

Millennials in the workplace

Read a report on millennials in the workplace to practise and improve your reading skills.

Before reading

Do the preparation task first. Then read the text and do the exercises.

Preparation task

Match the definitions (a–j) with the vocabulary (1–10).

Vocabulary

1. a threat
2. turnover rate
3. employee retention
4. large-scale
5. ethics
6. to give up
7. to strive to
8. to monitor
9. excessive
10. a sacrifice

Definitions

- a. the percentage of employees leaving the company
- b. a company's ability to keep its staff from leaving
- c. extensive; involving large numbers or a large area
- d. to try hard to
- e. something that can cause damage or danger
- f. more than necessary or normal
- g. something of value that you give up so that you can have something else
- h. moral principles defining what's good for society and its individuals
- i. to watch and observe over a period of time
- j. to stop having something you want

Reading text: Millennials in the workplace

Background

Millennials (those born between the early 1980s and the early 1990s) make up a huge part of our workforce but they seem to lack loyalty to the companies and the leaders they work for. Multinational companies are noticing larger turnover rates of millennials as employee retention rates fall. This report looks at the findings of two large-scale surveys on the mindset of the millennial generation and explores how organisations can strive to address these needs, increase employee engagement and encourage retention.

Research

In a global survey conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), more than 40,000 millennial (born between 1983 and 1993) and non-millennial responses were collected on the topics of workplace culture, communication and working styles, pay structure, career development, work-life balance, etc.

In a separate global survey conducted by Deloitte, more than 10,000 millennials participated in a study about their perceptions of the threats and opportunities in the complex world of work.

Key findings

- Millennials are as committed to their work as their more senior colleagues.
- Millennials value interesting work and a good work–life balance. They do not believe that excessive work demands are worth sacrifices in their personal lives.
- Millennials want flexibility in their working hours and are willing to give up pay increases and promotions for a flexible working schedule. They believe that success should be measured by productivity and not by the number of hours they are seen in an office.
- Millennials want to feel supported and appreciated by their company and their superiors.
- Millennials want more opportunities to develop their skills. These include technological skills, teamwork and interpersonal skills.
- Millennials believe that businesses and business leaders should contribute to the improvement of society and they are more likely to be loyal to a company with strong ethics.

Recommendations

Organisations and managers wanting to retain millennials should consider:

- monitoring their workload and satisfaction levels with their work–life balance
- creating a flexible work culture where employees have more control over their working hours and their work location
- providing meaningful work and interesting opportunities
- offering help and support in continuing professional development
- changing the organisation's goals from being mainly about profit-making to motives that address social concerns and solve wider societal problems.

Tasks

Task 1

Circle the best answer.

1. This report is based on the findings of how many surveys?
 - a. two
 - b. six
 - c. forty thousand
 - d. fifty thousand

2. This report was done for organisations that want to ...
 - a. get rid of millennial employees.
 - b. have higher turnover rates.
 - c. prove that millennials are more difficult than non-millennials.
 - d. increase the job satisfaction of the millennials who are working for them.

3. According to the report, which of the following would millennials be happy to do?
 - a. give up family time on weekends to finish a work project
 - b. sacrifice pay so that they can work shorter hours
 - c. be left to find their own developmental opportunities
 - d. be committed to their companies' profit-making motives

4. According to the report, which of the following would promote millennials' loyalty to their company?
 - a. better pay structures
 - b. more opportunities for promotion
 - c. a more regular working schedule
 - d. the company's commitment to the greater good of society

5. According to the report, millennials believe that it is important to ...
 - a. be appreciated for the work you do.
 - b. measure your productivity.
 - c. show your bosses how long you are working in the office.
 - d. work for a company that is bringing in a lot of money.

6. If managers want to keep their millennial employees happy, they should ...
 - a. avoid giving them feedback on the work they're doing.
 - b. give them options to work from home.
 - c. have them develop the technological skills of the non-millennials.
 - d. promote the importance of remaining loyal to the company.

Task 2

Are the sentences true or false?

	Answer	
	True	False
1. This report is based on surveys that only questioned people born between 1983 and 1994.	True	False
2. The surveys were conducted in several different countries.	True	False
3. Millennials are less loyal to their companies than non-millennials.	True	False
4. Millennials believe that their technological skills are sufficiently advanced.	True	False
5. Managers should be aware of how happy their staff are with the amount of work they have been given.	True	False
6. Managers should worry about their own work-life balance and not concern themselves with problems in society.	True	False

Discussion

What's most important for you to be happy at work?

Answers

Preparation task

1. e
2. a
3. b
4. c
5. h
6. j
7. d
8. i
9. f
10. g

Task 1

1. a
2. d
3. b
4. d
5. a
6. b

Task 2

1. False
2. True
3. False
4. False
5. True
6. False