

Ergonomics and Working with Millennials



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- **2015** - The “Millennial” generation was projected to surpass the outsized Baby Boom generation as the nation’s largest living generation, according to population projections (U.S. Census Bureau)
- **Millennials** - between ages 18 to 34
 - 2014 Millennial population was 74.8 million
 - 2015 Millennials increased in size to 75.3 million
 - Millennials projected to peak in 2036 at 81.1 million



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- **Pick a partner...**
 - Choose very wisely



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With your partner, how many you know?

▪ TMI	▪ TTYL
▪ IDK	▪ LMAO
▪ TBH	▪ ROTFL
▪ BRB	▪ BYOB
▪ BTW	▪ BYOD
▪ BEF	▪ BM&Y
▪ LOL	▪ IMHO



Millennials Bring:

- Group Work/ Team Work
- Creativity
- Multi-tasking Ability
- Purpose Driven / Civic Minded
- Technology Embedded
 - Born and Raised...




Millennials Bring:

- Their devices
- Their **HABITS**







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Habits and technology

- Boomers – “ADAPTED” to technology
 - Took prior skills (business typing in HS and applied skills to keyboarding)
- Sit up straight
- Touch typing
- Float hands over keyboard



Today...

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Phases of Learning

So What's the Problem?

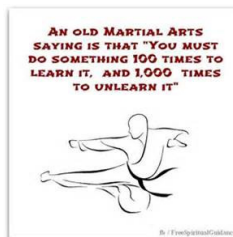
- Their HABITS have to fit YOUR safety culture!
- How hard is it to get people to change their habits?



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Are Habits Easy to Break?

- Green Beans and Ice Cream
- Habit Changing Efforts
 - Safety Incentives
 - Bingo
 - Number of Days w/out accident
 - Games
 - Pays to NOT report
 - Training sessions
 - Behavior Based Safety



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Phases of Learning

Ergonomics



- Looks at making the job more “comfortable” for the worker
- Millennials started LIFE with lousy habits and got ‘USED’ to them, they ARE comfortable...
...**They are not UNcomfortable**
- Are they SAFE? ...No
- Are they working in a position or posture that will keep them injury free? Risk factors haven’t changed

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Here’s the Problem...



Discomfort (Hassle)	Pain	SERIOUS!
Aching	Tingling	Decreased Strength
Pain	Numbness	Loss of Movement
Taking OTC Meds	Trouble Sleeping	Dropping Things, Can't Button Shirt/Open Jars

Most Millennials are walking into the workforce with MSD issues already!

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How to Work SAFETY with Millennials...Work within THEIR Culture

- This generation is **SPECIAL**...
...Or so they’ve been told all their life
... All 75 million of them...
 - Used to getting immediate feedback
 - Constant feedback
 - Immediate response to questions/requests
 - Texts, emails...no phone calls
 - Everybody gets one



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Working Their Culture into YOUR Safety Culture

- **Ergonomics**

- Because of their 'habits' we need to set up their workstation **IMMEDIATELY**.
 - The longer you take to work with them on setting up workstations, the longer their bad habits solidify into their new work environment.
- What's *correct* is now NEW and AWKWARD to them
- Include their HOME environment as well as work
 - Gaming, tablets, laptops, texting, reading

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Safety with Millennials

- **Ergonomics**

- Constant, immediate feedback
 - ANSWER them! Develops trust.
 - Calendar your follow up with them (to email or text)
 - Deliver on promises (Equipment, workstation adjustment orders)
- Everybody gets one
 - What you do for one, consider doing for all
 - What you fix at work, fix at home

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Ergonomics Safety and Millennials

Research from Finland

- Adolescents who are involved in computer game usage greater than 2 hours per day have an increased probability of musculoskeletal disorders
 - Before school device checking
 - Travel to/from school/work
 - At school/work activities
 - Lunch with devices
 - After school/work
 - In bed
- Common Sense Media (2015) found the average time for kids with their media is 9 hours/day



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Ergonomics Safety and Millennials

- **Risk Factors** for Injury Haven't Changed
 - Excessive Force
 - Too much repetition
 - Poor posture (any posture held too long is bad posture)
 - Lack of rest
 - Individual stress (feeling tension = muscle contraction)
 - Individual susceptibility (Genetics)

Work may not be “*causing*” the problem... work may be “*exacerbating*” the problem!



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Ergonomics Safety and Millennials

- **Exposures Have Changed!**
 - Non-work activities
 - Multiple devices (TV, Laptops, tablets, Facebook, games, phone, texting, etc)
 - More TIME interacting with devices
 - Makes Millennials more PRONE to MSDs

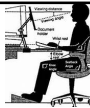
Biggest marker for an MSD injury is ‘have they had a PRIOR injury’.



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Ergonomic Assessments

- **Historically**
 - 1992 MSDs:
 - Women, secretarial, 50+ years old, keyboard use
 - Today MSDs:
 - New hires, younger workers
- **Add questions**
 - What do you do OUTSIDE of work?
- **Important to be PROACTIVE**
 - Coming in with pre-existing conditions and bad habits
 - Symptoms hidden (comfort) and far along in acute stage



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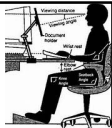
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Ergonomics Evaluations

ASK Them:

- Frequency
 - How long are you sitting in your day? (work/home)
 - How long are you interacting with technology?
- Duration
 - Without moving (work/home)
 - Work, movie watching, game playing, PEWDIEPIE
- Intensity
 - Pressure to complete a task (work deadlines)
 - Intensity of Games/pressure to win

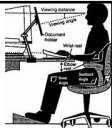



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Ergonomics and Millennials

Focus On:

