophy generation with caution when they enter the work force especially when negative feedback, conflict, recommendations etc. occurs as their sensitivity towards personal criticism tend to be a sensitive subject. Should a manager inforce constructive criticism, it is likely that the millennial will feel hurt, angry or attacked. The generation has been praised, and cultivated to feel high levels of positive self-image received from their superiors, therefore they struggle to digest criticism.

Managers will be able to get through with constructive criticism by equally delivering praise and constructive criticism or room for improvement. The " model" kids, pride and joy of their parents never learned how to receive criticism as they would often be praised and given recognition for everything, when they outrivaled and when they did not, because here everybody is a winner. You get prize when you win but when you do not win you also get a medallion – just because you tried and put in some effort to be

here- this idea created a " I did well" feeling even if the kids did not with the aim to avoid hurting any feelings or break down their self-esteem. In the long run this practice created millennials who is needy, they need praise to feel successful, constant injections of " feel good" to excel in their environment.

Generation me, myself and I

Sixty present of Generation Me believes that they can decide and feel what would be the best thing to do in any given situation based only on their personal insight, perspectives and magnitude, as per a study done by the National Study of Youth and Religion. This outcome is also linked to the fact that they have been praised with positive feedback and high recognition for everything done. This method of parenting lead for the millennials to mostly feel very confident about themselves, they feel assertive and entitled. Millennials' focus are not only on their careers and the workplace but more so on themselves, they believe strongly in a work-life balance and a " happy-healthy me", before they will start to feel concerned over the workplace. Millennials appear to discard the workhorse lifestyle of Baby Boomers and Gen Xers and seek genuine work-life balance. The most positive reaction from millennials came from monetary rewards of incentives, this is linked to the fact that they seek prerogative and feel they deserve the inducement even if they don't. Generation Y wants a sense of purpose, they want to feel they benefit and grow out of everything they do, for any input, they want an output benefiting themselves.

Feedback, only creating rebellion

Firstly, giving feedback to millennials are not a straight forward thing, feedback should be provided on a regular basis. High standards for self-fulfillment and growth are being set by the millennials and their managers should remember that they are a very open minded generation, therefore managers must try to find a way of communication that will create a situation where there is room for improvement clear in a manner where the millennial would understand the seriousness, but not feel the want to leave their workplace and invest their talents elsewhere. Only when they feel that a situation/conflict is good for their own individual development, they will find it favorable. In the modern work environment there is various kinds of feedback methods available to use including: Mentorship, verbal motivations and acknowledgements, monetary incentives, performance appraisals as well as rewards including ideas like employee of the month. There is not one kind of feedback that will singe handily be satisfying for a millennial, but some of these methods combined may.

Giving negative feedback to Generation Me, will be quite the challenge for managers. Millennials were praised for everything growing up, positive or negative, therefore managers will have to find a constructive way of giving feedback that includes an ego-boost. This action is critical due to the fact that millennials react positive to feedback once they perceive that it can better themselves, their careers or their future at the company. Millennials every so often think that their Generation X superiors are not very fond of them, that they are not trusted in brainstorming and decision making, the millennials feel they are not being included and they have so much more to

offer than they are allowed to within the company. The Millennials as generation can be used as a key part in the development of giving negative feedback, the way to treat them can be used as guide to treat all employees in order to get a better attitude as well as outcome in the end.

Teamwork when Terms and Conditions apply

Teamwork in the workplace are an essential part of success. Managers who participated in a study about millennials and teamwork in the workplace had different opinions regarding this matter. Millennials van work in a teams as well as independently well, the difference comes in whether the millennial choose to work well in a team or not, they enjoy the social part of teamwork, and as most groups, they are better in solving problems in the team situation than they would be individually. Even though millennials work well in teams, they are not scared to be honest about it when someone does not fit in to their liking, for example when someone new enter the team and the team does not approve of him or her, they isolate themselves from the newbie without hesitation. This attitude towards newcomers will make it difficult to accomplish tasks as it is necessary to help newcomers understand what the project goal is, and on what they should focus. The crux of the matter is, millennials work very well together when the find a liking in each other. They will stray from helping each other as soon as they do net get along, this behaviour is inevitable as there will always be different people, personalities, ages and cultures within a working environment, the odds that you will like and get along with everybody in your team is highly unlikely.

