

*An Online PDH Course  
brought to you by  
CEDengineering.com*

## **Millennial Engineers: Recruiting, Retaining and Developing**

Course No: K08-008  
Credit: 8 PDH

---

Richard Grimes, MPA, CPT.

---



Continuing Education and Development, Inc.

P: (877) 322-5800  
[info@cedengineering.com](mailto:info@cedengineering.com)

[www.cedengineering.com](http://www.cedengineering.com)

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Table of Contents ..... i

Preface ..... 1

Learning Outcomes ..... 3

Intended Audience..... 4

Why are Millennials Getting so Much Attention Now? ..... 6

    A Snapshot of the Millennial ..... 6

        Multitaskers ..... 7

        Connected..... 8

        Tech-Savvy ..... 8

        Instant Gratification & Recognition..... 8

        Work-Life Balance & Flexibility..... 9

        Collaboration ..... 9

        Transparency ..... 9

        Career Advancement..... 10

    A Career Risk for the Millennial ..... 11

A Quick Comparison of Generations..... 13

    Generation X ..... 13

    The Millennial Generation (Gen Y)..... 15

What the Leader Must Know ..... 19

    Developing Millennial Motivation..... 21

        Five Elements of Motivation..... 25

        #1. Telling Your Millennial What You Expect ..... 27

        #2 Give Your Millennial a Chance to Perform ..... 29

        #3 Let Them Know How They are Doing Along the Way..... 30

        #4 Give Them Help and Guidance When They Need It..... 31

        #5 Reward Them with Pay or Praise When They Succeed ..... 32

    What Would Motivate Your Millennials?..... 33

Developmental Delegation & Empowerment .....	34
Delegation with Millennials .....	35
Advantages of Effective Delegation .....	35
Why DO SOME Not Delegate .....	36
Their View of Subordinates .....	36
Personal Insecurities.....	37
A Need for Control.....	38
What Empowerment Means.....	39
Risks and Rewards of Empowering Employees .....	40
Preparing the Developmental Environment .....	42
Defining “Hard” and “Soft” Performance Measurables .....	43
Performance Assessment Sample .....	47
Performance Problem Flowchart .....	48
What the Millennial Must Know.....	52
Professional Growth and Development Opportunities .....	54
A Millennial’s Professional Development Strategy.....	57
Your Job in the Organization .....	62
Your Character as a Millennial .....	64
Your Impression on Others .....	69
You Are in the Customer Service World.....	71
Moments of Truth .....	72
Once Again... the Basics.....	75
Other Opportunities for Self-help or Self-hurt.....	75
Visual Messages.....	76
My Space and Your Space.....	77
Phone Tone & Other Behavior .....	77
Dealing with Angry Customers .....	78
Your Working Style.....	79
Self-Assessment Survey .....	79

Demonstrating Our Working Style .....	84
The Working Styles Grid .....	85
The Analytical Style.....	86
The Amiable Style .....	88
The Driver Style .....	90
The Expressive Style .....	92
Your Emotions .....	95
Behavior vs. Emotion.....	95
Maintain a sense of proportion.....	96
Learn to Adapt .....	97
Learn how to lose gracefully and smartly. ....	99
Your Activity: Busy or Productive? .....	101
Your Development Plan .....	102
Be All That You Can Be.....	103
The Second Law of Thermodynamics.....	104
The Lesson of the Cheshire Cat .....	106
Finding a Mentor .....	107

(Author's Note: I originally wrote this course in 2018 and recently included it in my periodic review of all the courses I have on this engineering educational website. The worst thing an author can do with time-sensitive content like this is to allow it to become stale and outdated!

We have come to learn much more about Millennials in the past eight years and I have updated and refreshed the course content. Gen Zers (1996-2012) are intentionally left out of this version but may be good content for a separate course dedicated to them in the next review cycle.

I left the original preface to give you a feel for the background of this course.)

## PREFACE

I was reading reviews from buyers of my courses recently and one comment really jumped out at me: "It seems like good content, but I'd like to see more targeted at Millennials, like me."

I stopped for a moment and thought about the forty-plus business courses I have written for engineers needing professional development hours since 2004 and thought, "Why would that guy expect me to write something tailored for him and his peers? What makes him think he's so special? Why wouldn't existing content be relevant to him?"

As a Baby Boomer, I've written to those I know best such as other Boomers and their successors, the Generation Xers, born between 1965 and 1980. But now that I think about it, I haven't specifically considered Millennials and should have. I did a little research comparing the different generations still alive now in our culture and suddenly woke up: *of course, the Millennials are different and have become the dominant players in the workforce who will shape our society for the next two or three decades to come. After all, if I'm not writing for them, what other audience will there be?*

So now I am looking at who they are from the perspective of my traditional audience: the professional engineers and project managers probably 40-65 years old who have been so good to me as loyal readers. I will identify some specific and important characteristics of the Millennials that you must consider and provide some useful tools and guidelines to help you recruit, keep, and develop these new professionals because *they are not what you are used to and your practices from the past may no longer be successful when applied to them.*

I have learned some interesting things about them and why they are legitimately different from the audience I have served before. And if employers want to recruit, retain, develop, and help these Millennials self-actualize as valuable long-term employees, they should take some time to understand them, too.

Thank you for selecting this course. I hope it is useful for you.

Dick Grimes, Author

Houston, Texas

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

Participants in this self-study course will be able to:

1. Identify specific characteristic differences between the Millennial workforce and the older Generation X (born 1965-1980).
2. Use their understanding of these differences to devise effective recruitment, retention, and development strategies.
3. Implement those strategies to reshape their organizations to maximize the potential of these young professionals.
4. Identify personal and professional growth opportunities for Millennials.
5. Devise performance feedback and measurement systems to allow them to self-monitor and control their performance levels.
6. Identify specific career development risks associated with high-potential Millennials.
7. Identify and implement five elements of motivating Millennials.
8. Devise effective delegation and empowerment opportunities for their Millennial subordinates.
9. Identify reasons they may have difficulty delegating effectively.
10. Conduct a risk analysis of the rewards associated with Millennial delegation and empowerment.
11. Effectively define “hard” and “soft” performance measurements to manage Millennial performance
12. Analyze and identify the causes of typical performance problems.
13. List at least five areas of self-development focus critical to a Millennial.
14. Identify a personal working style and relate effectively with those different from you.
15. List at least four critical areas of emotional behavior that must be developed.

## INTENDED AUDIENCE

My primary audience is a **senior professional engineer** in any leadership capacity who wants to understand this growing segment of the workforce, so they can successfully lead and develop them for the growth and expansion of their organization. I envision you as a member of Generation X and possibly a Boomer nearing retirement.



I wrote the course with these purposes in mind:

- **To help you, the senior professional engineer, understand this employee better** so you don't have to go through a trial-and-error approach (or any more than necessary) as you develop a leader/subordinate relationship with them.

When we were their age entering the professional world, we expected and endured a certain amount of emotional distance from our leaders because they were from the 'command-and-control' mindset of our parents' generation. We realized we had to work hard to earn their grudging respect and did long hours, a lot of grunt work, and tried to be 'seen-but-not-heard' until our work made us worthy of an invitation into their ranks. We had to "pay our dues" before becoming eligible for promotion and never heard the term "casual Friday."

If you treat your Millennial like you were treated because you assume they are just like you were, you will quickly chase them away to a more compatible environment. (And they aren't afraid to keep jumping from one position to the next until they are comfortable.)

- **You can use this as a mentoring guide** to refresh your memory on what motivates people, how to analyze performance problems and get to their basic cause, and some good suggestions on effective delegation and empowerment that will help you keep them focused on maximizing their potential. (In other words, helping them learn to help you.)



- ***Use this as a development resource for your Millennials*** to read and bring back to you for discussion about how the content may apply to your workplace. The more you engage with them in these development topics, and you see them grow professionally, you will see your years of hard work and perseverance become a legacy you are passing on to the next generation.
- ***Share it with your Human Resources Department*** to use as an additional tool in shaping your organization into a place Millennials would want to work. After all, they are becoming the ENTIRE WORKFORCE and if they don't find your situation inviting as a potential employer, your company will be closing its doors permanently.

## WHY ARE MILLENNIALS GETTING SO MUCH ATTENTION NOW?

In the last few years, Millennials (AKA Generation Y) have become the largest generation in the U.S. workforce. They are also the fastest-growing generation of customers in the marketplace, bringing the greatest lifetime value. In addition, they exhibit different attitudes toward employment, sales, and marketing, which are challenging many conventional strategies and approaches.

That is why everyone's talking about Millennials—but are they *really* different? How and why are they different? What do potential employers and leaders of them need to know?

## A SNAPSHOT OF THE MILLENNIAL

Before we get into the body of this course, it's important that you understand just who this individual is and why he/she isn't simply a younger version of you.

Millennials have been characterized in several different ways. On the negative side, they've been described as lazy, narcissistic and prone to jump from job to job. This is the first generation where we debate whether players should get trophies just for showing up<sup>1</sup> and wonder if it will create unrealistic expectations of working life.

A story in Time magazine said polls show that Millennials "want flexible work schedules, more 'me time' on the job, and nearly nonstop feedback and career advice from managers." Another Time story in May 2013, titled "The Me Generation," begins: "*They're narcissistic. They're lazy. They're coddled. They're even a bit delusional. Those aren't just unfounded negative stereotypes about 80 million Americans born roughly between 1980 and 2000. They're backed up by a decade of sociological research.*"

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://wamc.org/post/should-kids-get-trophy-showing>

The article also points out that Millennials may be simply adapting quickly to a world undergoing rapid technological change.

They have also been described in positive ways. They are generally regarded as being more open-minded, and more supportive of gay rights and equal rights for minorities. Other positive adjectives to describe them include confidence, self-expression, liberal, upbeat and receptive to new ideas and ways of living.

The interest in and the controversy surrounding the Millennial generation resulted in a packed audience and lengthy Q&A at LinkedIn Talent Connects session: *“Millennials: How to Attract, Hire, & Retain Today’s Workforce.”*<sup>2</sup>

Here are some more traits about them you should know. And whether you like them or not, you must consider adapting your workplace policies and practices to capitalize on those traits because these Millennials are who you will be recruiting – there aren’t any alternative employees.

### MULTITASKERS

Millennials are multitasking pros and can juggle many responsibilities at once. This also means they are easily distracted and find social media and texting hard to resist.

***What does this mean for you:*** Keep Millennials on track by being upfront about your expectations and establishing both daily and weekly goals. If your Millennial employees have frequent deadlines to meet, you’ll be less likely to find them playing on their phones at the office. We’ll talk about defining measurable goals later. During the recruiting process, be sure to tell them that the job will have variety and that every day will vary.

---

<sup>2</sup> <https://business.linkedin.com/events/talent-connect/agenda>

## CONNECTED

Millennials know everything there is to know about social media because they live it. Constantly perusing Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc., it's how they share and get information.

**What does this mean for you:** If your company isn't employing social media effectively, Millennials will think you're irrelevant. Keep your social media outlets active always. This doesn't mean constantly posting jobs or product updates – try to start conversations that will engage your audience. Talk about topics that relate to your company or will interest your followers. Consider allowing your Millennial employees to help you with your social media strategy. After all, they are the experts.

## TECH-SAVVY

There's no doubt that most Millennials are more tech-savvy than other generations because they've grown up immersed in it.

**What does this mean for you:** Make sure that your company and team stay up to date technologically. Also, ensure that your company and career sites are mobile-optimized so that you can easily be found online from any device at any time. In addition, make the application process fast and easy by allowing people to apply for positions with content from LinkedIn or other sources.  
(You can learn more about mobile recruiting strategies in LinkedIn's Mobile Recruiting Playbook.)

## INSTANT GRATIFICATION & RECOGNITION

Millennials need to feel like what they are doing is important and that they are on the right track. Yes, it sounds a little needy...and it is. But many Millennials grew up with constant praise from their Baby Boomer parents. It's what they know and expect.

**What this means for you:** During the recruiting process, tell them about how important the position is and that they will be making a valuable contribution to the company. Once hired, recognize their accomplishments publicly. This type of recognition encourages Millennials to work hard and increases their job satisfaction.

## WORK-LIFE BALANCE & FLEXIBILITY

Millennials aren't as willing as former generations to sacrifice their personal life to advance their careers. They like to "work hard – play hard" and want to be at a company that appreciates this desire for balance. They also expect a more flexible work environment than previous generations and want to work for a company that supports various causes.

**What this means for you:** Communicate that your company values work-life balance and tell them about sponsored events outside the workplace, benefits, charity and volunteer work you support, and any fitness or health related programs that you provide for your employees. In addition, let them know that if they are meeting deadlines and goals and attending meetings, their time-in/time-out is up to them. If possible, give them the option to work from home on occasion. Remember, they are not afraid to work hard, they just don't want to do it within a rigid, traditional 8-5 schedule.

## COLLABORATION

Millennials are extremely team-oriented and enjoy collaborating and building friendships with colleagues.

**What does this mean for you:** During the recruiting process, let them know that there will be plenty of opportunities for collaboration and team projects. You should also configure (if possible) your office space to allow for teamwork and easy idea sharing (think open cubicles, whiteboards, and drop-in rooms that can be used for group meetings).

## TRANSPARENCY

Millennials want to feel like they have an open and honest relationship with their manager and co-workers and that there won't be any nasty surprises when they join a company. Once they've signed up, they want assurance that their opinion is valued, and both give and receive a good deal of feedback.

**What this means for you:** Make certain that there is unrevised information about your company available online and let them know about any downsides that the position they are applying for may

have. They will appreciate your honesty, knowing that no job is perfect. Furthermore, tell them what their performance review process will be like. Once they are hired, provide them with the ongoing feedback that they desire. (A better approach is if they can self-monitor their performance progress without having to hear it from you. We'll talk more about this later.)

### CAREER ADVANCEMENT

Millennials want to know that they will have the opportunity to advance and develop their careers within the company they choose to join.

***What does this mean for you:*** During the recruiting process, tell them about opportunities that they will have to move up in the ranks. If possible, consider a program whereby they can rotate through different divisions of the organization to find the best fit. Also, you may want to break some of your former promotional steps into smaller steps, so they can get promoted but still have the necessary time for maturity as they move up.

Finally, include a lot of stretch – horizontally as well as vertically - goals in their development plans to provide a chance to develop teamwork skills and learn to get things done without having the formal authority to compel compliance.

## **A CAREER RISK FOR THE MILLENNIAL**

A passage from an article with the insightful title, “The Young and the Clueless”<sup>3</sup> gives us a snapshot of a fictional Millennial in a few years if not exposed to a little reality as they rise in the organization.

In many ways, 36-year-old Charles Armstrong is a natural leader. He’s brilliant, creative, energetic, aggressive—a strategic and financial genius. He’s risen quickly through the ranks due to his keen business instincts and proven ability to deliver bottom-line results, at times jumping from one organization to another to leapfrog through the hierarchy. But now his current job is on the line. A division president at an international consumer products company, he’s just uncovered a major production setback on a heavily promoted new product. Thousands of orders have been delayed, customers are furious, and the company’s stock price has plummeted since the news went public.

Worse, the crisis was utterly preventable. Had Armstrong understood the value of building relationships with his peers and had his subordinates found him approachable, he might have been able to appreciate the cross-functional challenges of developing this product. He might have learned of the potential delay months earlier instead of at the last minute. He could have postponed a national advertising campaign and set expectations with investors. He might have even found a way to solve the problems and launch the product on time. But despite his ability to dazzle his superiors with talent and intellect, Armstrong is widely viewed by his peers and subordinates as self-promoting, intolerant, and remote. Perhaps worse, he’s only half aware of how others perceive him, and to the extent he does know, he’s not terribly concerned. These relationships are not a priority for him. Like so many other talented young managers, Armstrong lacks the emotional competencies that would enable him to work more effectively as part of a team. And now his bosses seem to have unwittingly undermined his career, having promoted him too quickly, before he could develop the relationship skills he needs.

When you were just beginning in your professional career with the technical skills, energy, and passion necessary to conquer your part of the world single-handedly, you probably heard irritating phrases like “you must pay your dues”, “wait your turn”, and “timing is everything, your time will come.”

---

<sup>3</sup> <https://hbr.org/2002/12/the-young-and-the-clueless>

People more senior than you (obviously with connections, you rationalized) seemed to get the best opportunities and you were relegated to routine duties working with other rookies like yourself all trying to “build some time” at the bottom before beginning the climb up the success ladder.

Looking back during that time-building period with wiser, more experienced eyes, you now realize you were also forging relationships across the organization, learning who you could count on (as they were learning the same about you), and gaining patience when the bureaucracy ground along at glacial speed.

As you encountered various leadership styles, you subconsciously emulated effective techniques that worked easily and effectively while swearing never to use the destructive ones that you saw destroy morale and chase good people away. Slowly, you were professionally maturing which only comes as you experience failure, success, embarrassment, teamwork, disappointment, and all the other emotions necessary for a healthy psyche.

I am not claiming that we liked it or pretending that “paying your dues” in whatever activities that may entail is fair, but it was effective and gave us a solid foundation of emotional maturity upon which to build our futures and to lead others.

We of the previous generation(s) may be dazzled by the technical skills and wizardry of the Millennials and be tempted to let their career rocket shoot them toward the top and see how far and fast it goes. If we do, we risk the same disaster described in the fictional passage on the previous page.

We must remember that knowledge is not wisdom and that trust is historic: it must be developed and nurtured over time through experience with others. Just telling you to “trust me” is not the same as you learning to trust me.

