



Timely Information for Personal Success

How Millennials Push Employers to Better Technologies

By Victoria Pearce

Millennials – *sigh*...everyone loves to gang up on this age group. They are impatient; short attention spans; too demanding. Whether that is true in life (and as a Millennial I say it isn't!) it *can* certainly be true in the way Millennials interact with technology. Millennials grew up with computers and cell phones so they are used to using technology to make life and work simpler.

This also means Millennials aren't as wowed by technology and expect a lot more from it. A Millennial will abandon a web page if it takes too long to load or isn't visually appealing, will prefer texting to calling, and will google rather than ask a question.

This has led companies to change the way they do business, from offering online ordering of pizza

to instant messaging customer service. But Millennials aren't just customers, they are also *employees*. Like it or not your corporate clients, EAP or HR may need to make some internal organizational changes.

Putting into Practice

Here are some ways to use the lessons learned from Millennial *customers* for Millennial *employees*:

❖ **Put it online.** On demand access is key for Millennials who tend not to keep to strict working hours as other generations have. Most companies have an intranet site for HR forms, benefit information, policies, etc. Use these spots for things like e-learning, video demos, or provide other information to keep Millennials engaged.

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Healthy Recipe: Chipotle & Orange Chicken

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 tbsps orange juice concentrate, thawed
- 1 tbsps finely chopped chipotle peppers
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- 2 teaspoons unsulfured molasses
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1 lb. boneless, skinless chicken breasts

NUTRITIONAL VALUE:

- Calories per serving: 150
- Carbohydrates: 7 g.
- Protein: 23 g.
- Sodium: 227 mg.
- Fat: 3 g.
- Saturated fat: 1 g.

DIRECTIONS:

- ➊ Preheat grill or broiler.
- ➋ Whisk together orange juice concentrate, chipotle pepper, vinegar, molasses, and mustard in small bowl.
- ➌ Lightly oil grill or broiler rack. Season chicken with salt and grill or broil for 2 minutes. Turn, brush with the glaze and cook for 4 minutes, brushing occasionally with the glaze. Turn again, brush with glaze, and cook until center is no longer pink, 1 to 2 minutes longer.

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❖ **Make it interactive.** It isn't enough to just have a location where you place resources online, those resources need to serve a purpose and allow the user to interact. Things like forms that are submitted at the push of a button rather than completed and attached to an email are far more user friendly and efficient.

❖ **Make it easy, streamlined, and attractive.** There is a saying regarding Millennials – everything I want, nothing I don't. Millennials are so good with technology there can sometimes be a misguided sense that they can just "figure it out". The truth is yes, they probably can figure out where to find the info they need, or a way to work through a snazzy website, but they probably *won't*.

Keep in mind Millennials come from a world of competing technology, so if one website isn't working they will just abandon it for a better experience. Make sure the steps required for any task are clear and upfront, only provide the information needed, and avoid pages with too much scrolling.

❖ **Consider mobile.** With any software developed consider the mobile experience. A Gallup research report found that 85% of Millennials use the internet on their phone rather than a laptop, so ensure you have a mobile experience to match what's on the desktop experience.

❖ **Know when technology won't work.** There is a misconception that technology is all

Millennials are interested in, which *isn't* the case. Millennials look to technology to make their *work simpler*, but they still look to their workplace as a place for emotional connection.

That same Gallup research report found that Millennial employees are more engaged and satisfied in the workplace when they have regular feedback and meetings with their managers.

Summary

Before you bemoan the changes you might need to make I suggest this: *It's a good thing.* Millennials reach for technology first but by doing so they are helping you be aware of internal efficiencies.

Online absence reporting doesn't just save you from having to field phone calls, it allows you to automatically notify anyone affected by an absence, ensure proper coverage all while tracking the data allowing you to find trends – *all with no additional work.*

Beyond that, while it may be Millennials that push to develop new technologies they are really just the catalyst for change that everyone can enjoy. Facebook may have been started for college kids, but now even your grandpa posts status updates. ■

At the time of this writing, Victoria Pearce was communications manager with Morneau Shepell, a benefits and technology leader that takes an integrative approach to employee assistance, health, benefits, and retirement needs. Learn more at <https://us.morneaushepell.com/>