Technology Boffins

Technology in the life of a millennial is second nature, just as fast as they technology is changing, so fast are the millennials to learn and soak up every grain of information they can find, they are constant learners and always trying to find or learn something new. Ultimately the aspect that separates millennials from other generations are the fact that they are so trusted and familiar with technology, they seem to take the luxury of technology for granted as they grew up with it. Due to this way of growing up millennials were affected by technology including factors that millennials are not that good when it comes to face-to-face communication but their ability to sort and filter through loads of information ate excellent. The effects show challenges created by the technology but also opportunities that can be embraced to help the company grow.

Next to the importance of a work-life balance, the use of technology by the millennial generation is profound. This Generation expects to have immediate access to information and data, they grew up with access to smartphones, social media, laptops and a world of information one click away, no libraries needed. The use of technology by millennials can be a method to allow them the work elasticity they want. Compared to their older generation superiors millennials seem to have a better understanding of technology and how it works when they enter the working environment.

Inductive discussion " Millennials are over ambitious and like to challenge the status quo."

As a result of the literature study the millennials in the workplace and how manages can handle them, one thing stood out through the entire study, millennials do not only bring bad to the table. Taking all information into consideration, I vouch that managers should not hate millennials in the workplace, the more you embrace a millennial the more the Innate will enlarge their efforts. Millennials value and feel meaning at work through recognition of their capabilities and real influence, interpersonal fulfilling and self-concordance. Wouldn't more people strife in their workplace if they had the urge for self- fulfilling jobs and the will to perform? This characteristic in all people would make companies 100% more effective as the efforts would be a lot more. Millennials want to feel they " belong" within a certain environment, their need to feel they are making a difference will also drive them to put in a lot of effort to make these differences. Millennials expect continuous feedback, a diverse and stimulating career as well as rapid progression. Yes, there is a lot of aspects that are way out of the ordinary for other generations, but these aspects including social networks, ethnic mixture and culture also better our world. There are several factors that help millennials succeed better: Technological support, student degree of comfort with technology, ability to analyze and apply material presented, limitations, as well as millennials' personal characteristics. Looking past the negative comments, feedback and characteristics, the " Me" generation will transform the working environment for the better by using their positive inputs, fresh ideas, creativity, technological advantage, their social connections and the fact that they build diversity and individuality, value others their cultures and feelings can only make the world a better place where behavioral qualities

towards others matter. This change in attitude and views will not only influence the workplace, but also the social environment.

Recommendations

" Unless companies strive to understand what motivates millennials, they will not be able to manage youngsters efficiently." Let's take a look into how we can manage millennials in the workplace better, understand them better and how to keep them long enough within the company not to waist training, retain them and for them to feel they make a difference:

To create a company culture that reflects positive

Millennials want to work in a common goal with the company, they want to feel synced with their workplace and work towards the same goal as well as long term objectives. The millennial will be more eager to work for an organization whose vision and perception of the world meets theirs. For them these perceptions will include social responsibility, ethnic and race equality, social networking as well as other social issues including marriage and same sex relationships.

Invest in the millennial's Development

Generation Y has endless possibilities and energy, use it to the companies advantage, training is one of the methods to keep millennials interested and aboard. Companies should give them access to the best technology in the power, training opportunities, and platforms for learning, this will not only satisfy their desire for self-growth but also benefit the company with more skills and trained employees, think about the greater investment in your company.

Encouragement for that extra mile

Millennials have been praised their whole lives as also named in the literature study, but if you think about it, who praised them? Their parents, it is not the millennials who raised themselves but their parents, this is the way they were brought up and that is also why they will act like that within their everyday situations. Managers can start small by celebrating and encouraging small goals met, this will motivate them to feel more part of the company, the decision making and processes.

Grow loyalty and meaning

Millennials will find work meaningful as soon as their superiors are open for their ideas, the implementation of the new generation ideas and suggestions, they want to make an impact not only in the company but also globally influencing social issues. Generation Me wants to feel responsible within the company in order to few themselves as successful. Give them just a little responsibility and space to make their own decisions, but also let them carry the consequences, this action will not only let them learn real lessons but it will also give them meaning.

Conclusion

The Millennials is a new generation entering the workforce, but not the first new generation to enter. Every generation is new and needs new ideas as well as new management techniques just as every generation arrives with a unique set of skills and a way of doing things. Managers have future work cut out for them regarding the millennials hurt, creation of conflict over their own perspectives and unfairness at work, but over the long run new

adjustments in the workplace in order to accommodate the new Generation

Y wouldn't be so catastrophic as we thought.