This course is meant to help you help them gain the wisdom and maturity your organization will need for the future after you have gone and it’s their turn to run things.



## **A QUICK COMPARISON OF GENERATIONS**

First, it will be useful to take a quick, high-level look at their generation and yours.<sup>4</sup> (Also, it can be insightful for you and them if each of you looks at your list of descriptors and identify which apply to you. And then exchange them and tell the other, “this is what I’m like”. It will go a long way to start a meaningful dialogue between you.)

After this overview, we will explore the comparison from the two different perspectives: you, the Engineering Leader wanting to get the most from the Millennial, and the Millennial who wants to develop a blueprint for professional growth and development with your help.

### **GENERATION X**

The characteristics of my typical Generation X audience. How many of these apply to you?

- Born between 1965 and 1980
- The “latch-key kids” grew up street-smart but isolated, often with divorced or career-driven parents. Latch-Key came from the house key kids wore around their neck, because they would go home from school to an empty house.
- Entrepreneurial
- Very individualistic
- Government and big business mean little to them.
- I want to save the neighborhood, not the world.
- Feel misunderstood by other generations.

---

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.marketingteacher.com/the-six-living-generations-in-america/>

- Cynical of many major institutions, which failed their parents, or them, during their formative years and are therefore eager to make marriage work and “be there” for their children.
- Don’t “feel” like a generation, but they are.
- Raised in the transition phase of written-based knowledge to digital knowledge archives; most remember being in school without computers and then after the introduction of computers in middle school or high school.
- Desire a chance to learn, explore and contribute.
- Tend to commit to self rather than an organization or specific career. This generation averages 7 career changes in their lifetime, it was not normal to work for a company for life, unlike previous generations.
- Society and thus individuals are envisioned as disposable.
- AIDS begins to spread and is first lethal infectious disease in the history of any culture on earth which was not subjected to any quarantine.
- Beginning obsession of individual rights prevailing over the common good, especially if it is applicable to any type of minority group.
- Raised by the career and money conscious Boomers amidst the societal disappointment over governmental authority and the Vietnam war.
- School problems were about drugs.
- Late to marry (after cohabitation) and quick to divorce...many single parents.
- Into labels and brand names.
- They want what they want and want it now but are struggling to buy, and most are deeply in credit card debt.
- It has been researched that they may be conversationally shallow because relating consists of shared time watching video movies, instead of previous generations.
- Short on loyalty & wary of commitment; all values are relative...must tolerate all peoples.
- Self-absorbed and suspicious of all organizations.
- Survivors as individuals.
- Cautious, skeptical, unimpressed with authority, self-reliant.

## THE MILLENNIAL GENERATION (GEN Y)

If you are a Millennial, how closely does this apply to you?

### Positive Aspects

- Millennial engineers, typically born between the early 1980s and mid-1990s, often bring a fresh perspective to engineering teams. They are comfortable with technology, making them adept at using digital tools, which can lead to innovative solutions in projects.
- Their high motivation and enthusiasm can energize teams, and they tend to excel in collaboration, fostering a dynamic work environment.
- Additionally, they value flexibility, such as remote work options, aligning well with modern, adaptable work settings.

### Negative Aspects

- On the downside, some perceive Millennial engineers as entitled, focusing on individual promotion, which might challenge team cohesion.
- They may also change jobs more frequently, a behavior linked to seeking new experiences, potentially leading to higher turnover.
- Their relative lack of experience compared to older engineers can mean they need more guidance, which might slow down project timelines initially.
- These differences in work styles could also create communication gaps with older colleagues, requiring careful management.

### Positive Contributions

Millennial engineers are often heralded for their innovative mindset and technological proficiency, which are critical in today's fast-evolving engineering landscape.

For instance, a study from ESILV Graduate School of Engineering, Paris<sup>5</sup> highlights their ability to approach organizational processes with an open perspective, questioning the status quo to drive

---

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.esilv.fr/en/3-reasons-to-hire-millennial-engineers/>

innovation. This freshness is particularly valuable in addressing contemporary challenges in environmental, medical, and technological fields.

Their tech-savvy nature, growing up with digital tools, equips them to handle the digital age of manufacturing efficiently, as noted by ALTex Wire and Cable<sup>6</sup>. They embrace innovation, utilizing technology to simplify processes, which is essential for roles requiring rapid adaptation to new software and methodologies.

Motivation and enthusiasm are also significant strengths. Younger engineers often bring a high level of energy, eager to prove themselves, which can lift workplace morale. Bluefield Process Safety<sup>7</sup> emphasizes their passion and analytical skills, suggesting these traits are necessary for inventing and designing, aligning perfectly with engineering demands.

Collaboration is another area where they shine. Research from The Advance Group Jobs<sup>8</sup> indicates they find it easy to work in teams, thriving under clear deadlines and boundaries, which is crucial for multidisciplinary engineering projects.

Their ability to work remotely further enhances their flexibility, fitting well with modern work preferences.

Cultural competence is an unexpected benefit, with Millennial engineers driving inclusive company cultures. IEEE-USA InSight<sup>9</sup> notes their contribution to diversity, bringing international perspectives that enrich team dynamics and open new market opportunities.

---

<sup>6</sup> <https://altexwireandcable.com/common-traits-of-a-millennial-engineers/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://bluefieldsafety.com/2020/09/millennial-engineers-challenging-stereotypes-and-realizing-value/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.theadvancegroupjobs.com/hiring-millennials-risky-rewarding/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://insight.ieeeusa.org/articles/generations-what-can-older-and-younger-engineers-learn-from-each-other/>

### **Challenges and Negative Aspects**

In fairness, it is also useful to look at the other side of the Millennial coin.

Despite these strengths, hiring Millennial engineers comes with challenges, particularly around perceptions of entitlement and loyalty.

A study from Hireology<sup>10</sup> found that 68% of Gen Y (Millennials) are perceived as concerned primarily about individual promotion, which could affect team cohesion. This perception, while controversial, suggests a need for managers to align their career aspirations with organizational goals.

Experience is another concern, with their youth potentially leading to a lack of deep professional expertise. NSPE<sup>11</sup> discusses how younger generations may require different management approaches due to their unique characteristics, implying a need for more guidance. This lack of experience can slow project timelines, as noted in discussions on engineering recruitment challenges (Spencer James Group)<sup>12</sup>.

Job-hopping is a significant issue, with Gallup<sup>13</sup> reporting that 21% of Millennials changed jobs within the past year, compared to 6% of non-Millennials, costing the U.S. economy \$30.5 billion annually. This trend, also observed in engineering contexts (RHM Staffing Solutions<sup>14</sup>), suggests higher turnover, impacting team stability. However, Pew Research<sup>15</sup> counters that Millennials may not job-hop faster than Gen X did at the same age, indicating a nuanced debate.

---

<sup>10</sup> <https://hireology.com/blog/hiring-gen-y-managers-pros-and-cons/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.nspe.org/career-growth/pe-magazine/february-2008/mind-the-gap>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.spencerjamesgroup.com/blog/why-lack-of-experienced-engineers-is-a-top-hiring-concern>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.gallup.com/workplace/231587/millennials-job-hopping-generation.aspx>

<sup>14</sup> <https://rhmstaffing.net/what-you-need-to-know-about-careers-for-millennial-and-gen-z-engineers/>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2019/02/14/millennial-life-how-young-adulthood-today-compares-with-prior-generations-2/>

Work style differences can create communication gaps, particularly with older engineers.

LinkedIn<sup>16</sup> highlights the communication gap between Millennials and Baby Boomers, leading to stress and turnover, necessitating tailored management strategies. Their preference for flexibility, while a strength, can also mean they prioritize work-life balance over traditional office hours, potentially clashing with older colleagues' expectations.

### **The Bottom Line About Millennials**

Generation Y – Millennials - possesses many characteristics that are unique in comparison to past generations.

They tend to be excited about their jobs, and they will work hard and efficiently. They might approach their superiors as equals more so than previous generations, but smart employers can take steps to draw a line between supervisor and friend. When that line is drawn, millennials will not only work tirelessly for you but will show you respect due to a supervisor with many years' experience.



---

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/how-bridge-gap-between-millennial-engineers-baby-michael/>

## WHAT THE LEADER MUST KNOW

We begin with a look at specific Millennial traits and what they can mean to you as their Leader and Coach.

Millennial Trait	Developmental Strategy
They are nurtured by omnipresent parents, optimistic, and focused	A robust mentoring program to guide, coach, and steer their professional development will be attractive in the recruiting phase and critical for their retention and development later.
Respect authority	You must maintain that respect by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Published, practiced, and enforced civil behavior guidelines in the workplace.</li> <li>• Actual leaders, not bosses, in key positions</li> <li>• Transparency in decision-making as much as possible</li> </ul>
... they must live with the thought that they could be shot at school (now the workplace), they learned early that the world is not a safe place.	They must feel safe by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Well-defined and articulated safety procedures for your workplace.</li> <li>• Be able to explain how your Emergency Practices work and what the employees are expected to do.</li> <li>• Identify any employee Emergency Roles such as Floor Wardens, Fire Marshalls, etc.</li> </ul>
They schedule everything	Their leaders must be effective and open by scheduling as many workplace activities as possible.
They feel enormous academic (now workplace) pressure	Much workplace pressure and stress can be reduced by providing specific work performance metrics which allow the employee to self-monitor and manage their progress. Stress builds up when expectations are vague, and the employee fears they don't understand (and thus can't provide) what will please the boss.
Prefer digital literacy as they grew up in a digital environment.	Their leaders must become as proficient as possible in their understanding and use of the digital world. Nothing will erode their natural respect for the authority figure if they sense he or she is a "dinosaur" and not trying to understand them.
Prefer to work in teams	The organization must be adept and nimble in team building, development, and implementation whenever possible. Millennials are very social, and a smart organization can capture the potential constructive collaboration of a Millennial team and accomplish great things!

Millennial Trait	Developmental Strategy
Use “fairness” as a critical reference in social interactions and employment policies.	There must be an effective and easily understood system for performance measurement to prevent any whiff of arbitrariness in scoring annual performance reviews. Workplace policies and procedures should be well-documented to eliminate the need for “the way we’ve always done it” explanations as much as possible.
With unlimited access to information, they tend to be assertive with strong views.	Their mentors must help them understand the difference between knowledge and wisdom. They must learn about different working styles to help them interact with people different from them. They also must be allowed to fail safely enough that no real harm is done except to their egos.
Envision the world as a 24/7 place and want fast and immediate processing.	The traditional workday as measured by a clock may have to give way to measuring it by an outcome. Consider breaking the work into “chunks” instead of traditional timelines and pay for the chunks.  This is when Parkinson’s Law <sup>17</sup> that “work will expand to fill the time available” becomes critical. If a Millennial can finish a job in 3 hours but is being paid for eight and must sit there and kill time for the next five hours, they will soon be gone. We will talk more about this later in the course.
Tend to focus more on intentions than actions and outcomes	There must be an effective and easily understood system for performance measurement to help them stay focused on productivity, not just activity.
They have been told repeatedly that they are special, and they expect the world to treat them that way.	Think of judo and use their energy to your advantage. If they are already learning that way, compliment them and have them show you they deserve to be considered as special as they think they are.
Don’t live to work.	Be as flexible as possible in work schedules. If the work would allow four, ten-hour days instead of the traditional five eight-hour days giving them a three-day weekend, why not try it?

---

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/Parkinson-s-Law.html>



## DEVELOPING MILLENNIAL MOTIVATION

A key trait of your Millennial employee is they probably had nurturing parents who convinced them they were special (“awesome” seems to be a favorite word) and deserved the very best. They will probably expect – whether consciously or not – a very positive, upbeat setting in which they can continue to be special while working for you. When people are upbeat and feeling special, their morale is high, and their motivation and productivity improves.

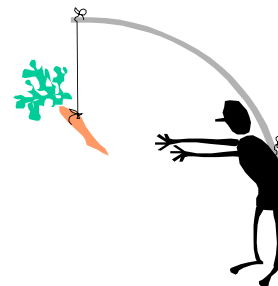
***And, Mr./Ms. Leader, productivity is exactly what they (and YOU) are paid to provide.***

However, their initial motivation to please and perform (i.e., “show off” because they’re special) will soon evaporate if you do not have an existing motivational environment. This critical environment (your sphere of influence) starts with the quality of your leadership. So, if you want to create a motivational environment, we will need to look at you first before showing you how to look at them. Please have patience as we go through this, the reason will become apparent shortly.

So, what is “Motivation”?

*“To provide with an incentive; move to action; impel.”*

*--The American Heritage Dictionary, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition*



Ask yourself a few questions:

“What incentive do I have to work for my employer?”

(If you are not sure why you work for your employer instead of doing the same job for someone else and are not clear about it in speech or action, you may not be ready to implement any changes in the department’s culture. An incentive to work there means you find value in staying and want to develop a career. Your Millennials need to follow someone with strong convictions about the value of working for this employer. If they don’t see you identify clearly and convincingly the employer’s characteristics you value, your attempt at creating a motivational workplace will fail. And if they don’t feel some motivation to stay, research shows they won’t!)

What incentive does each of your employees have to work for your employer?

(The better you understand the workplace from your employee’s perspective, the better you will understand their potential for self-motivation. It may be necessary to simply ask them during a departmental meeting that simple question.)

What incentive does each of your employees have to work for you, personally, as opposed to someone else within your organization?

(Ask yourself and be as honest as you can. Or, if you are brave and have trusted friends, ask them, “Why do you think someone would want to work for me?” Assure them you want an objective answer because you’re trying to improve yourself. Also, if you don’t hear everything you want to, remember – you did ask the question!)

Why are we asking you these questions?

(You must know your strengths and weaknesses first before you try to lead others. This way, you can work on improving your strengths and minimizing your weaknesses.)

Many surveys have shown that most employees do not stay with (or leave) their employers, they stay with (or leave) their supervisors. Therefore, it is so important that you spend time learning about your Millennials, so you can develop a relationship that makes them want to stay.)

Please take a few minutes to answer these additional questions we have for you and your employees.

Complete these sentences based on your current work situation.

YOUR STATEMENT	PROBABLE ANSWERS
Complete this statement... “Life in our department would be great if our employees will only...”	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Learn to think for themselves.</li><li>2. Show up for work.</li><li>3. Get here on time.</li><li>4. Show some initiative.</li><li>5. Etc., etc. (you get the idea)</li></ol>

Please put your answers here and set them aside while you complete the next activities.

<p><b>YOUR STATEMENT</b> Complete this sentence, “Life in our department would be great if our employees will only...”</p>	
--	--

Then please fill this out next for **yourself**.

“WHEN THE BEST BOSS I EVER HAD DID THIS (specify what it was they did), IT HAD THIS IMPACT ON ME AND MY WORK (specify the impact)”

When the Best Boss I Ever Had Did This...	...It Had This Impact on Me...	...And It Had This Impact on My Work.
<i>Told me what she wanted in clear and measurable terms and left me alone to do it.</i>	<i>I worked with much more confidence because I knew exactly what she expected. I did not have to worry by hoping I was doing it right.</i>	<i>I accomplished more because I knew exactly what was expected. I did not waste time asking if it was right or doing rework.</i>
<i>Showed me he trusted me.</i>	<i>I did my best to please him.</i>	<i>I was the top performer in my department.</i>

Now give the same one to your employees and ask them to bring it with their answers to meet with you.

When the Best Boss I Ever Had Did This...	...It Had This Impact on Me...	...And It Had This Impact on My Work.

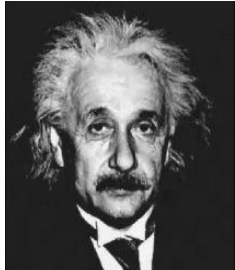
What relationship do you see between how you want your department employees to act with you and the way you acted with the best boss you ever had? *(This should help you realize that the way the best boss you ever had treated you had a great impact on your motivation and work product.)*

**Why do we ask this question at this point in the course?** (It is to help you realize that your behavior as a leader has a major influence on your Millennial's actions and their potential development within your organization.)

**What can YOU start doing differently RIGHT NOW that can help you get what you want from your employees' behavior?** (Ask those same questions above to your employees and ask for their honest answers. They will be telling you EXACTLY how to get the best performance out of them. That can be a foundation of your development activities.)

FIVE ELEMENTS OF MOTIVATION

Albert Einstein said once (paraphrased), “Insanity is doing things the way you always have and expecting different results.” This section is about getting you to think about changing some of your habits that may be less than productive.



**THINK ABOUT THIS:** When you were in school, did you know what was the *least* you could do to get by and not get in trouble at home?

How did you discover this?

