

How are millennials shaping the future of work?

Millennials are inspiring fresh ideas that will change the workplace as we know it while getting companies to be more forward-thinking about the future of work. Millennials get talked about a lot and are playing a prominent role reshaping expectations, experiences, and practices in the workspace! But who are they really? And what do they want?

Currently in the UK, there are roughly 17 million millennials. Millennials (those born between about 1980 and 2000) comprise half of the workforce and by 2025, 75% of the global workforce. They are a generation that grew up hyper-connected (computers, video games, smartphones, internet, social media) helping them have a more global perspective, but also putting them at the forefront of changes in the workplace on how teams interact together. They feel classic workforce models, old workplace policies, and performance management standards need to adapt with the times. Millennials are more diverse than past generations, and are highly educated but are waiting longer to make major life decisions like starting a family and/or purchasing a first home.

Company culture that is purpose-driven

Because of lower unemployment rates millennials can be more selective and demanding. They want to be part of purposeful work that has meaning. They seek to join organizations that lead to mission and purpose and have a corporate culture that reflects the same. They want to change the world but also are pursuing self-improvement and want employers to help. These trends show how millennials are reshaping the future of work.

Companies need to make lifelong learning a focal point but also realize that millennials want special attention on how they can improve their strengths, not their weaknesses. In comparison to all generations, opportunities to learn and grow are one of the top three drivers for retention among millennials. But only 39% agree that they learned something new in the past 30 days that correlates at being better at their jobs. And under half of the millennials strongly agree that their organizations have offered them opportunities to learn and grow within the past year.

Sometimes called connected but idealistic and unattached, millennials aren't afraid to change jobs looking for roles and organizations that enable their best performance. Currently, 6 in 10 millennials are looking for a new job. HR directors are warned!

Millennials want meetings?

Millennials are much less engaged than their older counterparts, in fact, only 29% of employed millennials state they are engaged at work. A lack of engagement that costs the UK economy billions annually in lost productivity.

More and more millennials are part of matrix teams (a team where team members work across functions, business units, geography, and where individuals report to different managers) something they can excel at because of their hyper-connectedness.

Unfortunately, quite often team alignment is absent among millennials, with only 43% of millennials strongly agreeing that they know what their coworkers are expected to do at work, while 57% of the older generations say the same. Greater team alignment could be improved through collaborative meetings. Meetings are something millennials are asking for, especially to get more high-quality feedback. Only providing feedback in the annual performance reviews isn't going to cut it.

Millennials that hold regular meetings with their manager's report being over 2

times more engaged than millennials that don't have regular meetings. But Klaxoon research shows that giving feedback isn't in the top 5 things we do in meetings. Millennials are craving better meetings that are less top-down, more collaborative, but also feedback-driven. But only 17% strongly agree that they receive "meaningful feedback" about their work.

Feedback loops stimulated by high-quality interactions can be made simple and visual with technologies like Klaxoon. Finding ways to leverage visual management becomes key for this generation that brings a social media sharing culture of videos and images to work. Organizations looking to improve team alignment and performance should increase feedback-driven meetings to help millennials thrive in the highly connected environment of matrixed teams.

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Flexibility or bust

To say that Millennials are connected is an understatement. Over 80% sleep with their smartphone. Our "always-on" culture has seen them re-focus on well-being and demand greater flexibility in the workplace. Nearly 75% of millennials believe that a remote work or "work from anywhere" company policy is important. Greater flexibility through remote work that is leading to more work-life balance but also putting into question traditional managerial habits.

Millennials are expecting managers to become mentors instead of time management wardens. As the adoption of technologies like Klaxoon helps to make working from anywhere possible, millennials are breaking away from standard workforce models to refocus on their work and what they care about. A new way of working that reduces distractions, boosts productivity, helping to increase engagement and curtail turnover.

As we enter this new decade, millennials will be given greater responsibilities to mold how their organization adapts to the future of work. They'll decide what technologies and new ways of working enter their day-to-day helping to break down traditional organizational structures. As millennials seek to be part of a purposeful organization, they are challenging companies to rethink the future

of work and how workplace environments connect to overall value creation.

Charles Kergaravat is head of international marketing at Klaxoon, an award-winning company that is changing the way businesses harness the power of teams with solutions designed to make meetings more efficient and work practices more collaborative. He has conducted multiple studies to measure how new ways of working are effecting and changing work habits at the intersection of people, places and technology.

Charles is very active in the technology scene, working closely with startups, accelerators, and incubators to further entrepreneurship and innovation. In 2008, he started Velo4Cure to raise funds for cancer research and completed a 3007 km solitary Tour de France by bike.

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