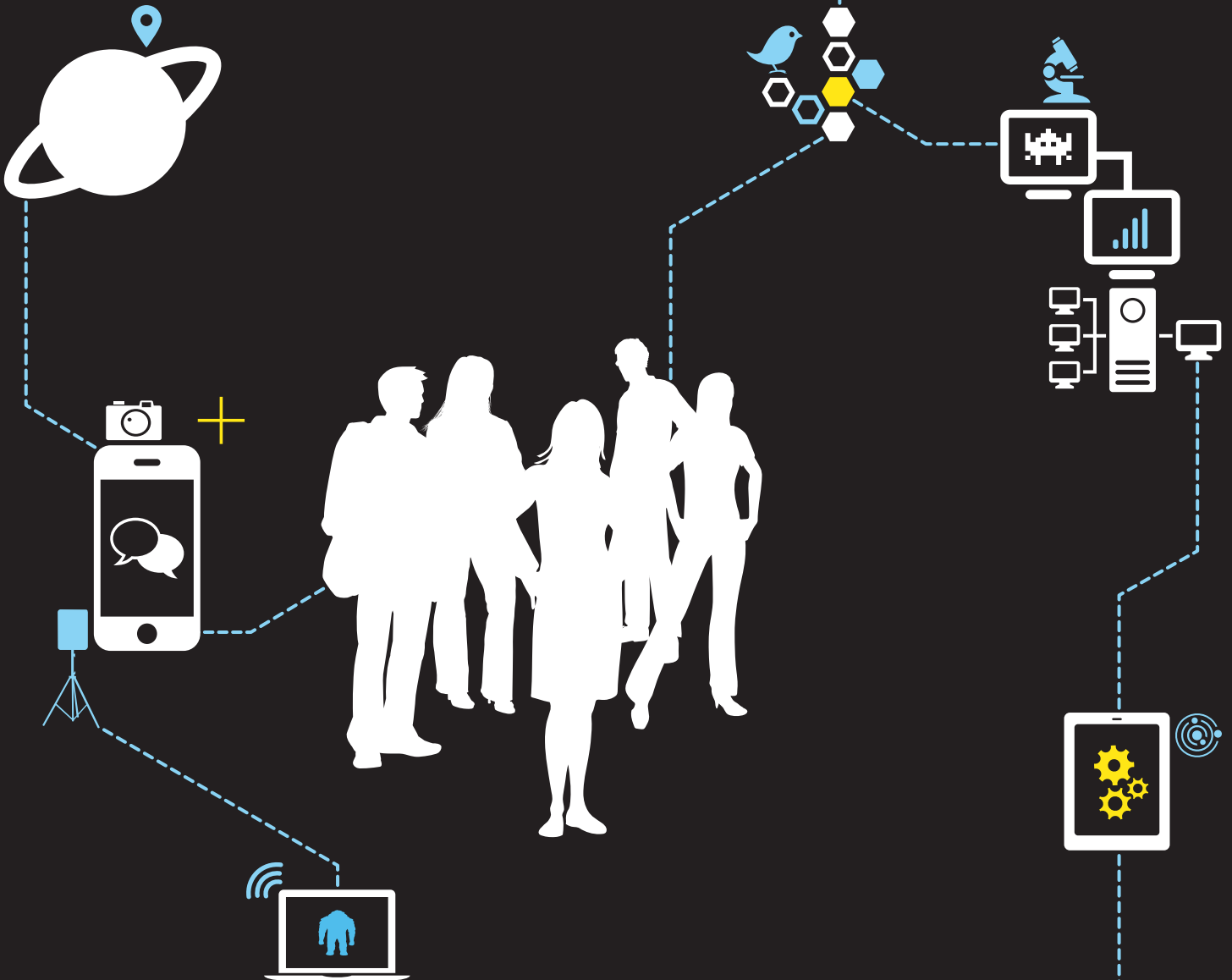


# MILLENNIAL MYTHS



DEBUNKING THE MYTHS AND GENERATING  
THE TRUTH ABOUT GEN-Y IN THE WORKPLACE

# MODIS

# WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT MILLENNIALS (THOSE BORN BETWEEN 1980 AND 2000) WHAT IDEAS COME TO MIND?