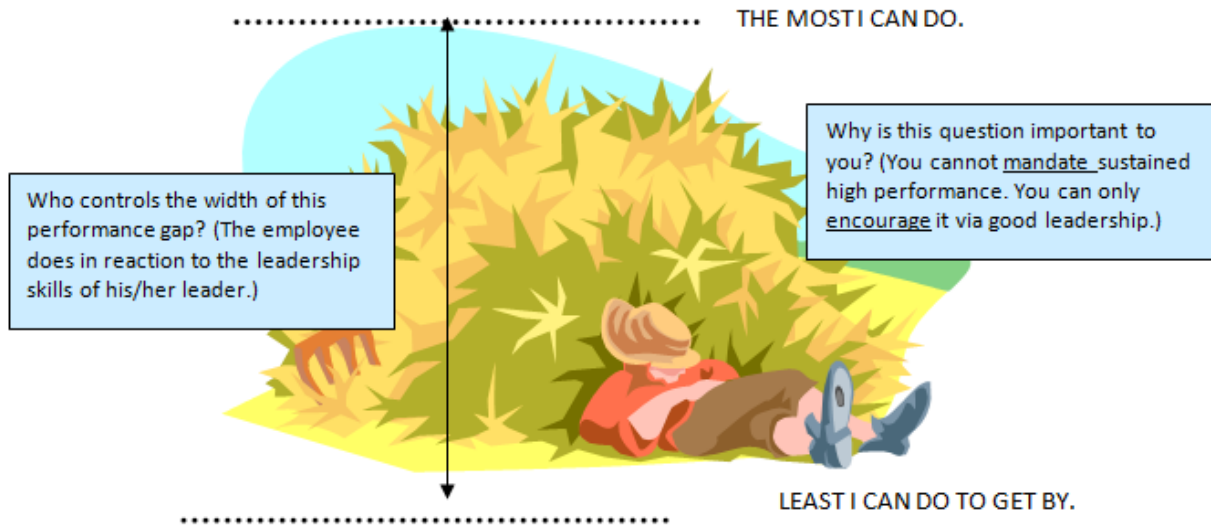
Did your parents tell you specifically what scores they wanted to

see or was it less objective and something like, “We want to see a good report card” leaving it up to you to determine what you thought a ‘good report card’ looked like?



Did you prefer to hear a specific number or something vague, allowing you to use some negotiating room if necessary, when the cards come out?

WHO DETERMINED WHETHER YOU DID THE LEAST YOU COULD DO TO GET BY OR THE MOST YOU COULD DO?



“What is the difference in contribution between a top-performer and a below average performer at the same paygrade?” (Answer =100%+) “What is the difference in pay?” (Answer = Between 5-10%) \*

-1998 American Compensation Association “Attracting and Retaining Critical Talent Conference” A survey of 2,000 managers.

**What Does This Possibly Mean?** (It means there must be something more than just pay motivating top performers if their contribution – productivity – is over 100% more than below average performers but they only make 5-10% more salary.)



Think about this...

**QUESTION:** If people were paid 10% more, would they provide 10% more productivity? If you think so, how long would they sustain that increased productivity?

When in your career has your work productivity increased with an increase in pay

**AND STAYED AT THAT HIGHER LEVEL?**

If you want to motivate your Millennial to improve performance over a period, these are the essential elements that you must make sure are present *in their mind*. We expand on these factors in the next section.

1. **Tell me what you expect of me** in *measurable* terms of quality, quantity, and time (or **Q, Q, T**) that reduce the risk of my confusion and help me clearly understand the desired outcome. I’ve always been told that I’m awesome and special, so help me continue to think I am!
2. **Give me a chance to perform** (and learn from my mistakes, too.)
3. **Let me know how I am doing as I go along...** (Do you remember the report cards you got in school every reporting period? You did not have to wait until the end of the year to learn if you had passed or failed the grade.)
4. **Give me help and guidance when I need it.** (However, do not hover over me or make me feel stupid for asking.)
5. **Reward me with pay or praise when I succeed.** (Recognition is a powerful motivator. A wise leader finds out what kinds of recognition are important for his or her employees and tries to reward them with something that has meaning to them when they achieve great things. Millennials thrive on praise. We will show you how to determine an employee’s key rewards a little later.)

## #1. TELLING YOUR MILLENNIAL WHAT YOU EXPECT

The first element of motivation is to define your expectations so clearly there is no possibility that your Millennial does not understand what you want. As simple and obvious as that may sound, there is a lot more involved that many leaders – even with the best of intentions – overlook resulting in employee performance falling short of desired goals. Even when the employee really wants to get it right for their boss!

Let's look first at the values associated with having measurable goals. (We will ask you to look at your work situation before we focus on the Millennials.)



What value do you think there is in having measurable goals?

(Specific measurables – in terms of QQT – make it easy to monitor progress toward their achievement.)

- What are some sources of stress in your work life? (How about vague expectations regarding some of your work products?)
- What are some measurable goals in your work life?
- What are some sources of stress in your home life?
- What are some measurable goals in your home life? (Maybe weight and exercise numbers you try to maintain?)



Do you think there are significant differences between **work pressure** and **work stress**? If so, how would you describe them?

(Many times, work stress comes from “undefined” sources or vague expectations. For example, if your boss tells you to complete a financial proposal within a week, but you do not know what he expects from it or what it should look like, you will be stressed trying to meet his vague expectations. Even after you turn it in, you still worry because you do not know whether he will like it.

However, if you have made many financial proposals for him in the past, you still may feel some work tension and job pressure until you finish. However, once you turn it in, you are relieved because it is finished, and you know you did a good job.)

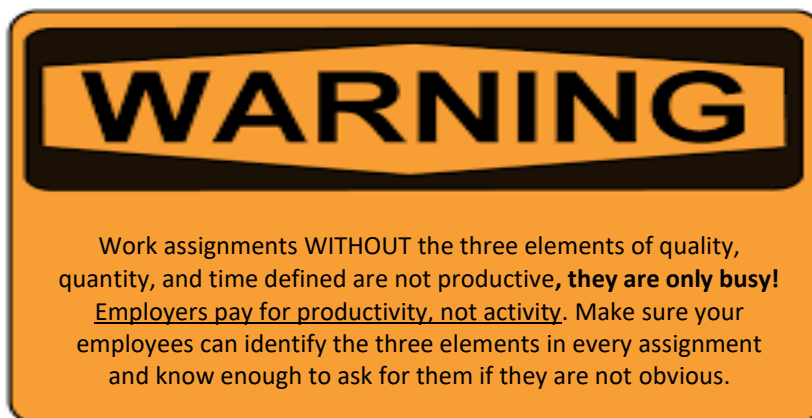
Use this table below and list some activities associated with your job that you wish were defined more clearly regarding what your leader expects you to do. How does this lack of clarification affect you and your work? (You should share this discovery with your leader to help improve your job satisfaction. After all, if you're not happy in your work, how can you help a Millennial become happy in theirs?)

Some job expectations that seem vague to me...	...have this impact on my productivity
<i>By not specifying when you want a special report turned delivered to you...</i>	<i>I can't prioritize it among all the other tasks I have, and my productivity suffers.</i>

Now that you have built some trust with your Millennials using the “Best Boss” exercises back on page 23, ask them to fill out a similar “Vague Job Expectations” analysis (table above) for you.

After they have filled it out, they review their responses with them and use the QQT elements to help you clarify their job expectations. If you have done a good job of defining expectations, you should see an immediate increase in morale because you are showing genuine interest in them and their situation.

As their morale increases, they work more confidently and become more able to self-manage - the early signs of a maturing employee!





## #2 GIVE YOUR MILLENNIAL A CHANCE TO PERFORM

In theory, this is quite easy to do. JUST GET AWAY FROM THEM AND LEAVE THEM ALONE!

Many people, however, find this hard to do in practice. First, make sure you are satisfied that:



- They can do the job to the performance level you expect.
- They are willing to do it.
- You have clearly defined your expectations in terms of **quality, quantity, and time (QQT)**.
- They understand your expectations because you have asked them to tell you *in their own words* what you want. (Be careful here that you do not offend them by implying you do not believe they understood you. Say something like, “I want to check to make sure I did a good job of explaining what I want. What do you think I was trying to say?”)
- You have reminded yourself that the desired outcome is more important than *how they do it!* (Resist the temptation to insist they do it the way you would. Give them a chance to put their “stamp of ownership” on it. Also, they may use a tech-savvy approach that you never knew existed!)
- They have adequate resources to accomplish the task.
- You have convinced yourself to *give them the chance to fail so they can learn*. For many people, a trial-and-error approach (called ‘experimental’ by others) is the best way to learn. As a leader, you must find a balance between allowing them that opportunity to learn by failing yet not letting them fail so badly it neither harms their career *nor yours!*

(Author’s note: Opportunities for a controlled failure that doesn’t harm their career, or the organization, can be very educational as they learn how to deal with failure, disappointment, and earning from mistakes. Their “helicopter parents”<sup>18</sup> may have never let them experience these emotions very often. You can learn a lot about them as you watch them recover.)

---

<sup>18</sup> [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/abilash-gopal-md/helicopter-parenting-has-\\_b\\_9657534.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/abilash-gopal-md/helicopter-parenting-has-_b_9657534.html)

### #3 LET THEM KNOW HOW THEY ARE DOING ALONG THE WAY

It is essential there is a way for the Millennial to get feedback on his or her performance as they go along. Ideally, the method should be something where you do not have to keep telling them.



For example, if you were a production employee and had to produce **25 items an hour with zero defects** (remember *quality, quantity, and time*), would you prefer to learn that you were under performing by reading an instrument on the machinery or having your boss tell you?

Or, when you were in grade school, was it easier to manage your performance by keeping track of your test scores and homework grades as you went along, or would it have been better to get nothing back and wait until the end of the grading period to see how you did?



The more your employee can self-discover his or her performance results and make corrections as needed without your intervention, the more reliable and motivated they will become. (Naturally, you need to be aware of the ongoing production because you are ultimately responsible for the business unit and need to step in before disaster occurs. However, if the performance is above minimum standards, we recommend you not look over the shoulder of the employee unless it is to encourage or praise them.)

The only way employees can monitor their on-going performance is if their leaders provide a mechanism to do that just like you had in grade school.



Look at your employees' work environment and ask yourself, "How could they tell *at any given time* how they are doing *in every aspect of their expected performance* without me having to tell them"?

If there is no apparent method, then they cannot self-monitor themselves! It is especially important to consider the terms of *every aspect of their performance*. You pay the employee to do the entire job – not just part of it. Therefore, you must not be satisfied with measuring only the

easily observed (objective) behaviors such as calls taken per hour but must also measure the harder-to-define (subjective) behaviors such as customer service.

#### #4 GIVE THEM HELP AND GUIDANCE WHEN THEY NEED IT

There are several ways you can provide help and guidance to employees without diminishing their professional development opportunities. These will take a little time to implement but are worth the effort. Consider these:



- *Take time to help them understand the “why” of something and let them figure out the “how” for themselves.* This gives them a chance to explore their imagination, display their initiative, and maybe find a new way to do something. An additional advantage is helping them discover a problem-solving process that works for them. This is more important than making them dependent on you for answers.
- Make sure they have adequate resources and then ask what effort they have made to find the answer before coming to you. Resources can be reference books, on-line glossaries or tutorials, procedure manuals, training materials, internet access, band width, etc.

When they learn your first question to them is “what have you done to find the answer”, and their answer is, “I came to you”, they will discover that you expect them to be problem solvers, *not problem passers*.

A good way of providing guidance while helping them to grow is by doing a role reversal when they ask for help. Try asking, “If someone were not here to answer your question, what would you do? What options do you have? What are the risks associated with each? If your first attempt did not work, then what?”

Your intent here is to get them thinking of themselves as “empowered” to solve their own problems if it does not violate any company rules or policies. The more they discover they can find their own solutions, the less dependent they are on their leaders or peers.

**#5 REWARD THEM WITH PAY OR PRAISE WHEN THEY SUCCEED**

People love to be recognized! It does not have to be an expensive recognition! A simple pat on the back with a sincere, “Nice Job” from you can mean the world to a hard-working, diligent, and reliable employee.



Here are some effective *and inexpensive* ways to provide pay or praise



for your employee. (The cost is not always most important to the employee. An inexpensive departmental birthday party often means so much to employees and their work team. Everybody likes to take a break from work and have some fun.)

- A \$10-20 gift certificate for a restaurant, a store, or for personal services such as haircuts, nails, or car detailing
- An ‘employee-of-the-month’ picture on the wall next to a plaque.
- Public recognition of their achievement at the next departmental gathering
- An inexpensive 1<sup>st</sup> place trophy that can rotate among employees for placement beside their workstations for top productivity that month.

An Internet search can provide many titles of books containing hundreds of great suggestions for inexpensive and effective ways to motivate employees.

## WHAT WOULD MOTIVATE YOUR MILLENNIALS?

“WHEN YOUR EMPLOYEES GET WHAT THEY WANT, YOU’LL GET WHAT YOU WANT!”

---Zig Ziglar, (Late) Motivational speaker

Here is another radical idea. Consider Zig Ziglar’s<sup>19</sup> statement above, hand out some 3”x5” cards, and ask your employees what you could give them that would have the most value for them. Tell them to keep in mind that you cannot hand out spot bonuses, private parking spaces, etc.

(I received comments like these from my employees when I did this:

- “A chance to learn more about what you do.”
- “A chance to lead some departmental meetings.”
- “Public speaking opportunities”
- “Help me develop my career.”

Nearly everything they mentioned did not cost money!)

While they are doing that, ask the same question about yourself. Compare the answers from you and your employees. Are you surprised?

What do <u>your employees</u> want in a work situation?	Does it cost money?	What do <u>you</u> want in a work situation?	Does it cost money?

WHAT IS KEEPING YOU FROM GIVING THEM THE FREE ITEMS TODAY?

WHAT IS KEEPING YOU FROM GETTING THE FREE ITEMS TODAY?

WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO DO TO GIVE THEM THE ITEMS THAT ARE NOT FREE?

WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO DO TO GET THE ITEMS THAT ARE NOT FREE?

---

<sup>19</sup> [https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/50316.Zig\\_Ziglar](https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/50316.Zig_Ziglar)

## DEVELOPMENTAL DELEGATION & EMPOWERMENT

Look back at the boy sleeping in the haystack on page 25 where we explained that employees determine where they work within a range their leaders define. We refer to this voluntary performance because that is a key part of empowerment.

It creates an opportunity for the employee to decide how much above the level “the least-they-can-do-to-get-by” they want to move. The employee feels they “get the chance” to perform the task and are driven to perform by something *within them* if it has meaning for them regardless of if the task is something seen as undesirable by others. (The previous 3”x5” card exercise on page 33 can give you a lot of insight into what unique values they may find in various tasks that others may see as boring.)

**Empowerment** requires the manager to know the employee well enough to know that something within this task will appeal to them because it contains the opportunity to learn something new, to use a unique skill or knowledge, or demonstrate a valuable competence such as managing a small project, creative writing, public speaking, etc. In other words, something not typically associated with their existing job that they would like to do.

The success of the task completion and recognition from the leader (and maybe their peers) is the intrinsic reward. Evidence from many studies indicates that empowered employees are more productive, satisfied, innovative, and create higher quality products and services than do employees who are not empowered to act.<sup>20</sup>

---

<sup>20</sup> [http://news-releases.uiowa.edu/2011/april/041811empowered\\_workers.html](http://news-releases.uiowa.edu/2011/april/041811empowered_workers.html)

## DELEGATION WITH MILLENNIALS

Basically, delegating is breaking a large task down into components and assigning their completion to others because of limited time available for completion or the sheer size of the project requires more than one person's skills, knowledge, or involvement. This is how the work within organizations gets done.

We still call it delegation even if the manager offers an incentive to complete the task because the motivation to act is coming from outside of the employee, not from within them. None of the internal motivators of empowerment are present and the employee may feel they have to do something rather than getting to do it. It is more of a *pushing* effort from the manager to the employee while empowerment is akin to a *pull by the employee* to get the chance to perform.

## ADVANTAGES OF EFFECTIVE DELEGATION

There are certain advantages associated with delegation when done correctly:

1. Time – It can increase the discretionary time available for the manager.
2. Workforce Development – It provides a hands-on laboratory for subordinates to learn and practice new skills.
3. Trust Development – This is an excellent way to show employees how much they are trusted.
4. Morale – Giving employees a chance to develop their skills and trusting them to do a good job can boost their morale and strengthen their commitment to the manager and the employer.
5. Decision making improves – The work of the department gets done by the employees, not the manager. Therefore, the closer the decision making gets to the actual work being done means better decisions can come from increased knowledge about the situation.
6. Productivity – More people working together to accomplish a common goal can mean a leap in productivity because the integration and scheduling of work can funnel through a single source of authority and delegation which is closer to the work.

## WHY DO SOME NOT DELEGATE

There can be as many reasons why managers do not delegate as there are managers in each organization. Also, even if a manager wants to delegate some of the available tasks, there must be some competent employees to whom those tasks can be given. (We will cover the “WHO” and “HOW” of effective delegation later in this course.)

Even though there are specific advantages to delegating (see the previous section) and there are competent subordinates available, many people still do not for reasons such as:

## THEIR VIEW OF SUBORDINATES

In the 1960s, a well-known organizational theory thinker, Dr. Douglas McGregor, of the MIT Sloan School of Management, developed his **Theory X & Theory Y**<sup>21</sup> concept and suggested that the management culture of many organizations favored one approach or the other.

A “Theory X” manager, he stated, has a negative view of employees assuming they are lazy, untrustworthy, and incapable of assuming any responsibility. He or she thinks all prospective employees are only out for themselves and the sole purpose of the employee’s interest in the job is money.

Their counterpart, a “Theory Y” manager, looks at employees differently. He sees them as being trustworthy, responsible for accomplishing their own work objectives, and capable of assuming high levels of motivation.



---

<sup>21</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Douglas\\_McGregor](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Douglas_McGregor)



Many people interpret Theory Y as a positive set of assumptions about workers and that a close reading of *The Human Side of Enterprise*, the book from which this theory comes, reveals that McGregor simply argues for managers to be open to a more positive view of workers and the possibilities that it creates.

He based his work on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs<sup>22</sup>, grouped the hierarchy into “lower order” (Theory X) needs and “higher order” (Theory Y) needs, and suggested that management could use either set of needs to motivate employees.

The discipline of Organizational Development has grown a great deal since he published that work. We now recognize many variables between the two X-Y extremes but this classic still serves as a useful beginning about manager/mentor/developer approaches to their employees/trainees.

