

# Notes on Gen Y in the Workplace: Ideas for Gen Xers and Baby Boomers

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**Where to start?**

# Challenged vs Effective Managers

Source: Espinoza, Chip, Ukleja, Mick & Rush, Craig. (2010) *Managing the Millenials*. New York: Wiley

## Challenged Managers

- “They need to change”
- “There is not much I can do about the situation”
- Subordinates sanctioned for challenging them

## Effective Managers

- “I need to change”
- “There is something I can do about the situation”
- Allowed subordinates to challenge them

# Challenged vs Effective Managers

Source: Espinoza, Chip, Ukleja, Mick & Rush, Craig. (2010) *Managing the Millennials*. New York: Wiley

## Challenged Managers

- Felt that positional power was their only authority
- Working with twenty-somethings made them feel older
- Saw twenty-somethings as an impediment to their own success

## Effective Managers

- Used the power of relationship rather than positional power
- Working with twenty-somethings made them feel younger
- Saw themselves as key to the twenty-somethings success

# Paradigm shifts for supervisors

Source: Espinoza, Chip, Ukleja, Mick & Rush, Craig. (2010) *Managing the Millennials*. New York: Wiley

## Millennial Mindset

### Autonomy

- “I should be able to do what I want when I want, as long as the work gets done”
- Hours kept aren't as important as the work that is accomplished

## Supervisor's Mindset

### Flexibility

- The ability to listen non-judgmentally to their ideas
- The ability to adapt to different ways of doing things if, in fact, they do make as much or more sense.

# Paradigm shifts for supervisors

Source: Espinoza, Chip, Ukleja, Mick & Rush, Craig. (2010) *Managing the Millenials*. New York: Wiley

## Millenial Mindset

### Creativity & Involvement

- The desire to create, change, and have an impact on decisions
- The tendency to be presumptuous about giving advice to superiors

## Supervisor's Mindset

### Allowing and informing

- Brief them ahead on the culture and where and when and how questions and advice is appropriate
- Take the time to follow through an idea with them to see where it would go eventually (and make them aware of the traps)

# Paradigm shifts for supervisors

Source: Espinoza, Chip, Ukleja, Mick & Rush, Craig. (2010) *Managing the Millenials*. New York: Wiley

## Millenial Mindset

Self involved

- Used to lots of attention and affirmation from parents and teachers
- Expect the same kind of thing from supervisors

## Supervisor's Mindset

Engaging

- Try to reach out an connect with them. Show an interest, ask about their lives and views
- They will do something because they like and respect you more easily than they will because you have a position

# Paradigm shifts for supervisors

Source: Espinoza, Chip, Ukleja, Mick & Rush, Craig. (2010) *Managing the Millenials*. New York: Wiley

## **Millenial Mindset**

Defensive about feedback

## **Supervisor's Mindset**

Disarming the feedback

- Make the feedback more frequent and balanced, informal, brief, focused on the action and its consequences rather than on the person.
- Reaffirm the relationship and your confidence in them



# Example

- “Why do you ask/say that”
- “Just to make sure I understand your idea, you are saying that . . .”

*Resist the temptation to argue or direct*

- “My idea is this . . .”

*Shift the focus from positional bargaining to joint problem solving*

- “What will accomplish what we need in the best way?”

# Paradigm shifts for supervisors

Source: Espinoza, Chip, Ukleja, Mick & Rush, Craig. (2010) *Managing the Millenials*. New York: Wiley

## **Millenial Mindset**

Not as attentive to social conventions

Very informal, which can be interpreted as unprofessional

## **Supervisor's Mindset**

Keep perspective

- Avoid the emotional reflex. Remember that calling you by your first name can be a sign of respect
- Share with them in a collegial problem solving way how something might be misinterpreted

# Paradigm shifts for supervisors

Source: Espinoza, Chip, Ukleja, Mick & Rush, Craig. (2010) *Managing the Millennials*. New York: Wiley

## Millennial Mindset

Can appear unfocused

Can seem to be doing too many things at once

Can look inattentive

## Supervisor's Mindset

Direct instruction

- Tell and re-tell on directions or protocols
- Check for understanding - ask them to tell you back what they understand the direction to be
- Explain even the details you think are common sense. They may be unfamiliar to the new hire