## LAZY? UNREALISTIC? TECH-OBSSESSED?

The good news is you're probably not alone.  
The bad news is you're probably not correct, either.

These commonly held notions about Millennials are rooted in misunderstandings, misperceptions and a lack of knowledge. They're harmful not only to Millennials themselves, but to businesses like yours. After all, these young people are entering the workforce at a record pace, and they will be a big part of your business for years to come.

So ditch those myths and get the truth about Millennials in order to effectively recruit, retain and inspire this growing segment of the workforce.

Read on to get started.



## MYTH:

### MILLENNIALS HAVE NO WORK ETHIC

#### THE REASONS

- They're not willing to put in the hours
- They expect to work from home
- If they don't get what they want, they'll quit

#### THE REALITY:

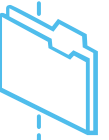
##### Millennials see work differently and act accordingly

Millennials are willing to work hard, they just want to work a little differently. They value their personal time and are willing to sacrifice money and income for freedom and flexibility. A work/life balance is important, and offering flexible schedules or the opportunity to work remotely can work for you and your younger employees.

On the other hand, Millennials expect to be recognized for their hard work, wherever and however it is completed. They are more than willing to put in the extra time and effort necessary to complete their tasks and distinguish themselves in their roles. However, they expect something in return – a bonus, an award, a promotion, a day off or even a thank you – and may become discouraged if they don't get it. Focusing on rewards and recognitions programs is a great way to engage, motivate and retain Millennials.

Socializing is also important to Millennials, whether it be in person or online through social media. It helps break up the monotony of the day and can keep spirits high.

While this desire for social interaction can be perceived as unprofessional, it can greatly improve company morale.



## FAST FACTS ABOUT MILLENNIALS

There are 82 million Millennials in the world today, more than any other generation. <sup>1</sup>

By 2020, Millennials will account for half of the U.S. workforce. By 2030, they will account for 75 percent of it. <sup>2</sup>

One out of every three workers in the United States has a boss who is younger than they are. <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <http://ncoc.net/226>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.forbes.com/sites/jeannemeister/2012/10/05/millennialmindse>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.careerbuilder.com/share/aboutus/pressreleasesdetail.aspx?sd=9/13/2012&id=pr715&ed=9/13/2099>

## MYTH:

# MILLENNIALS DON'T RESPECT AUTHORITY

### THE REASONS:

- Since birth, they were constantly being told how special they were
- Their parents spoiled them rotten; there was no sense of discipline
- Their attitudes carry on into adulthood, making them difficult to manage and impossible to coach
- They think their bosses didn't earn their titles

### THE REALITY:

#### Millennials have great respect for leaders

Millennials want to work for bosses who are able to inspire them and those who are willing to roll up their sleeves and do the grunt work - not those who issue orders and memos from behind a large desk. Millennials embrace teamwork, and they gravitate towards managers who share their vision for a team-oriented workplace.

In fact, a survey conducted by the Center for Creative Leadership shows far more Millennials respect authority than Baby Boomers and Gen X-ers.

### DEFERENCE TO AUTHORITY

Percentage who "agree" or "strongly agree" with the statement "Employees should do what their manager tells them, even when they can't see the reason for it."