#### **PERSONAL INSECURITIES**

Some managers fear they will lose the rewards and recognition associated with successful task completion if they share the tasks with someone else. They feel they have spent many years “paying their dues” getting to their current positions and have learned many “trade secrets” that they are unwilling to share with others.

Also, they may not be very adept at defining measurable expectations (we will talk more about these later) which makes it difficult for subordinates to achieve success if their managers cannot define what that success looks like.

Experience with subordinates having difficulty with the manager’s vague, incomplete, or inconsistent expectations may have led to uncomfortable confrontations as the assigned tasks missed schedules or failed to meet expectations. (Of course, the managers would never consider they had anything to do with the problems!) So now their attitude is, “if you want it done right, you have to do it yourself!”

---

<sup>22</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maslow%27s\\_hierarchy\\_of\\_needs](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maslow%27s_hierarchy_of_needs)

### **A NEED FOR CONTROL**

Some people just cannot let go of control even if they are ordered to do so. It is reasonable to consider that many managers with a strong need for control may subconsciously provide insufficient direction or project latitude to ensure failure and prove their point that “only they can do the job right!” It is an example of a self-fulfilling prophecy<sup>23</sup>. (Many times, it is these very same managers who complain that they can never get a day off or take a vacation because they can’t trust anyone else to “get it right”.)

---

<sup>23</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Self-fulfilling\\_prophecy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Self-fulfilling_prophecy)

## WHAT EMPOWERMENT MEANS

“Empowerment” became an extremely popular word in the late 1980s business world. Unfortunately, it was used so broadly in management topics with any employee-related practice that it became a meaningless cliché. Even today, if a student of this course were to mention it to their employer, there is a strong possibility they would hear, “Oh, we tried that long ago, and it was another one of those fads that didn’t offer anything substantial.”

This is a classic example of the phrase “a little knowledge is a dangerous thing” because it sounds like such a simple concept that everyone immediately assumed they understood it. So, when they tried to apply what they thought it meant, the result was highly likely much less than they expected, and they blamed the concept (naturally), never their lack of understanding of it.



The concept of empowering someone means the subject (the person being empowered) has a sense of these five components:

- **PERSONAL COMPETENCE**
- **PERSONAL CHOICES**
- **HAVING AN IMPACT ON THEIR SURROUNDINGS**
- **SEEING VALUE IN WHAT THEY ARE DOING**
- **SECURITY**

We will develop each of these components sufficiently to allow the student the best chance to create an environment of empowerment for Millennials in their workplace.

## RISKS AND REWARDS OF EMPOWERING EMPLOYEES

If the benefits of empowering employees are so positive, why doesn't it happen more often?

The answer will become obvious after we explore the elements of empowerment a little farther.

Meanwhile, please consider that empowering someone requires these actions from the authority figure (you):

1. Giving someone the responsibility and authority to act independently (“Here’s the outcome I want. I’ll allow you this much latitude and authority to figure out how to get that outcome.”)
2. Giving up a measure of control if the other is to act with confidence and independently.
3. A willingness to allow the empowered person to fail. (We mean enough failure to provide a learning experience but not so catastrophically that the employer or employee is at financial, physical, or career risk.)
4. There must be sufficient planning involved beforehand to define the parameters within which the empowered employee can act independently. (“You can spend up to \$X on this project and make decisions up to this specific threshold of budget, delivery date, maximum number of participants, etc.”)
5. A willingness to accept an outcome that may be satisfactory but different from what was expected. (When the manager says, “Oh, I never expected you to do THAT” but is willing to accept it.)
6. A willingness to allow someone else to get the credit for a successful project.
7. An understanding this is not a zero-sum situation: i.e., the more responsibility and authority to act that I give to you DOES NOT MEAN that I have proportionally less of each.
8. If something goes wrong, not to blame the employee but to examine first if the authority figure may have contributed to it through:
  - a. Providing inadequate resources or directions
  - b. Failure to clearly define expectations.
  - c. Failure to clearly define the limits of authority and responsibility.
  - d. Or take the blame entirely and use it as a learning experience for the employee and the authority figure.

It is evident from these eight actions that managers who focus more on control of their employees than developing them will have great difficulty adapting to the concept of empowerment.



**THINK ABOUT THIS**

When you have received tasks from your manager, how many of the eight actions above do you think were present?  
What makes you think so?

If you are currently a manager, how many of these eight actions are part of your typical assignments to employees?

How satisfied are you with the typical results of those assignments?

Do you see any correlation between the average outcome of those assignments and the number of those eight actions you typically include?

## PREPARING THE DEVELOPMENTAL ENVIRONMENT

Let's pause for a moment and think again about the advice that *you only get one chance to make a good first impression*. The Millennial will have no hesitation to leave for what they think are greener pastures if they don't feel a good fit with your culture.

We mentioned earlier that Millennials seek frequent feedback, reinforcement, and goal-setting opportunities in their work life. It can be easy to provide if you're willing to do a little groundwork with your performance assessment process.

Unless you work in a rare environment where it is very easy to tell just how well you are doing at any given time (remember that critical element of motivation) where goals are always clearly defined by QQT and little work stress exists (temporary work pressure is OK because you still know the expectations), you will have difficulty keeping your Millennials.

We want to help you keep them by strengthening your work performance definitions and measurement process.

## DEFINING “HARD” AND “SOFT” PERFORMANCE MEASURABLES

Earlier, we identified the links between clearly defined expectations and morale. Now, let’s look at how we can put objective measurements on nearly everything you expect from your Millennial’s performance. Remember, the more clearly your expectations are defined, the more confident they can work WITH LESS SUPERVISION while becoming more productive and satisfied with their career.

Although many job expectations are sufficiently defined that employees can work confidently toward them, there are many that are critical yet difficult to measure objectively. Here are a few typical job expectations that are critical, often wrapped up in broader categories, frequently mentioned yet hard to measure objectively:

- Teamwork
- Pride in Work
- Customer service
- Communications Skills

When all is said and done about job expectations, it always boils down to the two kinds of measurables in the workplace:

- **“Hard”** measurables which are commonly associated with tangible items or specific behaviors such as processed documents, lines of programming code produced, project deadlines, or the speed of a pitcher’s fastball.
- **“Soft”** measurables, which are just as important but less tangible, are typically attitudes or non-specific behaviors like customer service, teamwork, oral communications, or professionalism.

Regardless of whether we are talking about hard or soft skills, the elements of QUALITY, QUANTITY, and TIME are critical in each case and can be measured with a little creativity. Let’s look at how you can put a measurement on topics such as teamwork, written communications, or customer relations.

They become easy to measure if you will do this:

1. Identify the **behavioral traits** that demonstrate the topic. For example, if you wanted to measure “PRIDE IN WORK”, you first identify **behavioral traits** that indicate they have pride in their work.
  - a. There are no spelling errors.
  - b. It is always on time or before.
  - c. She always uses the proper format for the report.
  - d. There are no calculation errors in the document.
  - e. Her data is always accurate.
2. Establish a scale with a range of values for use with each trait. [This is a *Likert Scale*<sup>24</sup>.]
 

1 = I never see this

2 = I sometimes see this (Make sure you and your employees agree on what ‘sometimes’ means)

3 = I always see this

0 = Does not apply
3. Then create a scale that converts the average of the trait scale to your performance assessment system.

Joan Smith's <i>Pride in Work</i> Evaluation	Scores
There are no spelling errors. (A behavioral trait)	3
It is always on time or before. (A behavioral trait)	2*
She always uses the proper format for the report. (A behavioral trait)	2*
There are no calculation errors in the document (A behavioral trait)	3
Her data is always accurate. (A behavioral trait)	2*
Average score for the observation period	12/5= <b>2.4</b>
* A wise leader will have documentation of the times when the employee did anything that would result in a less than perfect score because they will certainly ask about it.	

<sup>24</sup> <https://simplypsychology.org/likert-scale.html>



The XYZ Corporation's Employee Performance Scale

**Performance scale ranges from 1.0 – 3.0:**

1. < 2.0 requires probation.
2. 2.0 – 2.3 = Satisfactory performance with lowest merit increase
3. >2.3 – 2.5 = Above satisfactory performance with medium merit increase
4. >2.5 = Outstanding performance and maximum merit increase

Using this process, we have turned the previously vague "Pride in Work" requirement into a defensible, objective measurement. ('Defensible' is a particularly important concept with your Human Resources Department. They will be happy to see this and the Millennial will think it is a fair system!)

Now let's consider this soft measurement process for potential Millennials in a department. If you can get your employees comfortable with the concept of evaluating each other on some parts of the annual review process, you will gain several major results on the way to becoming seen as fair and objective:

- When employees see they are being rated by their peers *using an instrument they helped to develop*, they become more accountable meeting their self-defined expectations.
- As they become more accustomed to providing input into their work processes, they will want other opportunities for input providing you the chance to introduce more of their ideas.



**Review question:** Why would you want to include your department employees in developing a performance scale for use in the annual performance assessment? (If they help develop the scoring system that you will use on them, they are more inclined to trust it.)

What risks are there in doing this? (They may say, "That's your job, boss. We do not want to!" The leader can counter this by saying, "Would you rather have some say in the way you are evaluated or just take a chance on what I come up with?" They will usually want to participate if that is the alternative. Or they may want to use standards that are too low. It is up to the leader to make sure the expectations cause them to stretch their efforts.)

Practice with your department in defining typically vague expectations with a list of behavioral observations such as “teamwork” like we have on the next page. Simply tell them what behavioral observations are by using ‘Joan Smith’s Pride in Work’ example from page 44.

Then ask them to define some “Teamwork” traits that they would be willing to be judged on by their departmental peers on your organization’s annual performance assessment. (Again, make sure HR understands this BEFORE you take it to your employees.)

**“TEAMWORK”** traits that you want to see may be: (samples)

- Demonstrates willingness to help others when finished with own work without being asked.
- Demonstrates willingness to help others with less experience or confidence.
- Demonstrates willingness to give credit to others when praise is given.
- Demonstrates willingness to carry his/her fair share of the workload (and more at times if asked).
- “Positive outlook” because he/she always tries to say something, friendly or encouraging and never participates in gossip or negative comments about other employees.

The word ‘demonstrates’ and ‘saying something friendly’ are observable behaviors.

Do you think these are realistic traits?

What traits would work in your workplace?

An example of how to obtain employee scores in this survey is on the next page.

**PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT SAMPLE**

After showing this to HR to ensure compatibility with your existing review process, use it as an example for your employees of the way they would rate each other in the categories allowing peer input.

“John Smith is due for a performance assessment of his last 12 months of work. Part of **our company’s annual** Performance Assessment form requires an assessment of **TEAMWORK**. I need your help in determining his effectiveness in this portion. Please rate him based on your experience with him during this past assessment period and send it to me by (date).”

Please rate these situations from a 1-10 using this rating.

**1** = I never see that trait    **2-3** See it rarely    **4-7** See it about half the time    **8-9** See it very often  
**10** = I always see that trait    **X** = I do not know well enough for an opinion.

(Use your own definitions for “rarely”, “half the time”, and “very often”.)

THE TRAIT WE ARE LOOKING FOR...	YOUR RATING #
Willingness to help others when finished with own work without being asked.	
Willingness to help others with less experience or confidence.	
Willingness to give credit to others when praise is given	
Willingness to carry his/her fair share of the workload (and more at times if asked).	
“Positive outlook” because he/she always tries to say something, friendly or encouraging and never participates in gossip or negative comments about other employees.	

When you get the replies, average the scores and assign a value according to the system you have developed **with your employees**. (Use the ‘XYZ Corporation’s Employee Performance Scale’ guidelines on page 45 as a refresher.)

An additional note: do not worry about how they define “rarely”, “half the time”, and “very often”. The numerical score is more important than the actual definition. For example, if they select as number from 4-7 for “about half the time”, we really do not care how they verbally define it!

PERFORMANCE PROBLEM FLOWCHART

An important aspect of the work environment for the Millennial is fairness. When inevitable performance issues arise, it is important that their leaders are seen to be acting fairly, logically, and rationally. This analysis flowchart will help them see that you are a fair actor and focus on discovering *what led to a problem* instead of a traditional ‘search for the guilty’.

It is a series of questions that will help you isolate the source of the employee’s performance problem. Use this series to make sure you have eliminated any possible reason why your employee does not perform. (Don’t hesitate to share it with HR; they will be happy to see it.)

*Before you begin*  
Ask yourself, “Is this issue worth pursuing?”



**Question:** How do you know if it is worth pursuing?  
  
(If it interferes with productive work, it is worth pursuing! If it is only a nuisance or aggravation, but does not interfere with work, it may be best to leave it alone.)

If worth pursuing, go to STEP #1. If not, you are done! Remember, you can stop anytime the problem is **“sufficiently solved.”** (This means it is not worth the time, effort, or expense to “fix it better”.)

**STEP #1**  
Ask yourself, “Are my expectations clear in terms of Q, Q, T??”



**#1 Question:** What do you ask your employee here?  
  
 (“I want to make sure I did a good job of explaining what I want. Please tell me what you think that is in terms of quality, quantity, and time.”)



If your expectations are clear, go on to the next step. If not, what should you do?

**STEP #2**

Ask yourself, "Are the resources adequate?"



**#2 Question:** What do you ask your employee here?

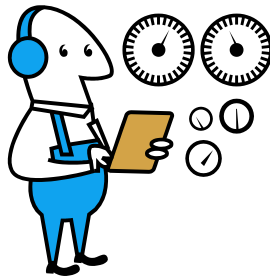
("Do you have everything you need to do what I expect?")



If they have everything they need to do the job, go on to the next step. If not, what should you do?

**STEP #3**

Ask yourself, "Do they get fast and frequent feedback on their performance?"



**#3 Question:** What do you ask your employee here?

("How do you know how you are doing?")



If they can monitor their progress so they can tell how they are doing, go on to the next step. If not, what should you do?

**STEP #4**

Ask yourself, "Does the desired performance seem punishing?"  
(Hint: What do you usually do if they finish early and **others have not finished yet?**)



**#4 Question:** What do you ask yourself about the situation here?

If their "reward" for finishing early, is you give them the work the slower people have not finished, you will soon have *no one* finishing early. You must praise the ones who finish early, let them know you documented their file that they finished ahead of the others, and ask if they will help the slower ones.

Then be sure to document the files of the slower ones indicating they needed help to finish. This way your performer does not feel the slackers are getting away with anything.



If you are inadvertently punishing their positive behavior, what should you do? If you think you are not, go on to the next step.

**STEP #5**

Ask yourself, "Is poor performance rewarded somehow?" (Hint: What do you usually do if **they have not finished yet**, but others have?)



**#5 Question:**

What do you ask your employee (or yourself) about the situation here?

(This is the opposite of Step 4. If they are behind, let them know you documented their file that they were behind, and you asked a faster worker to help pick up their slack.

This way, they realize they are not getting away with anything.)



If you are inadvertently rewarding poor performance, what should you do? If not, go on to the next step.

**STEP #6**

Ask yourself, "Is there any penalty for not doing it right?"



**#6 Question:** What do you ask your employee (or yourself) about the situation here?

("Is there any penalty for not doing it right?" If there were no penalty, why would they stop doing it?)



If there is a penalty, go on to the next step. If not, what should you do?

**STEP #7**

Ask yourself, "Is their non-performance a genuine skill deficiency?"



**#7 Question:**

What do you ask your employee (or yourself) about the situation here?

(Can they not do it, or can they do it but just do not want to do it?)

**#7A Question:**

Have they ever done this in the past? (If so, give them practice refreshing their skills)

If they can do it but do not want to, jump to Step #10.



If it is a genuine skills deficiency, go on to the next step. If not sure, what should

**STEP #8**

Ask yourself, "Can the task be made easier?"



**#8 Question:**

What do you ask your employee here?

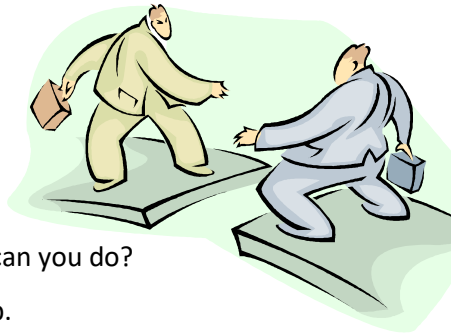
("Can you think of any easier way you can do this?")

If it can be done easier, do it. If not, go to the next step.



**STEP #9**

Ask yourself, "Are there any other obstacles?"



**#9 Question:**

What do you ask your employee here?

("Can you think of anything keeping you from doing this?")

If there are other obstacles, what can you do?

If there are not, go to the next step.



**STEP #10**

Ask yourself, "Does the person have the potential to change?"

**Question:** What do you ask your employee here?

("Do you have any plans to change your behavior?")



If they have the potential and desire to change, train them to the desired skill level. If they are not interested in changing, then encourage them to find a better job fit somewhere else: i.e., replace them.

Have you noticed that every step, except #10, is a factor controlled by management? Doesn't that mean there is a 90% probability that an employee's performance problem is caused by something controlled by management? If your Millennial sees you using a rational and logical approach like this to analyze their performance problems, they will see you as very fair and a leader with whom they will want to stay.