# A training model

1. I explain what I will do
2. I do it and you watch me
3. We do it together
4. You do it and I watch you
5. You do it on your own
6. You explain what you did

# Paradigm shifts for supervisors

Source: Espinoza, Chip, Ukleja, Mick & Rush, Craig. (2010) *Managing the Millennials*. New York: Wiley

## Millennial Mindset

Can appear indifferent

Can appear to lack  
commitment or be  
apathetic

## Supervisor's Mindset

Millennials thrive on and need a sense of meaning in what they do. Show them the meaning behind the work

- Explain the “why” of the work before you explain the “how”
- Ex. “This is one of the ways you can be saving people’s lives”

# Teaching them

They need to learn by talking about it, and then by practicing it.  
Passive learning is out.

The learning moment will need to shift from **telling** to **discussing**, from **one way** to **two way communication**.

Allow for interaction.

The workplace culture can be very unfamiliar to them.  
Explain the ins and outs of the workplace culture to them as the very first conversation for a new hire

Things to clarify for them:

- Etiquette
- Forms of address
- How to talk with clients
- What written communication should look like
- Work hours
- Attendance
- Trip wires in the social/political sphere

Source: Lancaster, Lynne C. & Stillman, David. ( 2010) The M Factor: How the Millennial Generation is Rocking the Workplace. New York: Harper Collins.

Then you can avoid moments like this . . .



- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0vUHIHLZsrE> 0:31



- Some millennials may need training on privacy legislation and policy in the workplace so they don't take work home and show it to their parents to help them with it.
- Need specific training on work skills you might take for granted – how to deal with important clients, how to manage disagreement, appropriate language and deportment in workplace, what windows to have open on your computer while doing work, etc.

There are professional sources to acquaint them with that will provide support for the advice you are giving, things like the CIPHI Code of Ethics

### **Principle 3: Maintaining Privacy & Confidentiality**

EHPs recognize the importance of privacy and confidentiality. They safeguard personal, family, corporate, and community information obtained in the context of a professional relationship. Members are aware and respectful of privacy laws designed to protect and preserve people's right to privacy.

<http://www.ciphi.ca/files/documents/cpc/ethics.pdf>

# Provide Context

**Millenials will want to know the why of policies and procedures.**

**Be prepared to explain up front how what you are advising them to do will fit into the larger picture and why it will be important to them in their professional practice.**

Again, there are professional sources to acquaint them with that will provide support for the advice you are giving, such as the CIPHI Discipline Specific Competencies

T6-1	Identify and use teaching as part of regulatory functions of environmental public health program delivery activities
T6-2	Explain basic concepts of the various environmental public health <i>practices</i> and the value and importance of possible consequences and resolutions to clients and the public, using both written and oral communication
T6-3	Conduct all communications utilizing appropriate verbal and written language relevant to each situation while reflecting the needs of both the end-user and the need to protect and promote public health
T6-4	Use effective listening skills when participating in a situation related to a health issue/action
T6-5	Use polite, prompt, and professional communication

<http://www.ciphi.ca/files/documents/cpc/dsc.pdf>

# And . . .

17-6

Explain the key values of the organization (employer) and follow a shared vision in the planning and implementation of environmental public health programs and policies in the community