#### BABY BOOMERS

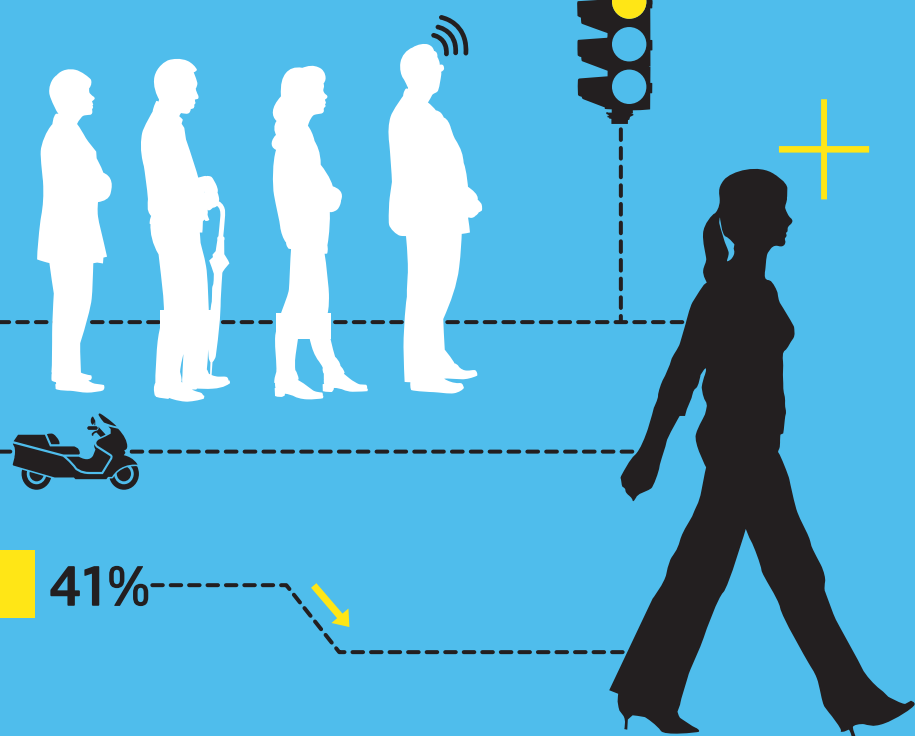
30%

#### GEN-XERS

30%

#### MILLENNIALS

41%



You can gain respect and loyalty by adopting a team concept in your office. Encourage collaboration sessions and discussions, and be willing to participate in them.

## MYTH:

# MILLENNIALS HAVE NO LOYALTY TO THEIR BOSS OR THEIR BUSINESS

### THE REASONS:

- They don't trust big businesses
- They want to stick it to "the man"
- They will leave at the drop of the hat
- They are only loyal to themselves

### THE REALITY:

#### You need to earn their loyalty and trust

Millennials aren't disloyal, but they are distrustful. This is a generation that grew up during the Enron and Bernie Madoff scandals, and they grew into adulthood during the Great Recession. They watched as companies chipped away at pensions, abandoned 401(k) programs and laid off thousands of workers. How could they not be a little wary of putting their faith - and their futures - in a corporation's hands?

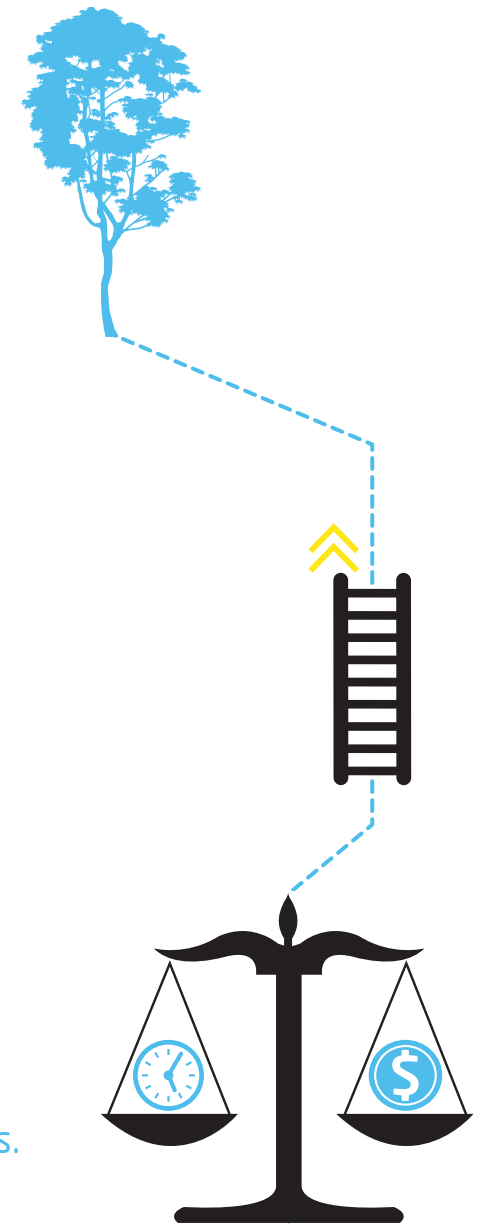
As an employer, you can gain trust by demonstrating how much you value your employees, something that can be effective for boosting morale and engagement for all ages. Offer professional development opportunities, highlight successes in newsletters or online and thank them for a job well-done.