## WHAT THE MILLENNIAL MUST KNOW

*Dear Millennial,*

*There is a very in-vogue phrase in the business world now you have probably heard a lot about – EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE.<sup>25</sup>*

*Understanding what it is all about is essential to your building a successful career path. A lack of EI is what caused the fictional career of the Millennial on page 11 to blow up at the worst*

*possible time. (Please take a few minutes to read it and then come back to this page.)*



*By sharing this course with you, your leader is trying to help you avoid making some critical mistakes along your chosen career path. If they haven't mentioned it yet, it is important that you understand your technical skills and speed of knowledge assimilation are NOT an automatic ticket to the top of your profession. Certainly, they will help you break away from the pack in your first few assignments, but you must have mature social skills built on widespread business relationships to climb the last few rungs on most organizational ladders. Your leader is trying to save you from the career damage that could arise from a trial-and-error approach in developing these critical workplace relationships.*

*Senior management can always hire technical specialists for ad hoc situations, but well-rounded, well-spoken, and well-respected executives necessary for the long term are rare.*

*Your future success will depend on the strength of the relationships you have built with peers, superiors, and subordinates in your daily work starting today. At some point in your ascent, you will have to rely on others for data: its quality, quantity, and timeliness.*

---

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.emotionalintelligenceatwork.com/resources/why-emotional-intelligence-is-important-in-the-workplace/>



*And the extent of the data picture you get will always be at the discretion of these others. The relationship you have built with them will determine how much beyond “the least you need to know” they will tell you.*

*Please use the material in this course to become more introspective to facilitate your professional development and make it easy for those others to help you be successful.*

*Dick Grimes, Course Author*

*Houston, Texas*

**PROFESSIONAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

This table examines the typical Millennial traits listed back on page 15 and suggests ways you can work on your professional self-development in relation to them. While your peers are focusing on the short-term race to the next promotion, taking time to develop your personal and professional skills (not only your technical skills) will give you a long-term growth and achievement curve they will never see.

Millennial Trait	Growth and Development Opportunity
They are nurtured by omnipresent parents, optimistic, and focused	Learn to resolve your own conflicts by developing listening and negotiating skills. The greater your ability to resolve inter-departmental or inter-peer conflicts without escalating them to your boss will speed your climb up the career ladder.
Respect authority	People in authority are what create a civilized society. Let your first reaction be to assume they are acting correctly and without prejudice or malice. You can always adjust your thinking later if proof (not just rumor) shows they were not.
... they must live with the thought that they could be shot at school (now the workplace), they learned early that the world is not a safe place.	There are no guarantees in Life that things will always be fair, safe, and painless, and unfortunately, we are hearing more about school and workplace violence. Be sure you understand the organization’s safety and emergency procedures.  Not just the Millennials but everyone is now dealing with this new “normal”. ‘Growth and Development’ may result from trying to make the most of each day since we clearly do not know how many we have left.
They schedule everything	Schedules can provide a sense of security but can also prevent the development of a flexible mindset. People who can adjust successfully on the fly when things suddenly become unscheduled have a greater chance for advancement in an operational setting than those who cannot.
They feel enormous academic (now workplace) pressure	Many times, workplace pressure and stress come from being unsure of your boss’ expectations of your work product. If you aren’t sure if you’re doing something right, then you aren’t sure if they’ll praise or chastise you which creates doubt, insecurity, and great stress in you.  Learn to say, “Boss, help me understand what you mean by... (“a timely manner”, “make it look professional”, etc.) so you know exactly what they expect, and you can deliver it.
Prefer digital literacy as they grew up in a digital environment.	You will never live in a totally digital world and must accept the fact your employer probably has a lot of data stored in binders, old reports, and filing cabinets. You may have to spend time digging through them. Look at it as a

Millennial Trait	Growth and Development Opportunity
	great chance to develop patience and learn more about your company's history.
Prefer to work in teams	Teams can be very useful in getting work done and are socially satisfying when engaged with others toward a common goal. However, do not be afraid to work alone, make your own decisions, and rely on yourself for the success of the project. Not all team members may be as productive as you are!
Use "fairness" as a critical reference in social interactions and employment policies	This is much like the harsh reality mentioned earlier of school and workplace violence and shootings. That would never happen in a truly "fair" society and it's important to realize that sometimes Life just is not fair to every participant. "Fairness" is a goal to work toward but you can't allow its perceived absence to distract you from your purpose.
With unlimited access to information, they tend to be assertive with strong views.	Knowledge does not equate to wisdom and just having access to a lot of data doesn't mean you understand how it relates to the situation at hand. Learn to listen to others and consider what experiences may have led them to their opinion just as you should look inward to seeing what has led you to yours.
Envision the world as a 24/7 place and want fast and immediate processing.	A few years ago, there was a book titled, <i>"Lord, Give Me Patience and Give it to Me Right Now"</i> <sup>26</sup> which says it all regarding what can be learned from this trait. Some things, people, and tasks require time to develop, mature, or become complete and no amount of Millennial foot tapping, pestering with text messages, or standing over them as they work will make it happen sooner.
Tend to focus more on intentions than actions and outcomes	There is a lot of "hashtag advocacy" for popular causes such as "Save the Whales", but what specific, concrete actions do these people take that will make a difference in a whale's life? The workplace focuses on productivity, not just activity, and the Millennial should frequently ask themselves, "Just what am I being paid to do" to help them stay focused when tempting distractions may arise.
They have been told repeatedly that they are special, and they	Although you are a unique individual, you are surrounded by others just as unique in their own way as you. Rather than expect to be treated specially, try asking yourself <i>"how can I increase my value to my employer?"</i>

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.amazon.com/Lord-Give-Patience-Right-Now/dp/1426707606>

<b>Millennial Trait</b>	<b>Growth and Development Opportunity</b>
expect the world to treat them that way.	If you focus on that while those around you keep waiting for their trophy to arrive for simply doing expected work, you will quickly stand out among your peers and soon be leaving them behind.
Don't live to work.	Your employer's business was built on being dependable for their clients and many times that includes working long hours unexpectedly. Don't hesitate to show you are a team player by doing your share with the long hours. But, also, don't become a doormat – be sure to ask for some flexibility, when possible, in your work schedule.

## A MILLENNIAL'S PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Here are three words to burn into your memory: **TRUST IS HISTORIC.**

**The common element with all successful people – as you want to become – is enough subordinates, peers, and superiors think they are trustworthy enough to support them in the next position.**

Look around you and think about the people – especially the leaders whether officially by title or unofficially by social behavior - which you believe are viewed as trustworthy by others. Next, take a moment and list at least three behaviors or traits they exhibit which you feel contribute to their being trustworthy. Finally, beside each behavior, estimate how long you have observed it. The point here is to make clear that *trust is historic* and takes a while to establish.

In addition to the behaviors or traits you have just listed, there are some which are subtler but still very important when creating a reputation that would encourage organizational stakeholders to consider your long-term potential. These are not achieved overnight but are well worth the time it takes to establish them.

### 1. You must be “competent+ (plus)” in the eyes of your supervisor/employer.

Your supervisor – *who must be on your side if you want any opportunities for professional development*– must think you are competent in something *in addition to* the specific skills required for your current role.



We say *in addition* because the skills required for the role you are in have defined the way the role has always been performed. If you want to convince your boss to give you a chance to develop outside of your current role, you'll have to convince him (her) that you have more skills than just those required for the existing job. And those additional skills could be critical in assuring success in the department's new look or in helping him or her do their job. (Remember, making it easier for the boss to do his or her job can make it easier for them to support your professional development.)

It may be specialized knowledge about your firm's business or a field of interest that is useful for the business such as in-depth knowledge about computers, a photography hobby, writing the newsletter for

your church or organizing events for a volunteer organization, or an ease in public speaking although your job description may not involve any of those right now.

For example, if your boss can count on you to write or make suggestions for a report he or she must submit, then you are competent+ in their eyes even though writing reports may not be what the company currently pays you to do. But, if you can help your boss in that unexpected way, they may be more willing to let you try a few new practices.

However, if your specialty were an ability to name every number one country song in the last 10 years, there would not be much value in that from a business perspective unless your employer was in the music business.



Stop for a moment and list the specialties you have that can be used to ease some of your boss's (or a peer's) workload either directly or indirectly. (These can also be interests such as checking data, teaching others to do things, a joy in meeting new people, managing small projects, or planning events that you never considered as specialties.)

How can these non-current-job-related specialties help you increase your value to your boss?

If you do not have any specialties now, what work-related interests (see above) do you have that you can develop into specialties?

How and when will you start developing them?

**2. You must be able to build alliances with others.**

Eventually, your professional self-development efforts will require either the cooperation of others or their ‘non-interference’ when possible. Therefore, you must focus on being as helpful to them as possible without consciously thinking about “what is in it for me to do this?”

If you can develop an honest attitude of unhesitating service to others, you will begin leveraging your efforts into greater results than you could have achieved alone *while building a history of trust with them.*



One easy way to develop that service attitude is by asking yourself as you look around, “How can I make it easier for them to do (or get) what they are doing (or need)? Easier to get the information they need; easier to get the results they need; easier to contact my department or my company?”

This is not about “networking” which usually amounts to a group of contacts who rely on each other for information sharing or help. An alliance, as we use it here, is about offering a hand to others when possible because at some point, someone will offer a hand to you.

Some people call this “paying it forward” and the premise is that if someone does something nice for you, after a sincere thank-you to them, consider doing good deeds unexpectedly for others as the payment. This investment in those around you will reap unexpected benefits when you least expect them (and probably most need them). Of course, this premise assumes that you believe life is ultimately fair and that eventually everyone ends up where they deserve to be.

Think about other departments with whom you must interact as you do your work. What opportunities exist for improving the communication and workflows between you? What work problems are there within your department that your supervisor may allow you to analyze for possible solutions? (Even if your leader does not have anything for you to look at, the fact that you asked can work wonders for your professional development plans.) What value would there be in people seeing you as a very valuable contributor to making their work life a little easier?



Think about this...

If you can help others see you as helpful and interested in their success, too, as you search for your own, you will learn the critical habit of building alliances that will become more essential as you move up in the organization.

What alliances have you developed so far in your workplace by being as helpful as possible?

What alliances have you developed so far in your life outside of work by being as helpful as possible?

Who are others with whom you can build an alliance by being as helpful as possible?

**3. You must develop the ability to not inflict wounds on yourself or have “qualifiers” mentioned when people describe you.**

An Associated Press article in January 2007 (“2 in 5 supervisors don’t keep their word, FSU study finds” by Brent Kallestad) reported these results of a survey from the Florida State University’s Business School that are classic examples of self-inflicted wounds:

- 39% of workers said their supervisors failed to keep promises.
- 37% said their supervisor failed to give credit when due.
- 31% said their supervisor gave them the “silent treatment” in the past year.
- 27% said their supervisor made negative comments about them to other employees or management.
- 23% said their supervisor blamed others to cover up mistakes or to minimize embarrassment.
- 4% said the supervisor invaded their privacy.

In every case, the action of the supervisor diminished the level of trust between him, or her and their employees and IT DID NOT HAPPEN. Although you will not start your career as a supervisor, be sure to remember these points when you do become one! All of these are examples of self-inflicted wounds.





In addition, how many people do you know with special skills or talents that always come with a qualifier statement? For example, “he is our best project engineer but, unfortunately, he is also such a jerk that no one else on the team can stand him.” Or maybe, “she is always so positive and upbeat that it almost makes you forget you can’t tell her any secrets that you don’t want spread around.”

These qualifiers are always self-inflicted and guaranteed to limit the success of the individual.



What qualifiers do you think are associated with you?

How can they limit your success?

What will you do about them?

Think about

If you are having trouble coming up with some, ask a few of your close friends after first explaining to them that you are trying to identify and eliminate any traits that may hold you back.

**Caution – do not ask them if you are not capable of dealing with the response honestly without argument! If you start to argue with them, you can forget ever hearing about anything useful from them in the future.**

## YOUR JOB IN THE ORGANIZATION

It is useful for you to look at your job in the organization from the perspective of your employer and ask yourself, “If I had to be rehired every day, would they hire me back every morning based on what I did the previous day?” (Of course, the corresponding question from you would be, “Based on my relationship with my supervisor as of the end of work yesterday, would I want to work here again today?”)



**Describe here what you are paid to do in terms that include the quality that is expected of your work, the quantity that is expected, and the time available to do it. (For example, “I am expected to process 10 documents (quantity) an hour (time) with no errors (quality).”)**

(If you are having trouble identifying all three elements of quality, quantity, and time, this may be a reason you and your leader do not share agreement on your productivity or you’re feeling stressed at work. This would be an excellent opportunity to talk with your supervisor and get those three elements clarified in your mind.)

**What other aspects of your job do you think are important to your success but may not be listed in the job description? (This would be a good question for discussion with some coworkers.)**

What about these important aspects of your job:

- How do you deal with disappointment? Do you accept it, try to understand why it happened and move on or do you focus on it, keep talking about it, and have trouble moving past it?
- How do you react when you make a mistake? Do you try to learn from it, deny that it happened, or try to fix blame on anyone but you?
- What do you do when someone confides in you about some gossip? Do you pass it on, or does it end with you?
- What about the workplace politics and “in crowd” that always exists within any organization? Do you spend much time concerned about them; do you complain to anyone who will listen that

it's so unfair that they exist; do you try to get into their circle; or do you accept it as a part of work life and move on?

- Where would your “reliability score” fall on a grade from 0-10 if your co-workers could respond to that question anonymously? How much can they count on you to be on time, keep a promise, or be accountable for your responsibilities?
  
- When you see opportunities for improvement in the work process, what determines whether you tell anyone:
  - If there is something in it for you
  - If you like your supervisor
  - If it will make the work easier for everyone
  - Something else – what?

Why do you think we are asking you these questions? (These traits may help you move ahead faster or slow and even halt your career advancement regardless of how well you perform in your formal job function.)

## YOUR CHARACTER AS A MILLENNIAL

Dr. Henry Cloud, author of *Integrity*<sup>27</sup>, identifies these as some of the traits essential to success in the workplace (and life itself.) Look at each one and ask yourself how your peers would rate you if they could answer anonymously.

1. **The ability to connect authentically which ultimately leads to trust.** Connecting “authentically” means, in Dr. Cloud’s terms, is dealing with the people as they are without regard to race religion, sex, age, OR WHAT THEY CAN DO FOR YOU IN RETURN. If you help someone because you genuinely want to help them, then you connect authentically.



With whom have you connected authentically recently? (This does not have to be in the workplace.)

What led you to make that connection?

Do you think that was a rare occurrence or common?

Who has connected authentically with you recently? What was your reaction to what they did?

If they were a coworker, would you be willing to help them in return sometime without them asking for help?

How do these questions relate to our earlier statement: [trust is historic?](#)

---

<sup>27</sup> [http://www.amazon.com/Integrity-Courage-Meet-Demands-Reality/dp/006084969X/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1323098814&sr=8-1](http://www.amazon.com/Integrity-Courage-Meet-Demands-Reality/dp/006084969X/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1323098814&sr=8-1)

2. **Your orientation toward the truth** (which leads to finding and operating in reality)

How well are your hopes and dreams anchored in truth/reality? The example we think of here is the television show, *American Idol*, and viewing the tryouts. While there are certainly people who have dreams of being successful singers and have the skills to support them, there are obviously many others who also have a dream but are not in touch with the truth, i.e., the reality that they have absolutely no talent at all.

Any viewer watching some of those tryouts as they screech and scream in a strange variety of costumes and outfits must ask himself or herself, “What are they thinking? How can they believe they have the talent to get on to a singing show?”

Are your career hopes and dreams solidly anchored in the truth (reality) or are they based on some false hopes that deny reality? Can you accept the fact that being tone deaf and unable to carry a tune will keep you from winning a singing contest?

Another risk of not living in reality is the danger that it can seriously harm you. Jim Collins, the author of “Good to Great”<sup>28</sup> interviewed retired Admiral James Stockdale, USN, who served on active duty in the regular Navy for 37 years, most of those years at sea as a fighter pilot aboard aircraft carriers.

Shot down on his third combat tour over North Vietnam, he was the senior naval service prisoner of war in Hanoi for 7-1/2 years - tortured 15 times, in solitary confinement for four years, leg irons for two.



---

<sup>28</sup> [http://www.amazon.com/Good-Great-Companies-Leap-Others/dp/0066620996/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1323099101&sr=1-1](http://www.amazon.com/Good-Great-Companies-Leap-Others/dp/0066620996/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1323099101&sr=1-1)

Mr. Collins asked which prisoners did not make it through the years of prisoner-of-war confinement. His reply, “*Oh, that’s easy. The optimists!*” When the author admitted he did not understand, the Admiral clarified by saying, “*The optimists were the ones who said, ‘We’re going to be out by Christmas.’ Christmas would come and go. Then they would say, ‘We’ll be out by Easter.’ Easter would come and go. Then it would be Thanksgiving and Christmas again. And they died of a broken heart.*”

Then he turned to the author and said, “This is a very important lesson. ***You must never confuse faith that you will prevail in the end – which you can never afford to lose – with the discipline to confront the most brutal facts of your current reality, whatever they may be.***”

Another consideration is our self-imposed limitations. How many times have you heard someone (or you) say something like, “I’m too old to learn about .... or...I’m not smart enough to understand that...or...I never finished high school and can’t...” A fact of human nature is that if we argue hard enough for our own limitations, we will always have them.



What limitations have you imposed on yourself as an excuse for why things are not working out for you? (Something like, “My schedule is so busy I don’t have time for \_\_\_\_\_.”)

What opportunities do you think you have missed in life because of these self-imposed barriers?

What do you plan to do about them?

Can you keep these barriers and still expect to achieve all the things about which you dream?

Do you really think that arriving for work just in time, taking every minute available for lunch and breaks, while being the first out the door at the end of the day will help your career?

