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lifetime careers like prior generations. Gone are the days of accountants working 30 plus ...

Garrett Wagner • Feb. 13, 2019



One of the biggest stereotypes for the millennial generation is that they are constant job hoppers, quickly hopping from one job to another and not committing to lifetime

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searches for new jobs by millennials is at an annual high. They aren't going to make an immediate move, but they are actively looking. Now is the time when they feel the most pain and are compelled to start their search for a new job, firm, or career.

What this translates to, is that while these millennials may tend to switch firms in the fall, the start to this job hopping is actually starting right now. If you want to change the trend and retain this illusive generation, it isn't about what you do in the fall, the difference starts right now. Before we dive into the three ways to break this trend and retain these millennials, let's first understand why they are so much more prone to switch jobs than generations before.

Understanding the millennial mind

Like all generations, millennials are strongly influenced by those who came before them. Millennials as they grew up, watched first hand as their parents and grandparents went to work day after day to jobs and careers that they did not enjoy. They watched as their parents came home unhappy day after day, week after week, year after year. They saw this pattern and as a result, millennials developed a strong desire, and dare I say need, to enjoy what they do in their careers.

This desire for enjoyment at work was magnified by the higher standard of living we are currently experiencing. In today's climate, we see an increase in job opportunities, career paths, and work situations. Remote work options are on the rise across the US with no signs of slowing down, and new industries are arising from increased innovation. As a result, millennials need for fulfillment at their jobs is magnified by these increased opportunities. As a result, the deck is stacked against current organizations when it comes to retaining millennials, but while the deck may be stacked, we can buck this trend.

Buck the trend

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Let your millennials know that they are a part of the organization and are a part of the solution. Encourage them to dive into the root causes for the additional issues you are facing. Setup an environment where they are encouraged to identify problems, and not just complain about them, but find solutions to them. It is okay to remind them that due to the high hours already worked this time of the year the organization cannot fix immediately, but use the time now to capture the issue and possible solutions. This small pivot can help millennials not focus on the negatively and the problem, but instead focus on what they can do to make the organization better.

Step number two takes place once your busy season ends, and you cannot say your busy season never ends. For most public accounting firms, this means early May. Have your millennials get together as a team and review all the problems and the solutions they created, then prioritize and refine them. Challenge them to really think through each problem and solution. This will be outstanding practice for them to think outside the box and past their technical skills. The second half of step two is the hardest for any organization to accomplish. You must now act on these solutions which are presented. If a solution doesn't make sense, you need to explain it to the team of millennials, and challenge them to come up with another solution based on those objections.

For the great ideas, take action. Stop waiting and putting them off, these issues and problems are holding back your organization.

The final step is actually the easiest and most fun of all. When you make steps to fix a problem, drive change, and engage your millennials, celebrate it. Don't be afraid to celebrate your wins, both large and small. Not only can this make the workplace more enjoyable, but it helps to establish the organizations' desire and support for driving change, which will resonate with millennials.

If you want to buck the trend of having your millennials leave in the fall, the change

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