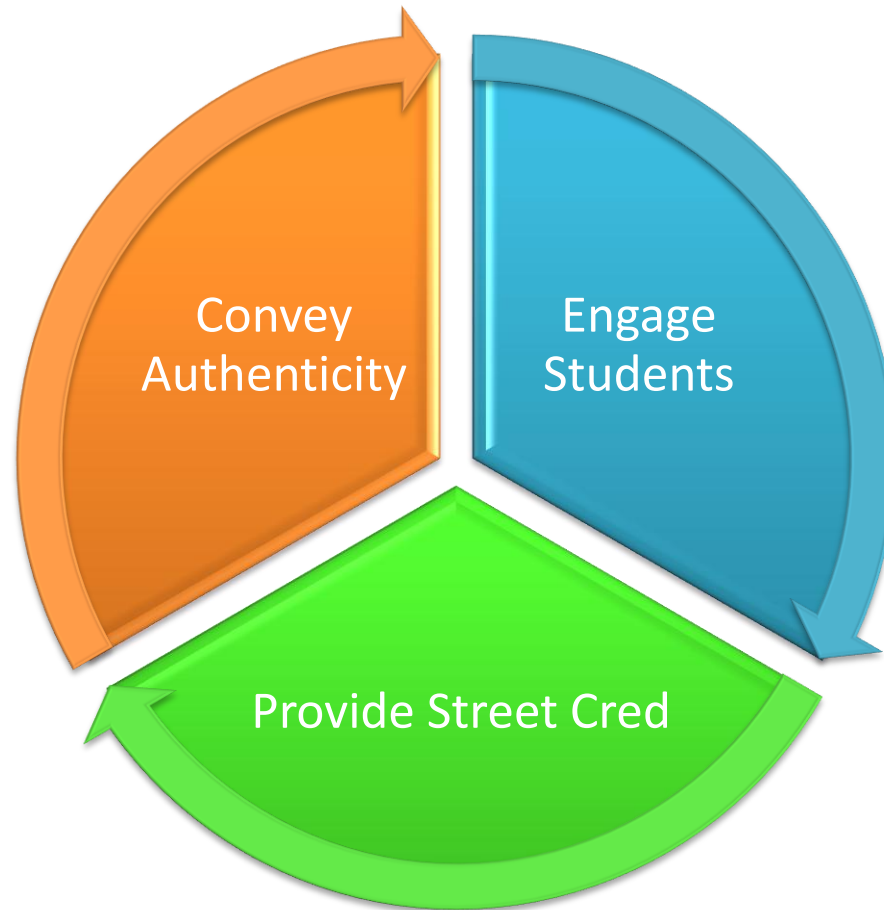
<http://www.ciphi.ca/files/documents/cpc/dsc.pdf>

# Correct them directly and supportively

- The paradox is that this generation usually prefers directness EXCEPT when directness can be interpreted as personal criticism.
- Start by affirming the contributions the person has been making. Focus on the particulars of the problem and the changes that could solve the problem. Reaffirm what you appreciate in closing.
- They will be used to hearing feedback in terms of growth potential, for example, rather than saying “This is not correct” a millennial may respond better to a phrase like “If this part is changed in this way it will make the product stronger still.”

# Share “War Stories”

We are a storytelling species in a storytelling culture. Using an example from your own work experience can engage the new person’s attention, and give definition, relevance, and power to the point you are trying to make. It can also help to build that all-important relationship and with it, respect for you and the value of your experience.



- Deloitte and Touche says it want to become a “coached organization.” It believes that coaching resonates with millennials who don’t want to be told what to do and are used to getting feedback from baseball coaches or vocal music coaches.

Source: Alsop, R. (2008) *The trophy kids grow up: How the millennial generation is shaking up the workplace*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass p. 113.



# Books on the topic

- Alsop, R. (2008) *The trophy kids grow up: How the millennial generation is shaking up the workplace*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- Bauerlein, M. (2008) *The dumbest generation: How the digital age stupefies young Americans and jeopardizes our future*. New York: Penguin.
- Bibby, R. W. (2009) *The emerging millennials: How Canada's newest generation is responding to change and choice*. Lethbridge AB: Project Canada Books.
- Chester, Eric. (2002) *Employing Generation Why?: Understanding, managing and motivating your new workforce*. Lakewood CO: Tucker House Publishing.
- Espinoza, Chip, Ukleja, Mick & Rush, Craig. (2010) *Managing the Millennials*. New York: Wiley
- Howe, N. & Strauss, W. (2000) *Millennials rising: The next great generation*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Lancaster, Lynne C. & Stillman, David. (2010) *The M Factor: How the Millennial Generation is Rocking the Workplace*. New York: Harper Collins.
- Sujansky, Joanne GI, & Ferri-Reed, Jan. (2009) *Keeping the Millennials: Why companies are losing billions in turnover to this generation – and what to do about it*. Hoboken NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- Tapscott, Don. (2009) *Grown up digital: How the net generation is changing your world*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Tulgan, Bruce. (2009) *Not Everyone Gets a Trophy: How to Manage Generation Y*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- Twenge, J.M. (2006) *Generation Me: Why today's young Americans are more confident, assertive, entitled – and more miserable than ever before*. New York: Free Press.