The truth/reality is simply fulfilling the job description is the least you can do to remain employed. Just showing up and going through the motions of work will not last long.

If you want to move upward, you must show your employers that you are worthy of consideration. In addition, you must extend yourself first without asking for what you will get in return if you want to be successful. While there is no guarantee that you will be successful if you do this, it is virtually guaranteed that you will not move upward if you do not.

3. **The ability to embrace, engage, and deal with the negative.** This is about your ability to deal with things that do not work out as you wish. Maybe you did not get the amount of a raise that you were expecting or some other ‘good thing’ that was supposed to happen did not.

Do you get angry about the result and start talking about how there is “no justice, the boss isn’t fair and doesn’t like you; the boss has favorites, etc.” or do you ask yourself what led to your assumption that a good thing was supposed to happen?

*There is a statement in logic theory that there are no wrong conclusions, just faulty premises.*

This means that a wise person will not waste time whining about the wrong (in their mind) conclusion but will, instead, immediately begin to examine the factors (premises) that they thought would lead to the expected conclusion. This may lead to better preparation next time or clarification of assumptions that were not true to begin with.

The better you become in learning why things did not turn out as you expected will help you develop habits for success in the future. The wise person welcomes problems because they are an opportunity to learn something new! (If everything worked out just as you expected, what new things would you have learned?)



When did something that was important to you not work out as you expected?

How did you react?

What possible errors did you make in your assumptions?

What did you learn from the situation (or what could you learn if you went back and examined the premises more carefully?)

How will you act differently in the future when a similar situation comes up? (Remember, you cannot do things the way you always have and expect different results!)



## YOUR IMPRESSION ON OTHERS

Many people have probably not considered what it is like (in the eyes of others) to work with them. Like the famous cartoon character, Popeye, they think, “*I am what I am and that’s all that I am...*”<sup>29</sup> and consider nothing more about it. (Author’s Note: If you’re too young to have heard of Popeye, here’s a YouTube link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nSdz5ln2rME>)



In reality, the experience of collaborating with you can range from someone thinking, “What a jerk!” to “Wow! What a nice person. I’m glad I met him (her)!”

You may be asking yourself, “Why should I care what kind of an experience I create when working? I’m paid to work – not to create an experience.” In today’s interconnected social media world, that may not be entirely true. In fact, the more positive of an experience that you create when interacting with others may do wonders for your career or, at least, make your existing job create less wear-and-tear in your own life and maybe expand your career opportunities, too. (Think of the Facebook custom of “thumbs up or down” when liking or not liking something.)

Although your job may not have the words “customer service” in the title, anyone with whom you interact is a customer. Whether they pay for your services (such as in your profession), you donate them in community service, or they are included in your salary (as part of a project team or member of the workforce), there is still the service provider (you) and the service customer (the person receiving your goods or services) relationship present.

---

<sup>29</sup> [https://images.search.yahoo.com/yhs/search?p=popeye+the+sailor+man+quotes&hspart=att&hsimp=yhs-att\\_001](https://images.search.yahoo.com/yhs/search?p=popeye+the+sailor+man+quotes&hspart=att&hsimp=yhs-att_001)

We can explain all this much better if we take a customer service viewpoint. If you take that perspective through this section, you will understand the message we are trying to convey and get people to like working with you.



Suppose your retirement dinner from your organization were held tonight. What would you want people to say about you as an employee and co-worker?

What specific behaviors of yours can you list that would guarantee people will say that?

## YOU ARE IN THE CUSTOMER SERVICE WORLD

This section is not about customer service because service is a 'given': it is the LEAST PEOPLE EXPECT when they deal with a service provider. Instead, it is about their experience during the delivery of that service.

For example, if you go into a bank to make a deposit, the least you expect is for the teller to take your check or cash, deposit it to your account accurately and quickly, and give you a receipt. The service that the bank is in business to provide is the least the customer expects. If the teller just does that, it is nothing special from the customer's perspective.



However, the customer's experience while in the bank during the transaction is what matters because they will do one of three things:

1. Forget it because everything about it was expected and mundane (ordinary, routine, or nothing special) and completely forgettable!
2. Remember it because parts of it or everything about it was unexpected and positive.
3. Remember it because parts of it or everything about it were unexpected and negative.

Do you think there is a connection between the amount of unexpected and positive (or negative) elements in an encounter and the extent to which it is considered positive or negative?

Why?

Do you think it takes an equal number of unexpected **positive or negative** elements to make an experience positive or negative?

Why?

(Just one negative aspect of an encounter can nullify all the positive aspects in the minds of some people. Why would you take a chance?)

## MOMENTS OF TRUTH



In 1986 Jan Carlzon, the former president of Scandinavian Airlines, authored a book, *Moments of Truth*<sup>30</sup>. In his book, he defines the moment of truth in business as this:

*"Anytime a customer comes into contact with any aspect of a business, however remote, is an opportunity to form an impression."*

From this simple concept, he took an airline that was failing and turned it around to be one of the most respected airlines in the industry.

Some examples of “moments of truth” in his book about the airline business are:

- When you call to make a reservation to take a flight, (remember, this was before online booking)
- When you arrive at the airport and check your bags curbside,
- When you go inside and pick up your ticket at the ticket counter,
- When you are greeted at the gate,
- When you are taken care of by the flight attendants onboard the aircraft, and
- When you are greeted at your destination.

These moments can be taken farther into categories we will call:

- **Magic Moments** (something unexpected AND POSITIVE happens)
- **Miserable Moments** (something unexpected AND NEGATIVE happens)
- **Mundane Moments** (something expected, AND ORDINARY happens)

Which ones do you think are remembered most (circle)? Magic Miserable Mundane

\_\_\_\_\_

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.amazon.com/Moments-Truth-Jan-Carlzon/dp/0060915803>

What will people usually do after having a Magic or Miserable experience?

What are some potential “moments of truth” in your business from an external (someone from outside your organization) customer’s perspectives and how do you think the customers would rate them? Use symbols for the reaction as: Magic = “+” Miserable = “x” Mundane = “?”

	Description of a “Moment of Truth”	Typical Rating	Reason for That Rating
1			
2			
3			

What are some potential “moments of truth” in your business from an internal (someone from inside of your organization) customer’s perspective and how do you think the customers would rate them? Use symbols for the reaction as: Magic = “+” Miserable = “x” Mundane = “?”

	Description of a “Moment of Truth”	Typical Rating	Reason for That Rating
1			
2			
3			

What are some potential “moments of truth” WHEN DEALING WITH YOU from an external customer’s perspective and how do you think the customers would rate them? Use symbols for the reaction as: Magic = “+” Miserable = “x” Mundane = “?”

	Description of a “Moment of Truth”	Typical Rating	Reason for That Rating
1			
2			
3			

Is there room for improvement? Why do you think so? What description would you like it to be?

What will you start doing differently (and when) to get “moments of truth” involving you closer to the level you want?

What are some potential “moments of truth” WHEN DEALING WITH YOU from an internal customer’s perspective and how do you think the customers would rate them? Use symbols for the reaction as:

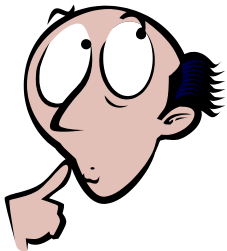
Magic = “+” Miserable = “x” Mundane = “?”

	Description of A “Moment of Truth”	Typical Rating	Reason for That Rating
1			
2			
3			

Is there room for improvement? Why do you think so? What description would you like it to be?

What will you start doing differently (and when) to get “moments of truth” involving you closer to the level you want?

## ONCE AGAIN... THE BASICS



The basic elements of getting people to like working with you include:

- Developing a “customer” friendly attitude
- Expanding your definition of service
- Reconsidering who your “customers” are

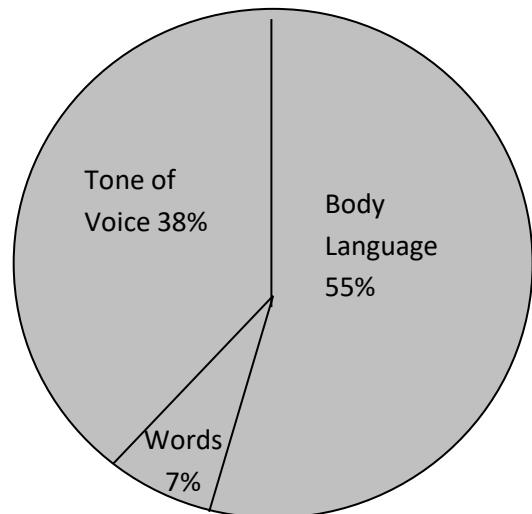
## OTHER OPPORTUNITIES FOR SELF-HELP OR SELF-HURT

Here are other opportunities to prepare for your professional growth.

One very important opportunity is your body language.

We say so much more with our body language than we do with our spoken language.

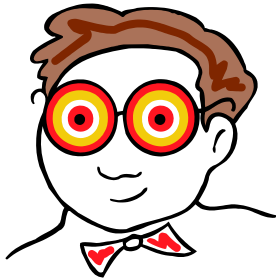
How can you tell when someone with whom you work isn't happy to see you even when they do not say anything? How do you act when you see someone you are not happy to see?



This graphic shows the percentage of the message we send with various parts of our behavior. How can you tell when someone on the telephone is not happy that you called even when you cannot see him or her? Which of those clues (above) do you probably display when you are not ready to deliver a “magic moment” of customer experience?

When you display them, how does that impact your value to your employer? Why should you consider your impact on the customer and your value to the company?

## VISUAL MESSAGES



How does “staring” differ from “looking at?” Would you rather have a coworker stare at you or look at you?

Keep that preference in mind when you deal with your customers.

When a customer is upset, what should you consider about eye contact?



Your body posture and behavior can tell the customer so much about your interest in them. What messages do behaviors like these send to the customer?

- Leaning back or stepping away
- Turning your body away from the customer
- Looking past them at the clock or someone behind them
- Checking the vibrating cell phone to see who is calling.
- Looking at their watches repeatedly
- Always give a big sigh before answering the question
- Clicking a ballpoint pen open and closed while they talk to you.
- Virtually no body movement, no facial reaction, and staring straight ahead.

What do you do to convey you really are not interested in listening to someone?



### MY SPACE AND YOUR SPACE



“Personal space” is the distance that feels comfortable between you and another person. If someone moves too closely into ours, we tend to back away.

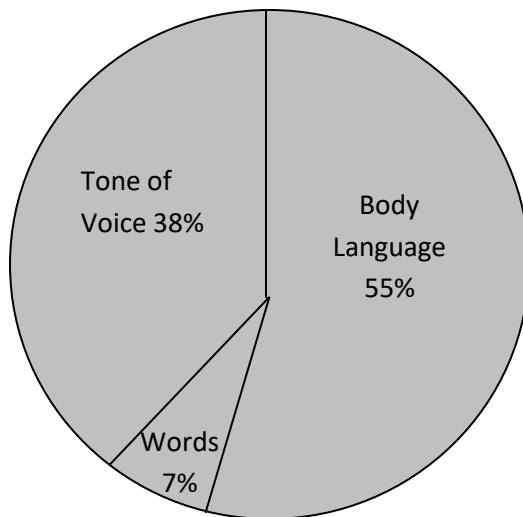
How can you tell if you are invading a customer’s space? What should you do?

How can someone tell if they are invading your space? What can you do?

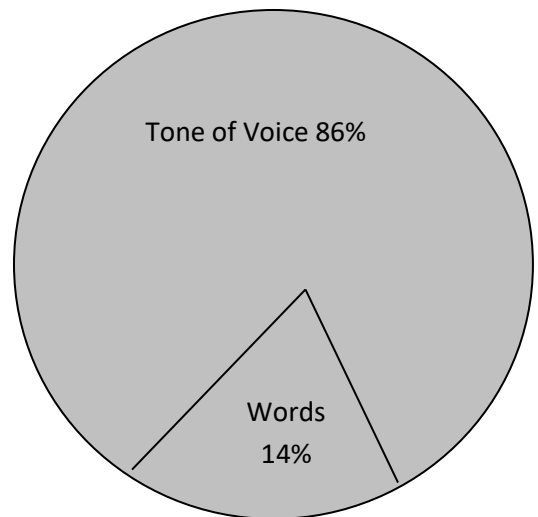
### PHONE TONE & OTHER BEHAVIOR

Earlier we talked about the importance of body language when we can see the customers but how do things change when we talk to them on the telephone?

FACE-TO-FACE



OVER THE TELEPHONE



Does the tone of your voice inspire confidence or confusion? Do you sound like you know what you’re talking about or are not sure?

## DEALING WITH ANGRY CUSTOMERS

How do you handle calls when the caller is angry, difficult, or has a complaint?

Here are some things to keep in mind now.



- Empathize (“I can see how that would be frustrating.”) You are not agreeing with them – just demonstrating you are listening.
- Apologize (“I am sorry you had this problem.”) Remember agreement DOES NOT mean you admit guilt. It is just agreeing that this is a frustrating situation.
- Stay positive (They are angry at the problem, not you!)
- Take responsibility for finding a solution.
- Confirm your understanding (“Let me make sure I understand this correctly...”)

Then you can:

- Do not overreact to “trigger words” or phrases (Such as, “Doesn’t anyone there know what they’re doing?”)
- Listen completely to the complaint.
- DO NOT BLAME ANYONE! (Not you, the caller, the company, or the department even if you know who did it)
- Paraphrase their comments and ask questions to make sure you understand the situation (this also demonstrates to them that you were paying attention.)
- Offer solutions and alternatives (if possible). An alternative gives the caller a sense of power and calms them. Why? (They feel like they have a choice.)
- Confirm the solution with the caller and make sure they agree on what has been decided.
- Say, “You’re Welcome” not “No Problem” if they ever say ‘Thank You’ after listening to them. Saying ‘No Problem’ may just set them off again.

## **YOUR WORKING STYLE**

You probably have many associates or service customers with whom you get along very well because they seem to be a lot like you! Maybe it is the way they present their problem or the way they respond to your answers that makes you think you have a lot in common.

Additionally, there are probably many with whom you feel absolutely no connection and it is difficult to deal with them successfully. The reason may be that your individual working style –the way you interact with the world – is like some of your customers’ working styles and very different from some others.

Before we can help you deal effectively with the various customers you have, it is important that you know what your working style is, so you can identify theirs. Once you can understand the clues and characteristics of the four major working styles, it will become easier for you to become flexible in your approach to customers who display a different style than yours.

## **SELF-ASSESSMENT SURVEY**

We all are combinations of the four various working styles and, depending on the situation, we may display different aspects of our individual style.

For example, at work we may allow the “take charge” aspect of our personality to lead while after work, with friends, we may pull back the take-charge element and bring out the “friendly and feelings” aspect of us. Please remember this – we are a blend of these styles and the one that we call upon most is our working style.



Circle the response in the following questions which is most likely how you would respond. The answers are neither right nor wrong. Just base your responses on how you are today, not how you think you need to be or want to be in the future.

1. When talking to a customer or co-worker....
  - a. I maintain eye contact the whole time.
  - b. I alternate between looking at the person and looking down.
  - c. I look around the room a good deal of the time.
  - d. I try to maintain eye contact but look away from time to time.
  
2. If I have an important decision to make....
  - a. I think through it completely before deciding.
  - b. I go with my gut instincts.
  - c. I consider the impact it will have on other people before deciding.
  - d. I run it by someone whose opinion I respect before deciding.
  
3. My office or work area mostly has....
  - a. Family photos and sentimental items displayed.
  - b. Inspirational posters, awards, and art displayed.
  - c. Graphs and charts displayed.
  - d. Calendars and project outlines displayed.
  
4. If I am having a conflict with a co-worker or customer....
  - a. I try to help the situation along by focusing on the positive.
  - b. I stay calm and try to understand the cause of the conflict.
  - c. I try to avoid discussing the issue causing the conflict.
  - d. I confront it right away so that it can get resolved as soon as possible.
  
5. When I talk on the phone at work....
  - a. I keep the conversation focused on the purpose of the call.
  - b. I spend a few minutes chatting before getting down to business.
  - c. I am in no hurry to get off the phone and don't mind chatting about personal things, the weather, and so on.
  - d. I try to keep the conversation as brief as possible.

6. If a co-worker is upset....

- a. I ask if I can do anything to help.
- b. I leave him alone because I don't want to intrude on his privacy.
- c. I try to cheer him up and help him to see the bright side.
- d. I feel uncomfortable and hope he gets over it soon.

7. When I attend meetings at work....

- a. I sit back and think about what is being said before offering my opinion.
- b. I put all my cards on the table, so my opinion is well known.
- c. I express my opinion enthusiastically but listen to other's ideas as well.
- d. I will try to support the ideas of the other people in the meeting.

8. When I make a presentation in front of a group....

- a. I am entertaining and often humorous.
- b. I am clear and concise.
- c. I speak relatively quietly.
- d. I am direct, specific, and sometimes loud.

9. When a customer is explaining a problem to me....

- a. I try to understand and empathize with how she is feeling.
- b. I look for the specific facts pertaining to the situation.
- c. I listen carefully to the main issue so that I can find a solution.
- d. I use my body language and tone of voice to show her that I understand.

10. When I attend training programs or presentations....

- a. I get bored if the person moves too slowly.
- b. I try to be supportive of the speaker, knowing how hard the job is.
- c. I want it to be entertaining and informative.
- d. I look for the logic behind what the speaker is saying.

