**MILLENNIAL MATTERS: DEVELOPING THE TALENT PIPELINE**



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Most organizations don’t have a solid talent management strategy, according to a 2015 report from Bersin by Deloitte, resulting in individuals and organizations that fall short of their potential.

And, as Ram Charan describes in *The Leadership Pipeline*, leadership at every level is needed for company survival. CCL helps organizations look at the leadership development needs up, down and across the organization — and pay attention to often-overlooked segments of employees, including Millennials.

It’s become trendy to talk about Millennials — those in their 20s through mid-30s — as a different species in the workplace. *Millennials can’t take criticism, they want constant acclaim, they are entitled. They are too attached to their devices. They expect a job to be fulfilling.*

Assumptions and stereotypes, anecdotes and personal experience can fuel these perceptions among older managers and, yes, even talent professionals. It may surprise you that Millennials want essentially the same things most employees want. Recent studies point to no generational differences in key areas.

A 2012 analysis of 20 studies and 19,691 people found that generation had nothing to do with employees’ job satisfaction, organizational commitment or turnover intentions (Constanza, et al. *Journal of Business and Psychology*. Generational Differences in Work-Related Attitudes: A Meta-analysis).

An IBM Study ([Myths, Exaggerations and Uncomfortable Truths](http://www-935.ibm.com/services/us/gbs/thoughtleadership/millennialworkplace/)) of 1,784 employees, in 12 countries and from six industries had similar findings, including:

* Millennials have similar career aspirations as other generations; they desire financial security and seniority.
* Millennials don’t really want a trophy; they want a leader who is ethical and fair and they want performance-based recognition and promotions, just like older groups.
* Millennials don’t really want to do everything online and virtually. When learning something new, they want face-to-face interaction.
* Millennials leave their organizations for the same reasons as other generations — to get ahead, enter the fast-lane, to make money.

**What We All Want**

CCL’s research has also found no differences in what different generations think makes a leader effective.1 We all want a leader who is participative, team-oriented, charismatic and humane-oriented. And — especially relevant for talent-management efforts — we found no differences among generations with regard to attitudes, beliefs and preferences about development and learning at work. We all want on-the-job training, discussion groups, peer feedback, live classroom instruction and one-on-one coaching.

What gives the feeling of a generation gap? The level in the organization — your role — is a differentiator. Where you sit in the organization explains employee motivation more than generation2&.

So, how *do* you develop talent strategies for Millennials?

First, do the same things you know work for you and for other generations. Give support, create opportunities, help find a good match between skills, interests and business needs. And tailor learning and development based on level. Whether a Millennial is an individual contributor, a first-time manager, a high-potential or a proven leader, give them access to relevant programs and experiences that benefit them now, and prepare them to take on something new.

*CCL’s* [*Leader Development Roadmap*](http://www.ccl.org/leadership/impact/individual.aspx) *helps you match the right learning at the right time for each leader, whether it’s Leading Self, Leading Others, Leading Managers, Leading The Function, or Leading The Organization. By focusing on the skills critical for success at each level, your organization can see faster results.*

1Deal, J. J., Stawiski, S. A. Gentry, W. A., & Cullen, K. L. (2013). [*What makes a leader effective? U.S. Boomers, Xers, and Millennials weigh in*](http://insights.ccl.org/articles/white-papers/what-makes-a-leader-effective-u-s-boomers-xers-and-millennials-weigh-in/). [White Paper]. Greensboro, NC: Center for Creative Leadership. Research was also conducted in the [UK](http://insights.ccl.org/articles/quickview-leadership-articles/what-makes-a-leader-effective-generations-in-the-u-k-weigh-in/), [South Africa](http://insights.ccl.org/articles/quickview-leadership-articles/what-makes-a-leader-effective-generations-in-south-africa-weigh-in/) and [India](http://insights.ccl.org/articles/white-papers/what-makes-an-effective-leader-generations-in-india-weigh-in/).

2Deal, J. J., Stawiski, S., Graves, L., Gentry, W. A., Weber, T. J., & Ruderman, M. R. (2013). *Motivation at work: Which matters more, generation or managerial level?* Consulting Psychology