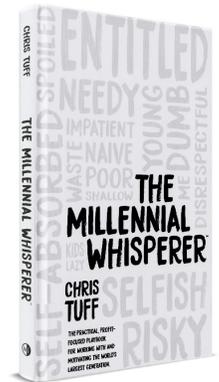


The Millennial Whisperer

The Practical, Profit-Focused Playbook for Working with and Motivating the World's Largest Generation

by **Chris Tuff**



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The Summary In Brief

In *The Millennial Whisperer*, author Chris Tuff squashes the myths and stereotypes regarding the Millennial generation and shows us how, by simply empowering, trusting and motivating one of the greatest generations of all time, the future of our business communities can flourish and succeed in ways never thought possible.

Regardless of your professional or personal background, it is within all of us to be an inspiration and motivation for this generation. Many of us often wonder just how we can give back.

The Millennial Whisperer outlines, in fantastic detail, methods and ways that will empower, inspire, and motivate Millennials. The results will shape not only our business success, but the success of the communities in which we live.

In This Summary, You Will Learn:

- How to attract, keep, manage, and reward Millennials.
- How to communicate effectively with Millennial employees.
- Ways to encourage, motivate, and incentivize your employees.
- Why it's important to make others feel like heroes!

Truth in Numbers

The Millennial Generation – 1981-1996. According to the Pew Research Center, in 2016 Millennials became the largest generation in the workforce, accounting for 35% of working Americans as of 2017. By 2030, they will make up 75% of Americans in the workforce. Yet, they have been and remain stereotyped by many employers in the workplace today. Why?

Each successive generation has disrupted the workforce and our psyches. Baby Boomers, the Me Generation, Generation X, Generation Y...and now, the Millennial Generation. But it would appear that the Millennial generation has it worse than the others. There are the misconceptions that they are entitled and lazy and poor workers.

These misconceptions are just that...misconceptions; yet they have tarnished their reputation. Millennials grew up during the advent of the Internet, Smartphones and Artificial Intelligence during the years their personalities and proclivities were still being shaped. Their parents signed them up for anything and everything they could to help position them to be accepted into the best college possible. This completely backfired and left many Millennials totally unprepared for the “real world” and the demands of the workplace. These misconceptions are hurting workplaces more than they are hurting Millennials.

Debunking the Millennial Myths

Contrary to popular belief, the Millennial generation is not the generation of “beer drinking, video game playing, living-in-their-parents’ basement” slackers. This generation is the future. They are smart. They are daring. They are eager to work, to be inspired, and they have so much to offer to employers. You can be the catalyst to help light that spark.

The reality is that Millennials are hardworking, optimistic workers, with many working 45 plus hours per week in addition to a side job. Many fully expect to be working until past 65 years of age, with some never envisioning retirement.

Everyone has the potential to succeed if given the right environment, supportive culture, and key opportunities. Small changes in how we relate to Millennials can reverse the negative damage done by misconceptions, over-protective parents, and misunderstandings.

If our generation does nothing to embrace Millennials, but instead gets annoyed each time one of them speaks up

during a meeting, or continues to view them as spoiled, entitled brats, companies will be full of employees who hate being there. Employees will show up to work, do the least amount of work possible and collect a paycheck. When the chance comes to jump ship, they will be gone. And then begins the cycle of rehiring and retraining Millennials.

Money and resources will be wasted on training and benefits and things that do not matter nor work for the people we want to motivate. Companies will try to hang on to the ways of the past and ignore the amazing opportunities standing right before them. Those companies will go bankrupt or fold.

The key is to change our way of thinking. Getting the most out of Millennials does not require a budget. We simply have to change how we do business and recruit better, motivate better, and lead Millennials to success.

Recognizing the Changing Seasons of Life

There are younger Millennials and there are older Millennials. Some Millennials are still trying to find out their passion and niche. This is where your talents, passions and profits intersect. Many don't have the capacity to take long, expensive vacations. Many often take several mini vacations. The older generation folks might tend to view both the older and younger Millennials as lazy or unmotivated.

Do they really have toddlers keeping them up at night, or are they lazy? Do they just not want to make partner or are they stretched time-wise, planning weddings for their kids? Older Millennials did everything their parents expected. They accepted entry-level jobs and stressed themselves out trying to climb that corporate ladder.

Then the “Great Recession” hit. The newer Millennials had the rug pulled out underneath them. They were downsized and laid off. They had done everything right and everything they were told to do. This came when student loans were due. This is the thanks they got. Older Millennials were also impacted, but they had put in decades of solid employment at their company. Many saw their parents impacted firsthand by this and saw the stress, worry and financial security dwindle. Savings were depleted. The Millennials saw this as a fight to survive situation and forged their way in the workplace.