11. When I want to get my point across to customers or co-workers....
  - a. I listen to their point of view first and then express my ideas gently.
  - b. I strongly state my opinion so that they know where I stand.
  - c. I try to persuade them without being too forceful.
  - d. I explain the thinking and logic behind what I am saying.
  
12. When I am late for a meeting or appointment....
  - a. I don't panic, and I call ahead to say that I'll be a few minutes late.
  - b. I feel bad about keeping the other person waiting.
  - c. I get very upset and rush to get there as soon as possible.
  - d. I apologize profusely after I arrive.
  
13. I set goals and objectives at work that....
  - a. I think I can realistically attain.
  - b. I feel it is challenging and would be exciting to achieve.
  - c. I need to achieve as part of a bigger objective.
  - d. Will make me feel good when I achieve them.
  
14. When explaining a problem to a co-worker from whom I need help....
  - a. I will explain the problem in as much detail as possible.
  - b. I sometimes exaggerate to make my point.
  - c. I try to explain how the problem makes me feel.
  - d. I will explain how I would like the problem to be solved.
  
15. If customers or co-workers are late for a meeting with me in my office....
  - a. I keep myself busy by making phone calls or working until they arrive.
  - b. I assume they were delayed a bit and don't get upset.
  - c. I call to make sure that I have the correct information (date, time, and so on).
  - d. I get upset that the person is wasting my time.

16. When I am behind on a project and feel pressure to get it done....
- I make a list of everything I need to do, in what order, by when.
  - I block out everything else and focus 100 percent on the work I need to do.
  - I become anxious and have a hard time focusing on my work.
  - I set a date to get the project done by and go for it.
17. When I feel verbally attacked by a customer or a co-worker....
- I tell her to stop it.
  - I feel hurt but usually don't say anything about it to her.
  - I ignore her anger and try to focus on the facts of the situation.
  - I let her know in strong terms that I don't like her behavior.
18. When I see a co-worker or customer whom I like and haven't seen recently....
- I give him a friendly hug.
  - I greet him but don't shake his hand.
  - I give him a firm but quick handshake.
  - I give him an enthusiastic handshake that lasts a few moments.

1 a Driver b Amiable c Analytical d Expressive	4 a Expressive b Amiable c Analytical d Driver	7 a Analytical b Driver c Expressive d Amiable	10 a Driver b Amiable c Expressive d Analytical	13 a Analytical b Expressive c Driver d Amiable	16 a Analytical b Driver c Amiable d Expressive
2 a Analytical b Driver c Amiable d Expressive	5 a Driver b Expressive c Amiable d Analytical	8 a Expressive b Analytical c Amiable d Driver	11 a Amiable b Driver c Expressive d Analytical	14 a Analytical b Expressive c Amiable d Driver	17 a Driver b Amiable c Analytical d Expressive
3 a Amiable b Expressive c Analytical d Driver	6 a Amiable b Analytical c Expressive d Driver	9 a Amiable b Analytical c Driver d Expressive	12 a Analytical b Amiable c Driver d Expressive	15 a Expressive b Amiable c Analytical d Driver	18 a Amiable b Analytical c Driver d Expressive

Write your total score here:

Driver = \_\_\_\_\_ Amiable = \_\_\_\_\_ Analytical = \_\_\_\_\_ Expressive = \_\_\_\_\_

Working styles from Personal Styles and Effective Performance: Make Your Style Work for You by David Merrill and Roger Reid (Chilton, 1981)

The more you understand your working style and the traits of different ones around you, the more effective you will become in dealing with them. *Remember, we're not recommending you try to become the other person, just that you adapt temporarily to deal effectively with them.* After the transaction is over, you can continue to be YOU.

### DEMONSTRATING OUR WORKING STYLE

Our everyday behaviors can go a long way to identifying our style. If you are observant, you can pick up clues from:

- What people say - How they say it
- How they act - Their work environment

**What People Say:** How do you express yourself? Do you use colorful phrases, “down home-isms”, or larger-than-life expressions, or do you tend to say things in a more modest, low-key manner? The types of words you use and the way you use them are a direct reflection of your working style.

**How they Say It:** Do you speak quickly in your normal mode and speed up even more when you get angry? Or do you speak slowly and distinctly and grow quieter if you get angry? Does your voice have a lot of inflections and tonal changes, or does it stay essentially the same regardless of the topic? Is there excitement in your voice or calmer and more relaxed? The way you speak tells people as much about you as how you say it.



**How they Act:** Have people ever said to you, “If we hold your hands, you won’t be able to talk!” Do you gesture broadly when you speak, or do they rest quietly in your lap or at your side while you speak? Do people have to move quickly to keep up with you or do you stroll at a leisurely pace? Your body movements are a very natural aspect of your working style.

**The work environment:** Do you have reports, files, and papers strewn over your desk or is it neat and tidy? Are your pictures of your family casual or formally posed? What about the wall decorations? Are they achievement oriented (#1 in the golf tournament) or (attention seeking) “here’s the governor and me at a luncheon?” The office environment can tell a lot about the inhabitant to an alert observer.

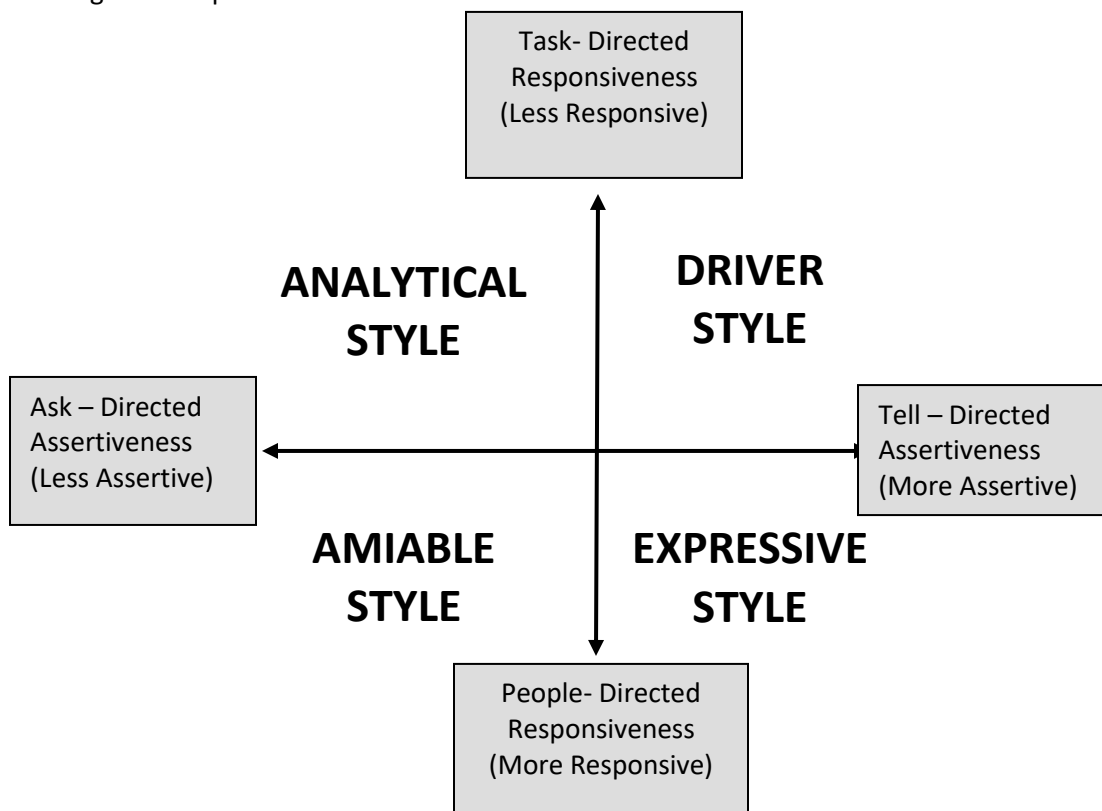


### THE WORKING STYLES GRID

The concept of Working Styles is based on where people fall along two behavioral ranges. These ranges address:

- How (or the extent to which) people assert themselves to others (outgoing communication meaning whether they typically ‘tell’ or ‘ask’) and,
- How (or the extent to which) they respond to others with more focus on people or task issues.

Here is a grid to help visualize it



## THE ANALYTICAL STYLE

Their working style has a low degree of assertiveness (they listen more than they speak) and a low degree of emotional expression. People with this style focus on facts more than feelings. They evaluate situations objectively and gather plenty of data before deciding. They prefer an organized work environment where they know exactly what is expected of them.

They are often perceived as deliberate, constrained, and logical. They tend to be good listeners who follow procedures, carefully weigh all alternatives, and remain steadfast in purpose. They are seen as disciplined, independent, and not aggressive, and as people who are likely to let others take the social initiative.

They may be perceived as conservative, businesslike, and persistent in their relationships with others. Strongly risk-averse and pursue their goals only after they have compiled plenty of data to support a project's purpose, practicality, and policy. For them, the process is as important as the outcome.

### **Here are some of the phrases often used to describe Analyticals:**

- Seem technically oriented, often seeking structure, certainty, and evidence before making decisions (show them the warranty!)
- Appear quiet and unassuming; may show little emotion when dealing with others (they are listening much more closely than it appears)
- Tend to take little social initiative with others; may remain guarded until a strong relationship has been developed
- May push to extend existing ideas and procedures before going on to something new
- Will meticulously check every word and term in a contract or agreement before signing it

### **Their office environment probably includes:**

- Minimal wall decorations. If there are some, they are probably off-the-shelf graphics, nothing frivolous, everything is utilitarian
- If there are documents on their desk, they are neatly stacked, and everything looks orderly
- Family pictures, if any, are formal portrait settings, not candid shots of vacation, the dog, etc.
- There are probably charts, graphs, or other statistical measurements in their office.

**Strengths of this style include:**

- Seem able to approach problems based on facts and logic and to create solid solutions
- Tend to make the most practical decision by being thorough and open to ideas
- Like to discover new ways of solving old problems
- Often productively competent in working out a problem and in getting a job done right

**Growth opportunities (i.e., career-limiting challenges to overcome) for this style include:**

- Realizing their need to collect data it makes it difficult to meet a deadline
- Their need to make zero errors makes it difficult to provide an estimate or make an off-the-cuff suggestion
- Their need for orderliness makes it uncomfortable when someone with whom they are working jumps from one topic to another randomly

**Strategies for dealing with them:**

- Meet their need for data by providing charts, graphs, warranties, or statistics. Always check your data first because they will.
- Give them some room for error when asking for an estimate or opinion otherwise you will never get an answer because they are still collecting data. For example, ask for an estimate “with a 95% confidence level.” If you give them an ‘out’ (95% instead of 100%) so they do not have to be perfect, you allow them to reduce their inner drive for error avoidance.
- Set some preliminary milestones so you can check on progress instead of an all-or-nothing final date. Their drive for perfection and analysis of data may cause them to get so bogged down in the details they lose track of the overall schedule.
- Support their principles and thinking, provide evidence and service; and answers that explain HOW as often as possible.
- When explaining something, proceed in a logical sequence and do not make any leaps of logic.

## THE AMIABLE STYLE

An amiable, is often seen as quiet, unassuming, and supportive. Perceived as a warm, friendly listener who seem easy to get along with, they attract people who enjoy personal contact and shared responsibility (“teamwork” is something they enjoy).

They tend to pursue goals by first establishing strong personal ties (first the personal relationship then the business relationship.) They may be perceived as avoiding risks and decision making unless they have strong support or data to back them up.

They like time to build relationships and to seek support and feedback from others before they make decisions (“Where do you want to go to lunch? What about you?” they will ask everyone in the group but make no decision themselves for fear of offending someone.)

They are very cooperative in their interaction with others because they want to be liked and “fit in’.

### **Phrases frequently used by people to describe Amiables include:**

- Seem to accept others, placing a high priority on getting along
- Appear quiet, cooperative, and supportive as they seek approval
- Seem easy to get to know and work with
- Tend to minimize interpersonal conflict whenever possible

### **Their office environment probably includes:**

- “Happy” decorations including candid pictures of family & friends
- “Have a Nice Day” slogan variations
- Probably some clutter giving it a comfortable and homey feel
- Some emphasis on teamwork in an award, a slogan, or books on the shelf dealing with relationships and or communication

**Strengths of this style include:**

- May help others and provide positive strokes for other people's work and accomplishments
- May have a deep sense of loyalty and dedication to those in their work and peer groups
- Seems able to communicate trust and confidence in other people
- Function very well on teams and other social settings
- Tend to make people feel comfortable about themselves

**Growth opportunities for this style include:**

- Amiables often have trouble asserting themselves and making decisions quickly.
- Generally, they don't like confronting disagreements with co-workers
- Must resist the temptation to base everything on feelings and more on results.
- Their reluctance to deal with conflict means that they don't always get what they really want.
- Their frustration about not resolving such issues can turn into resentment that is directed toward the same co-worker in later interactions.

**Strategies for dealing with them:**

Use a friendly tone of voice while making frequent eye contact and smiling

- They seek approval – provide it as much as you can.
- Use no aggressive or no dramatic gestures because this may be seen as unfriendly
- Speak slowly and in soft tones with moderate inflection (because that's how friends talk with each other)
- Use language that is supportive and encouraging with guarantees and assurances

## THE DRIVER STYLE

The Driver is results-oriented, tending to initiate action and give clear direction. Drivers seek control over their environment and want to know the estimated outcome of each option when making deals.

They are willing to accept risks but want to move quickly and have the final say. They love competition – especially when they win. In relationships, they may appear uncommunicative, independent and competitive and tend to focus on efficiency or productivity rather than devoting time and attention to casual relationships. They seldom see a need to share personal motives or feelings.

Drivers feel most comfortable pursuing their goals when they're in charge and taking the initiative. They are often seen as thriving in situations in which they can create plans and have others carry them out.

### **Drivers are frequently described as:**

- Heartless, bottom-line oriented, will make direct eye contact to intimidate and exert influence
- Able to move quickly and briskly with purpose while others hurry to catch up
- Speaking forcefully and fast-paced using terms such as will (not should), can (not try), and sound very certain of themselves
- They seem to make things happen, take risks, and view problems as just another challenge.

### **Their office environment probably includes:**

- Planning calendars and project outlines displayed in their offices
- Wall decorations include achievement awards (“#1 in the golf tournament)
- Furniture is “executive” style and of the best available (or best they can afford)
- Probably many communication methods are available because they want to stay in touch, solve problems, and keep moving people ahead toward goals.

**Strengths of this style include:**

- The ability to take charge of situations and make quick decisions are what often make drivers high achievers.
- They put a single-minded focus on the goals they want and are not afraid to take risks to accomplish them.
- Often confident and strong-willed and like to initiate, control, and serve as own motivator
- Appear efficient, hardworking, results-oriented, and direct and to the point

**Growth opportunities for this style include:**

- When feeling stressed, drivers can be so focused on getting things done quickly that they can overlook details and make mistakes.
- They may push aside their own and other's feelings to get the job done, which can create tense situations with co-workers.
- Because of their hard-driving, competitive nature, drivers can sometimes become workaholics.
- Their failure to consider the feelings of others can drive off a lot of good employees from their organization

**Strategies for dealing with them:**

- Don't waste their time – get to the point and be efficient
- Allow them to build their own structure when possible
- Give them choices between options and probabilities – allows them to be 'in charge'
- They measure value by results – show them how your product achieves results

## THE EXPRESSIVE STYLE

The typical description of an Expressive is “often excitable, fun-loving, and talkative; loves an audience and applause or recognition may be a cherished reward”. They are motivated by recognition, approval and prestige. They are very communicative and approachable, while freely sharing their feelings and thoughts.

They move quickly, continually excited about the next big idea, but they often don’t commit to specific plans or see things through to completion. They are better with strategy than the tactics needed for execution.

Like drivers, they enjoy taking risks. When making decisions, they tend to place more stock in the opinions of prominent or successful people than in logic or research. Though they consider relationships important, the Expressive’s competitive nature leads them to seek quieter friends who are supportive of their dreams and ideas, often making relationships shallow or short-lived.

### **Phrases like these are often heard when describing Expressives:**

- Appear to be risk-takers, competitive, and spirited
- Often futuristic, creative, and inspirational
- They are out-going, spontaneous, persuasive, gregarious, and humorous
- They see the “big picture” but don’t care much for the details
- Their approach toward projects may be, “Ready, FIRE, aim!”
- They think quickly and are more solution than process (like Analyticals are) focused

### **If you had a large project, the styles would broadly work like this:**

- The Expressive dreamer lays it all out
- The take-charge Driver leads it and makes it happen
- The Amiable team builder keeps the workforce together
- The Analytical data manager maintains the records and documents



**Their office environment probably includes:**

- Pictures that shout “look at me” such as with celebrities, unique locations (The Golden Gate Bridge), or exciting events such as skydiving. (The Driver’s pictures would be competition or achievement like #1 in the golf tournament. The Expressive’s would be ‘Here are the Governor and I playing golf’.)
- Bright colors
- Candid pictures of the family and their dog
- Many different projects or topics that they are working on

**Strengths of this style include:**

- Their lively nature allows them to motivate and generate excitement in others.
- They work at a fast pace and are good at building alliances and relationships to accomplish their goals.
- They are well suited for high-profile positions that require them to make public presentations, such as trainers, actors, salespeople, and so on.
- Like to share dreams and stimulate creative exchange of ideas

**Growth opportunities for this style include:**

- When upset, they can often communicate their feelings with considerable intensity, and if criticized, they may lash out with a verbal attack.
- They may seem overwhelming to less assertive styles, because when they're enthusiastic about an idea, they press for a decision and may overlook important details.
- They may need to stay with a project longer than just the initial start-up phase to make sure everyone understands the concept
- Rely less on intuition at times and dig for more facts

**Strategies for working with them:**

- Start by focusing on generalities rather than on details.
- They usually respond well to playful people who focus on the big picture.
- It's important to make direct eye contact, having energetic and fast-paced speech,
- Be sure to allow time in the meeting for socializing, talking about experiences, people, and opinions, in addition to the facts
- Asking about their intuitive sense of things will help
- Support your ideas with testimonials from people whom they know and like
- Paraphrase any agreements made and maintain a balance between fun and reaching objectives

**BACKUP STYLE**

Many people, when under stress, usually revert to their “backup style” of behavior. For example, back on page 85, you learned that people fall into two broad categories of assertiveness: more assertive or less.

