


Chapter 4

The True Millennial Leader

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ABSTRACT

It is noted that those born between the years of 1981 and 1996 are deemed millennials. For the sake of this text, the authors define leadership as a person who is committed to a purpose with the ability to influence people to accomplish or achieve a goal. As the largest living generation, the millennial generation brings a sense of diversity, inclusivity, and disruption to the normal operation of life, liberty, and the pursuit thereof. This chapter reviews the different generations, what leadership means to millennials, millennial leaders who exemplify characteristics important to millennials, preferences of millennial leaders, and what millennial leaders bring to the table, roles, jobs, and spaces.

INTRODUCTION

It is noted by Dimock (2019) that those birthed between the years of 1981 and 1996 are deemed millennials. For the sake of this text, we define leadership as a person who is committed to a purpose with the ability to influence people to accomplish or achieve a goal. As the largest living generation, the millennial generation brings a sense of diversity, inclusivity, and disruption to the normal operation of life, liberty, and the pursuit thereof (Dimock, 2019).

In real life, millennials are social butterflies and thrive in community spaces. As a social generation, millennials use social skills in all aspects of their lives from

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work, family, friends, colleagues, and even shopping. The opinions of others matter enough to influence a millennials' decision but not to follow a majority but rather as a form of validation to their considerations. In return, millennials will share their experiences, opinions, or recommendations and feedback to various life encounters like shopping and socializing (Howe & Strauss, 2003).

This chapter will discuss what makes a millennial leader and serve as an introduction to the true millennial leader, leadership, the millennial leader's needs, and how to cultivate the millennial leader within the workplace.

The Generations

Each generation is classified by age, time period, and even cohort. The age of an individual is simply age in numbers. The time period refers to events that happens or has happened during that persons life. The cohort refers to the group of people with shared experiences or events. Those in the same cohort may have similar attitudes and behaviors that further underscore the cohort an individual is within (DeVaney, 2015).

As baby boomers begin to exit the workforce and leadership roles millennials have been tapped to move forward but are constantly compared to the assumptions of the ideal leadership strategies of prior generations. Additionally, millennials are stereotyped with an inclusion of the postmillennial group or generation z which begins with those born in 1997 or later (Fry, 2018). According to Fry (2018), "prior to the millennial generation, is the generation X which are those birthed between 1965 to 1980 and baby boomers who were birthed between 1946 and 1964".

According to Fry (2018) the chart shown in Figure 1 provides context to the generational definitions.

Bialik & Fry (2019) tells us that "Millennials are now the second-largest generation in the U.S. electorate (after Baby Boomers), a fact that continues to shape the country's politics given their Democratic leanings when compared with older generations." Millennials have increased the awareness and brought forward the diversity within American society. With an increased percentage of educated millennials than previous generations, we see a more critical and strategic delivery of work product in the workplace (Bialik & Fry, 2019).

The Millennial

Millennials have seen the effects of the college loan debt and the recession. Millennials have seen social protest and social change. As a group, millennials are delaying marriage but starting businesses (DeVaney, 2015).

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