

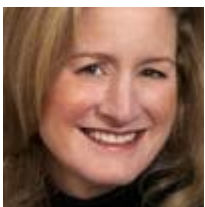
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## The Inside Scoop on What Spurs Millennial Hires

Here's What They Expect and Here's How You Can Keep Them Motivated

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**Carol Phillips**

Ever wonder what your millennial employees are thinking but not saying? Last spring, we conducted focus groups among professionally employed millennials around the country. We asked, "If you could tell your boss one thing, what would it be?" Their answers provide insights about millennial expectations and what it takes to keep talented millennials motivated.

### 1. 'TEACH ME.'



**Carolyn  
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It may come as a surprise that while they do believe they are more knowledgeable in certain areas -- such as technology -- they realize they have a lot to learn from older generations. As one millennial working in marketing at a large consumer package-goods firm put it, "Go ahead and tell stories, share your wisdom or teach them something you wish you would have known when you were their age."

### 2. 'MENTOR ME.'

Millennials want mentors, coaches and teammates -- not just bosses. Interestingly, all of the participants expressed more loyalty to the people they work with than to their company. One brand manager said, "People make everything worth doing." Millennials need to feel trusted and appreciated, and they also need to be able to trust the people they work with.

### 3. 'THIS JOB IS NOT MY LIFE.'

This statement followed a conversation about expectations regarding flex hours, vacation time and work/life balance in general. All expected a minimum of three weeks vacation from the start. Most expected a flexible work schedule and the opportunity to work from home. Many continue to receive financial support from their parents, which means they have the luxury of being more demanding. While they can appreciate how fortunate they are, they don't feel the need to apologize for it. They believe that work/life balance will make them even more productive.

#### 4. 'TRUST ME.'

Millennials yearn for autonomy and the authority to have a real impact. They feel especially discouraged when they are micromanaged. This might seem to contradict their need for a lot of feedback. But there is a huge difference between open communication and telling someone how to do every detail of his or her job. A manager's goal should be to find a balance between giving employees generous feedback and giving them the freedom to make decisions and solve problems.

#### **ABOUT THE AUTHORS**

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#### 5. 'REWARD ME.'

It's important to clearly communicate performance expectations and how performance will be rewarded. Compensation was a particularly sensitive topic for millennials, many of whom felt incentives were not designed to maximize performance. Millennials welcome open conversation about compensation and incentive programs. Some want a raise, but others prefer a results-based bonus structure, more vacation time or public recognition.

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#### 6. 'DON'T TAKE ME FOR GRANTED.'

When we probed them about workplace loyalty, we heard many say they would like to be loyal but only to companies that "earn" their devotion. Millennials feel their parents' generation was loyal to a fault: Even if a company didn't care about them, they remained faithful because they had no choice. Millennials believe they have more options.

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