One of the simplest and most cost-effective ways to build trust is to let them in on the decision-making process. Let them know about decisions that need to be made, why they need to be made, how they're going to be made and when. Then, communicate the business justification for your decisions and how the decisions will directly impact them.

Effective communication is crucial.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, employees have been in their current positions for 4.4 years, on average. Millennials leave their jobs within 18-24 months.

They're leaving, but it's not because they're disloyal.



## MYTH:

# MILLENNIALS QUESTION EVERYTHING

### THE REASONS:

- They never take direction at face value
- They don't respect authority
- Every request is met with a question, not an action
- They're too self-absorbed, so they need to make everything about them

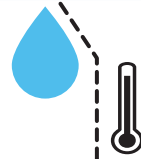
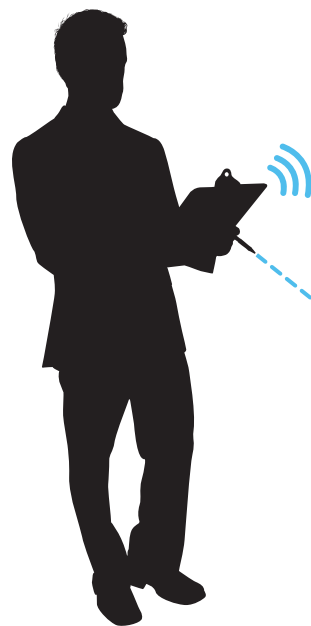
### THE REALITY:

#### Millennials need to understand why

From an early age, Millennials were encouraged – and expected – to ask, "Why?"

"Because I said so" was not an acceptable answer in school, and they won't accept that answer at work, either.

Millennials want to know the reasons behind every project, action, decision and process – and that's not a bad thing at all. An inquisitive nature and a willingness to question the status quo is a great way to challenge norms and encourage innovation. Plus, an informed workforce is likely to be a more productive one. Thus, explaining the small-and-big-picture reasons behind your requests may take a little time, but it can pay off for your employees and your company alike.



## MYTH:

# MILLENNIALS ARE OBSESSED WITH SOCIAL MEDIA

### THE REASONS:

- They're always on their phones
- Their lives revolve around Facebook and Twitter
- They can't hold a face-to-face conversation
- They'd rather text than email

### THE REALITY:

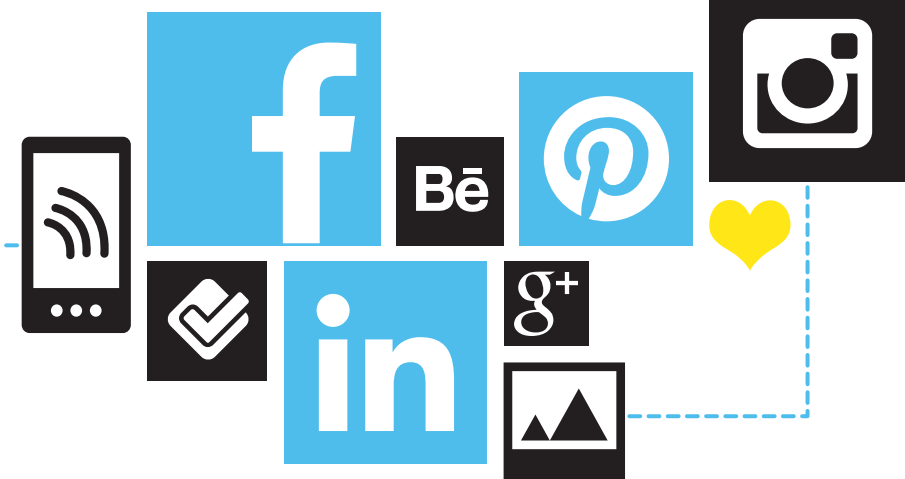
#### Millennials are social media obsessed – but that's good for them and your business

Social media is extremely important to Millennials. They want to be connected to their friends and family, and they see no reason to disconnect while at work.