Do we view this as too easily distracted? Do they not re-

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spect authority? When we step back and realize their backstory, it is absolutely understandable as to WHY they would not trust “authority.” Once we acknowledge we helped create what we complain about, we can start to change our way of thinking. We helped create the technology they are accustomed to. We were the ones who terminated their parents. We modeled no loyalty in the corporate world. We scared them into buying a house. We shadowed them as parents. We made everything so easy for them.

The Message is Clear

We caused it and we can most definitely fix it. We can restore it. The first step is acknowledging that the old way of thinking about Millennials is totally incorrect. Their values are different. They will question authority. When we harness the ingenuity of the Millennials, we create a loyal workplace that will go above and beyond for our companies.

Millennials want to feel they are contributing directly to a goal and not just being able to pay their bills. They want their business to improve things in the world. They have a very far reaching vision and want to be a direct part in making good things happen.

When we empower Millennials and employ them in jobs that focus on goals and incentives far beyond just making money, you get your best work from Millennial team members.

When Millennials Work Best

Many Millennial employees do not believe that excessive work demands are worth the potential sacrifice to their personal lives. Most crave a strong, stable team-oriented environment at work. They want to do interesting work - even work around the world. These factors are important to their happiness in the workplace, even more so than their non-Millennial coworkers.

Millennials are looking for personal growth and development. It is crucial that business leaders “get the ‘deal’ right” when attracting top Millennial talent. They want to be a part

of an organization that lets them move forward in a professional and personal capacity. Use Millennials to assist in the recruiting process of other Millennials. Allowing the current Millennial team members who may work for you to be part of the interviewing process gives an added benefit of solidifying the company culture and improving retention rates.

A long period of recruitment and a deep understanding of what Millennials want is needed to attract top-quality Millennials for the next level of success.

Create a Culture for Millennials to Thrive

Millennials need us to create a culture and provide the structure for them to succeed. Investing in your employees is a wonderful way to build their loyalty to you. They will be more willing to go the extra mile for you. You can transform their job performance if you put a little money into the tools and training that will help your Millennial team members/employees do their job. Do not try to stifle the Millennial’s drive and entrepreneurial spirit. Give them room – consider letting them use a small chunk of their time during the workday to explore projects they are passionate about.

It is critical that your employees are recognized. Everyone is happier when they are recognized for doing something good. When employees are recognized, it increases their productivity and their loyalty. If you have an employee who can’t be trusted, then they should not be on your team.

- Don’t wait a full year to give them a review and feedback. Do so more frequently and with a purpose.
- Give feedback compassionately along with compliments.
- Discipline in the moment. Do not let issues linger.
- Negativity is extremely damaging in the workplace (and ALL aspects of life). Foster an open and transparent environment. Encourage open communication in the moment.

- Empower Millennial employees in the interview process. Peer to peer. Also have leaders involved in this process. Get involved!
- Consider personality and adaptability over pedigree and accomplishments.
- Sometimes you will have to fire a Millennial. Do so quickly and gracefully. Move on. Keep in mind, things will go wrong in business. People quit or they just need to be let go. We all make bad hires, so do not beat yourself up over this process.
- Reward your Millennials! If they want to work from home for a change of scenery, trust them to do so from time to time.
- Recognizing your Millennial employees is crucial. You don't have to break the bank for this. Foster a team environment – celebrate rewards together. Come up with ideas your company can do together to celebrate the accomplishment of a team member. Swag, stickers, good quality T-shirts, or movie tickets – the possibilities are endless and inexpensive. The less expensive, the better. Just don't forget to make it fun.

You will know when YOU have become a Millennial Whisperer. Millennial employees will wear the company shirt with pride or put company bumper stickers on their cars. You may even come across a hashtag with your company name beside it one day when you are scrolling through Instagram, looking at animal pictures and sunsets on the beach.

Start today and recognize the potential of Millennials. Start to take steps to blend generations and create an amazingly productive workplace, and world. Kindness and compassion matter...not just in the workplace, but in everyday life. When the Millennials succeed, we succeed. We must set ourselves up to succeed in leading the biggest, most resourceful, and most passionate generation in history. To do that, we must implement the strategies we know in order to move forward.

Make It Happen

There are several areas to be on the lookout for to know you are implementing your strategies effectively. You will see success in things that are measurable, such as productivity, turnover, costs and profits. You will see and hear things – energy and excitement in the workplace become palpable. You will notice people working great together, going to lunch together, hanging out at events outside of the workplace, and even participating in charity events together.



Chris Tuff is a partner at 22squared, a full-service advertising agency based out of Atlanta, GA where he oversees content marketing and partnerships. Chris has held many different roles over the 10 years he's been there and specializes in building new offerings and motivating the millennial generation.

Chris was one of the first marketers to work directly with Facebook in 2005, and is now one of the foremost thought leaders in the digital space. Always on top of emerging trends, he oversees all content marketing and helps push to get existing clients access to first-to-market ad products and offerings. He's responsible for partnership development with technology and media companies like Twitter, Google, Facebook, and beyond.

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