

Five Millennial Myths

Written by Bob Snyder
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Jennifer J. Deal's **Five Millennial Myths** is subtitled: Forget what you think you know about your Gen Y employees.

That part was easy: I didn't know much.

The conventional wisdom, apparently, is that "...everyone under the age of 30 is needy and narcissistic. They want the corner office and a company car, but they aren't truly committed to their organization. They don't take kindly to criticism, but can be easily won over with the next hot gadget."

Deal asks: "Can companies afford to put their trust in these types of characterizations?"

For the past 12 years, she studied the so-called generation gap through empirical research, and found the stereotypes of millennials in the workplace as inconsistent at best and destructive at worst. With data collected from more than 13,000 participants in for-profit, nonprofit, and government organizations, Deal identifies five key myths that companies believe about their younger employees.

Myth #1: Millennials don't want to be told what to do.

The reality: Wrong! Their research shows (unexpectedly, she admits) that millennials currently in the workforce are more willing to defer to authority than either baby boomers or Gen Xers.

Millennials are more likely to thrive if they know the ingredients for success in the workplace, starting with the basics. For example, although it may seem obvious to an older manager, millennials may appreciate being told what time they are expected to arrive at the office, and precisely how quickly they should turn around a project (beyond just "ASAP").

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