But taking social media away won't benefit anyone. In fact, blocking access to social media is one of the quickest ways to ensure that Millennials will choose not to work for your company.

Rather than restricting social media, embrace it. Sites like Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, LinkedIn and others are great tools for engaging your customers and building your brand. So why not let the people that know it best do it for you?

Make social media a part of your business, and leverage your young workers' knowledge and talents to make it work for you. Let them shape your social media strategy, and give them the freedom and support necessary to make it happen. Your digital presence can make or break your business, and Millennials can make it a strength.

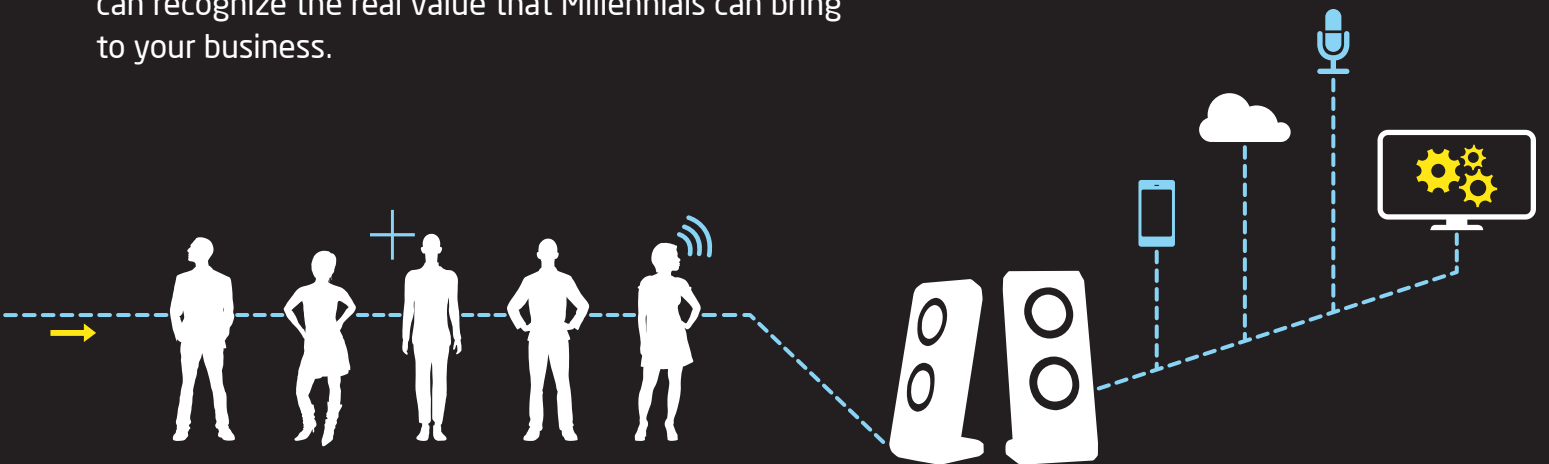


Before the Millennials, members of Gen-X were labelled as cynical, selfish slackers. Before that, Baby Boomers were thought of as impatient idealists who questioned authority and the rules of the time.

Sound familiar?

Every generation in history has been defined by different circumstances, characteristics, work-styles and misperceptions. Unfortunately, they've also been defined by persistent myths. Millennials are no different.

By acknowledging that these myths are just that, you can recognize the real value that Millennials can bring to your business.



To learn more about managing exceptional connections with Millennials in the workforce, visit [modis.com](http://modis.com).