The more assertive types are the **Drivers** and **Expressives**; the less assertive ones are the **Amiables** and **Analyticals**.

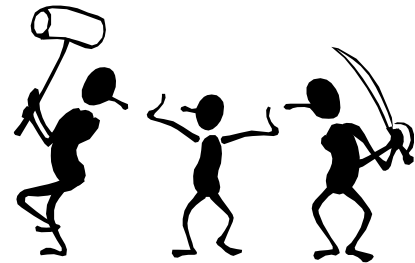
Under stress, people will become more of whichever assertive styles they are. The **Drivers** become more demanding (their controlling trait); **Expressives** attack verbally (their verbal and quick-thinking abilities); **Amiables** give in and put their personal feelings aside; and **Analyticals** withdraw into a shell avoiding the situation.

## YOUR EMOTIONS

There are too many self-help books about emotions on the market for us to get into another rehash of all the same topics although there is a need to consider a few specific elements from an employment perspective.

## BEHAVIOR VS. EMOTION

If you are ever asked to describe behavior you have witnessed, do not use words that describe emotions or attitudes and be sure to focus on behaviors.



For example, do not say a co-worker was “rude and unprofessional” when he or she hung up on the customer because there are no universal definitions of rude or unprofessional. The chance that someone else would understand the extent of the situation exactly as you meant when you said rude and unprofessional is very slim and someone may think you are trying to paint a worse picture than it was.

However, if you said, “her voice became louder, her face got red, and then she slammed down the telephone”, you will be more accurate and credible because everything you said was an observable behavior. Anyone else witnessing the event would agree that her voice did get louder, her face became redder, and they hung up the telephone forcibly.

Whether or not they would agree it was rude is not addressed because being rude is subject to opinion. Everyone will agree with what they saw (behaviors), but may not agree to what it means (rude or well deserved?)



Think about someone you have seen recently (in real life, television, or the movies) become very agitated and act out. Write out a description of the situation using behavioral or objective terms as much as possible.

Although you cannot control the unexpected, you can control your reaction to it. Sometimes bad, undesired, unwelcome, or unexpected things will happen to us without warning: that is just part of life, and we cannot do much about them.

However, we can do something about the way we react to them. The wise person will remember that the reason for the reaction will soon be forgotten by coworkers and management, but they may remember your reaction to it for years to come depending on the event and how you reacted.



Think about a recent situation at work, home, or in the community where you reacted in a way that you later regretted. What do you think was the impact on others as they watched your performance? How long do you think they will remember it? If you could replay that event, what would you do differently?

If you had acted differently, what do you think the witnesses would think about you now?

#### MAINTAIN A SENSE OF PROPORTION



Everyone has probably had a friend who was very dramatic over seemingly small matters or about those with which we have no control.

As teenagers for example, we may have known someone who could not get her braces off before the homecoming dance as she had planned and become nearly hysterical sobbing to her friends, “it’s the worst day of my life – my life is over – I just want to die, etc.”

Obviously, it is important to that girl but is it worse than the car accident she was in when she was younger, or will her life not continue past 16 years of age? Of course not and she probably felt all the drama was necessary to demonstrate her disappointment. But, from an observer’s perspective, what does it tell us about her ability to manage disappointment?

If a similar disappointment happened at work and she over dramatized for all to see, what lingering memory would any member of management have if they had witnessed it? What would they think of her prospects as a future leader?



Think about a recent emotional outburst that you witnessed that was overly dramatic and, in your opinion, way overdone. If that person were a coworker of yours, what effect would that performance have on your opinion of their ability to handle pressure within the department?

If you were their supervisor and they put on that show at work, what would be your reaction?

### LEARN TO ADAPT

Have you ever heard the saying, “you can’t go home again?” It does not mean that you cannot physically travel back to your home, of course, but rather that home will never again be what it once was. Your childhood friends have grown up, their (and your) view of the world has broadened (we hope) and our interpersonal relationships are now diluted with the experiences we had AFTER we all went our separate ways. Obviously, we are not the same people at our high school reunion as we were when we graduated ten years ago.

Unfortunately, some people are not able to move past their ‘glory days’ whether it was in their youth or when they were an “all-star” producer in the department years ago before we introduced computers. If you are not willing to adapt and stay current with the organization’s plans for growth or its innovations in technology, policies, and procedures, you are effectively asking to be left behind when the next reorganization occurs.

If your response is, “It will not happen to me because I have been here too long”, or “My job is too important – I am the only one who knows how to do this”, then you are wearing blinders and living in the world as IT WAS.

Think about this situation. Historically, before the 1970s, the Swiss were the center of the world trade for watches. They made the finest watches with their artistry of miniature gears, balance wheels, and all the associated machinery that made a watch work. They owned hundreds of patents on the mechanisms and believed they were invincible.

Moreover, when one of their imaginative designers came up with a design that used the vibrations of a quartz crystal to move the watch hands instead of the fine springs they had always used, they laughed

and never even filed the patent because, in their minds, that is not how watches are “supposed to work.”

Later that year, a representative from Texas Instruments saw that new design at a trade show and discovered that the inventor did not protect it with a patent. The rest is history as more than 98% of the world’s timepieces are now “quartz” watches. (Your watch is probably quartz and is a descendant of that Texas Instruments discovery.)

The point of that story is, “Do not ever assume it cannot happen to you because it can.” Do not wear blinders to the changing world and be sure to keep asking yourself, “If I applied for my job today, would they still hire me?” That question becomes more important as time passes between when you were in your glory days of the past and the reality of today.

Describe a time when you had to adapt to a change in your life that may not have been comfortable but was necessary for your continued growth.

What enabled your decision to adapt and not fight the change?

Describe the situation of someone you know who did not adapt well to a change and has brought on problems for themselves ever since.

What do you think kept them from adapting gracefully?

**LEARN HOW TO LOSE GRACEFULLY AND SMARTLY.**

This goes back to the reality that in life we end up losing more often than we win. We do not necessarily mean BIG LOSSES all the time but smaller ones like not getting the parking space we want, having to send two dozen resumes out to get one interview, not finding the perfect outfit we wanted when we went shopping. Often, things just do not always go our way.

A good guideline to remember is Kenny Rogers' song, "The Gambler"<sup>31</sup> when he told us,



"You gotta know when to hold 'em,  
Know when to fold 'em,  
Know when to walk away,  
And know when to run!"

Many times, in life, things just do not work out and we must learn to accept that. We must "know when to fold 'em" and "know when to (gracefully) walk away." Unfortunately, many people who are not well-grounded in reality have trouble letting go of things (or situations) and keep trying to force their desired outcome - which only makes the situation worse.

Losing gracefully means you have learned when to "fold 'em" and when to "walk away" to resume making progress in your life without being anchored to an outcome that is not going to change.



Describe a time in your life when you did not know when to fold 'em and walk away. What problems did that cause you?

Why do you think you did not know when to fold 'em?

What is different about you now? Why?

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kn481KcivMo>

Losing “smartly” requires the strength to do some introspection and remembering what we said earlier about there are no false conclusions, only faulty premises. If you understand and believe that, then you can become “smarter” by asking yourself what mistakes you made with one of the premises that led to your faulty conclusion (the undesirable outcome).

Perhaps you did not get the promotion or choice assignment that you wanted. Instead of whining and complaining that, you were cheated, or that “office politics” had a hand in the decision, ask yourself, “were you REALLY as deserving of the desired outcome as you thought you were?” Maybe you need to ask an objective (and honest) friend who is familiar with the situation if they can help you see something you may have overlooked.



Perhaps the other person was more skillful in doing the job or had a greater knowledge of the work. In addition, even if you were cheated or office politics had a hand in the decision (but you cannot prove it), the outcome will not change regardless of how much you whine, complain, or threaten. **SO WHY WASTE THE ENERGY DOING SO?**

Now your choice of response may also include asking yourself, “Do I really want to work in a place where things like this can happen?”



Describe a situation in your life when you did not get the result you expected.

What possible flaws were there in your assumptions that led to the faulty result?

Describe a time in your life when you went back, examined your original assumptions (the premises), and discovered a flaw in them before the faulty result occurred.



### **YOUR ACTIVITY: BUSY OR PRODUCTIVE?**



Just as there are three critical elements necessary for fire (fuel, heat, and air), there are three critical elements necessary for productivity (which is much different from just “being busy”): quality, quantity, and time.

Occasionally we will abbreviate them into QQT as we discussed back on page 62.

Productivity means people clearly understand how error-free the work must be (quality), how many products you require, and by when (time.) People whose activities are not defined by those three critical elements risk having their supervisor question their productivity, which is never good for high career aspirations.

If you cannot define those three elements in your work, be sure to ask your supervisor to clarify them for you. It will ensure that you are being productive (not busy!) and give your supervisor an unexpected treat when you take the initiative to ask (which ALWAYS looks good for a career plan!)

Write a description of one part of your job that uses the elements of quality, quantity, and time to define the requirements. (If you have trouble defining each element, ask your supervisor for some ideas.)

PLEASE NOTE THIS: If you do not know if your activities are “busy” or “productive”, there is a strong possibility that your career may not grow as quickly as you would like. Make sure you always know the difference, are always being productive, and can prove it to anyone by describing the quality, quantity, and time elements of your task.

## YOUR DEVELOPMENT PLAN

There are three distinct references we must make to lay the foundation for this next section on self-development.

- One is, “Millennials have unique opportunities for success or failure!” This is what we base this course upon.
- The second comes from physics. It is the Second Law of Thermodynamics which states (paraphrased) that a “closed system winds down over time if there is no outside energy coming into it.”
- Finally, the third part of a children’s story that goes, “One day Alice came to a fork in the road and saw a Cheshire cat in a tree. “Which road do I take?” she asked. “Where do you want to go?” was his response. “I don’t know”, Alice answered. “Then”, said the cat, “it doesn’t matter. When you don’t know where you are going, any road will take you there.”<sup>32</sup>



What do you want to be doing in your career in five years? What field of knowledge would you want to know a lot about? What kind of accomplishments would you like to have accomplished?

What do you want people to say about what it is like to **work for you**?

What do you want people to say it is like **collaborating with you**?

---

---

<sup>32</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alice%27s\\_Adventures\\_in\\_Wonderland](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alice%27s_Adventures_in_Wonderland)

**BE ALL THAT YOU CAN BE**

Before you can think about moving ahead, it is essential that you look back over all the topics we mentioned earlier to eliminate (or reduce as much as possible) the negative impact of any habits, beliefs, or idiosyncrasies you have identified within yourself, so you are not doing anything to restrict your development.

Next, consider a statement that we introduced back on page 66: ***“Argue for your limitations and they are yours.”***

Write here what you think that statement means.

List here any self-imposed limitations that you can remember you had since childhood. (If you are having trouble thinking of any, complete this sentence for as many different situations as you can think of “If only this were different about me (or my situation) \_\_\_\_\_, I could do (or have) this \_\_\_\_\_.”)

Learn to keep asking, “What else?” A caution here is that we are not focusing on material or selfish things such as “what else have you gotten me for my birthday” or “what else are you going to do for me?” We mean, instead, think of it in terms of expanding yourself by asking, “What else can I learn now that I know this?” or “What other uses can I find for this skill or knowledge that I have?”

Grow your potential like a garden by keep asking yourself, “What else?” As soon as you stop looking to expand your horizons, you become frozen in time and the world will pass you by. What skills or special knowledge do you have that you have not used for a while?

Where could you apply some of your existing skills or knowledge (perhaps in a non-conventional manner) that would benefit your employer?

What skills or special knowledge have you always wanted to have but, for some reason, have never gotten around to pursuing them?

## THE SECOND LAW OF THERMODYNAMICS

This law states (paraphrased) “a closed system winds down over time if there is no outside energy coming into it.”



Think of a lighthouse keeper as a “closed system” back before the days of radio, television, and the Internet. His job required him to live on an island offshore and keep the light bright and shining at night. There was virtually no contact with other humans and, even if he had an extensive library, there were still limitations to his potential for emotional, intellectual, and sociological growth. In

short, over time, he would “wind down” without some external input of energy from other people to keep his (internal) system developing.

A modern-day example of this is people who become so self-absorbed in their world that they almost become a closed system. All they can talk about is sports, the talk shows, fashions, etc. to the same people over and over, or spend most of their time on Facebook. They keep checking their friends’ entries or uploading pictures and stories from their lives to share with everyone else while precious, irreplaceable minutes of their lives keep ticking away.

While it is certainly important to have friends and interact socially with them, an obsession with being so focused on these non-developmental interests will stunt your potential for career growth. Spending hours surfing the net checking to see who said what, what they look like, or the latest gossip reinforces the closed system that prevents personal growth. Without taking frequent and consistent steps to expand their knowledge of the world around them and develop new skills and interests with others that we do not know, these individuals run the risk of limiting their personal development.

A student of this course should ask themselves (if he or she, too, is a frequent visitor to these ego sites or spends most of their free time talking about the same things with the same people), “When considering all of the time I spend focused on these social topics, reading about others and uploading material about me that others may or may not care about, how much more employable am I now than I was before I spent so much time talking about my team, gossip, or visiting those sites?” If the honest answer is ‘none’, you have an opportunity for improvement.

If there are a finite number of hours allotted to your life, which would serve your desires better to move ahead in your career?

- Continue spending most of my non-sleeping time interacting socially with my peers who are pretty much just like me as we spend more time doing the same things over and over.
- Break out of that non-developmental cycle and take your future in your hands by some honest introspection of your talents (and weaknesses) and developing your strengths as much as possible while minimizing the potential impact of your weaknesses on your career.

Your “developmental muscles” are just like your physical muscles: the more you use them, the more they will grow! You must take the initiative TO CREATE YOUR OWN OPPORTUNITIES!

### THE LESSON OF THE CHESHIRE CAT

How does the conversation between Alice and the Cheshire cat (page 102) relate to your personal development? (All this talk about developing yourself will be just busy work instead of productivity unless you have an idea of where you want to go.)

We suggest that you do not focus on a particular position (department supervisor or making a specific salary) in the future as a target but rather on a specific preparation that would make you the best candidate for that position if the door of opportunity opened.



This is because you cannot control when that opportunity will come.

Typically, we become frustrated when we think we can control things when we cannot. (Our eagerly awaited golf outing is finally here, and the biggest thunderstorm of the season arrives at the same time. While we are certainly disappointed, there is no reason to become agitated because we cannot control the weather. We can only control our reaction to it. Look back at the topic on page 95 as a review.)

You can control, however, the extent of your preparation for that moment when the door of opportunity suddenly opens. When that happens, will you be invited in or will you hear, “Thanks but we are not interested” as the door closes in your face?

So, you can identify your destination by asking yourself, “What skills and knowledge should a person in that position have” and then set out your personal quest to acquire them.

## FINDING A MENTOR

Dictionary.com defines ‘mentor’ as

1. a wise and trusted counselor or teacher.
2. an influential senior sponsor or supporter.  
–verb (used without object)
3. to act as a mentor: *She spent years mentoring junior employees.*  
–verb (used with object)
4. to act as a mentor to: *The brash young executive did not wish to be mentored by anyone.*

Many organizations realize the value of having a mentoring program as an excellent way to preserve their “human capital” (collective corporate knowledge), retain talented younger employees, attract new employees, and develop their future leaders internally with little expense. This is a great idea if an individual is (a.) fortunate enough to be in an organization where a program like this exists and, (b.) fortunate enough to be invited to participate in it.

However, the reality is (a.) most organizations do not have these programs and (b.) a motivated individual does not have to be at the mercy of the employer to determine whether he or she has a mentor even if the organization has such a program. If your organization does not, why not select one (or more) for yourself? It is easier to do than you think.



What traits do most people have in common regardless of age, sex, race, national origin, etc.?

(They love to show how much they know, they love to get attention, and they want to be valued are three common traits.)

Now we will look at you:

- What are the skills or knowledge from the previous section (page 106) that you identified as important to your professional growth and development?

- Who are the people within your organization that you think possess these now?
- How can you get them to share these with you?
- One way would be to look at the situation from their perspective and ask yourself, “Why would they want to share their skills and knowledge with me?”

If you do not come up with any answers, ask yourself, “Why would I want to share any special skills or knowledge I have with someone else?”

(Possible reasons may include:

- Ego – it is nice to be considered as an ‘expert’ in something.
- Self-esteem – it makes you feel good to help others.
- The concept of legacy – it’s nice to think that you can leave something behind
- Helping others – watching them become something new and better because of your gifts)

Our point here is this: the same reasons that would motivate you to help someone else will probably motivate them to do the same thing for you. All you must do is give them the chance to experience the gratification they seek (ego, self-esteem, etc.) by working with you. When you think about it, **YOU ARE DOING THEM A FAVOR, AREN’T YOU?**

We have covered enough for now and I hope this course was useful for you.

Thank you for choosing it.