- Excessive STATIC Postures
 - Get them to move more! (i.e. Apple Watch)
- With Multiple Risk Factors, focus on:
 - Wrists – Separate keyboard and screen. Don't 'hold' device (i.e. Wingo, Cricket, etc)
 - Neck (become a touch typist... no longer taught)
 - Lower Back - Inadequate lumbar support/poor postures from bad physical workspace matters! (i.e. quality chairs)
- Early ergonomics evaluations
 - Capture symptoms early




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Ergonomic Training

Focus on Posture Guidance

- Good posture in NOT intuitive
 - Millennials adapted posture from habits developed at age 2
 - Mobile devices means taking device to bed, couch, dinner table
- Untrain...
 - They have muscle memory from poor posture
 - Showing them new ergonomic ways (*your* way) and equipment won't work
 - Untrain what they feel is *comfortable* (comfort doesn't mean it's correct)
- **Re – teach the 'why'** behind risk factors
 - Neutral postures, frequency, intensity
- **Follow up and Feedback**




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Ergonomic Product Use



- Work with IT
 - What new products are being rolled out?
 - Monitors/Laptops from square to landscape???
 - Tablet devices (holders, additional keyboard)
 - Swiping technology
 - Cell phones (weight, width, cases, blue tooth, talk to text, etc)
- BYOD Policies
 - Bring in ergonomics EARLY
- Review your 'recommended products' list often
 - Do they work with the newest technology? Purge, add, etc.
- Ergo Products – For hotelling, mobile, home?

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- Their HABITS have to fit YOUR safety culture!

How hard is it to get people to change their habits?




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Ergonomic Effectiveness and Millennials



Engage, you must...

To engage, your message needs to be:

- Positive, enthusiastic – Listened, I have
- Personal, supportive – Understand, I do
- Productive – Follow through, I will

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Selfies

So What's the Problem?

We need to understand what they are saying...

Legit

Really, tho...

Srsly

Said no one ever...

Savage...

Literally dying...

Stop It Right Now...

I Know, Right??

Rude...

Obviously

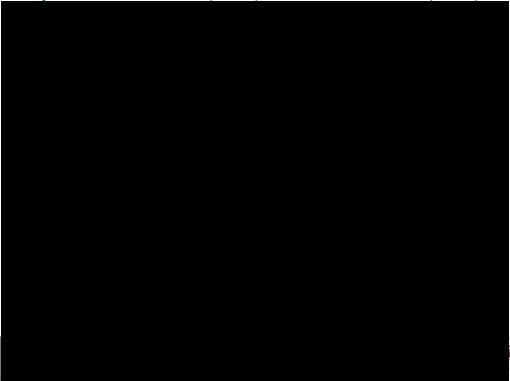
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Not just 'what' they say but 'how' they say it...



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Goes Both Ways...



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Millennial Speak...



- When Millennials keep it short, something's up!
- When Millennials keep their responses to a minimum, they're trying to tell you something.
 - They were raised by parents who trained them to be very sensitive to people's feelings.
 - They don't like conflict-especially at work!
 - They'll do whatever they can to avoid confrontation and uncomfortable conversations.

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Millennial Speak...



1. "That could work."

Real Meaning: "I don't think that will work at all, but I don't want to be rude and tell you it's a bad idea."

- Millennials were raised to be highly collaborative.
- This tactful response is meant to allow them to open up the conversation to alternatives you can discuss and agree upon.

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Millennial Speak...



2. "I'd like your feedback."

Real Meaning: "Explain specifically what I'm doing right (appreciation) and how I could be better (advancement)"

- They aren't asking for a fake compliment like "nice job" or "that's great."
- Don't rip them to shreds.
- They're asking for you to pay attention to their career.
- They're asking for **coaching**--something they've been given their whole lives. They expect it.
- Coaching is NOT a sign of weakness, it is a PATH to greatness.

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Millennial Speak... 

3. "Maybe we should try it like this"

Real Meaning: "I think your idea isn't good, and I don't want to hurt your feelings, so I'm going to suggest an alternative."

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Millennial Speak... 

4. "Sure."

Real Meaning: "I'll do it, but I'm not psyched about it."

- Millennials want to do meaningful work *all the time*.
- When given a task that doesn't thrill them, they can't hide their feelings that well. Notice when their response is one word.
- Which leads to them often saying the next comment a short while later...

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Millennial Speak... 

5. "Why do we need to do this again?"

Real Meaning: "Help me understand the bigger picture here, because I'm not seeing how this is a good use of my time."

- When coached your entire life, things are often explained by how it relates to personal success.
- If a Millennial can't see how this contributes to their career growth or professional success, they'll want some help seeing it.
- Help them understand how important the task is to the success of the business and that it will be reflected in the way they're viewed as a worker

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Millennial Speak...



6. "That's interesting."

Real Meaning: "Actually, it's not interesting at all and I don't want to get into a conversation with you about it."

- This is a conversation shut-down tactic.
- Expand on what you're sharing so they can see the connection.
- They aren't always going to understand what you're saying and why you're excited, but they don't want to look ignorant.
- They may need more context to find what you're sharing worth discussing.

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How to Work with Millennials

- Immediate response to questions/requests
 - Texts, emails...no phone calls
 - ANSWER them! Develops trust.
 - Calendar your follow up with them (to email or text)
 - Deliver on promises
- Everybody gets one
 - What you do for one, consider doing for all
 - What you fix at work, fix at home



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Understanding Millennial Core Values Can Help You



CORE VALUE 1

- Belonging. To fit in. Be part of a TEAM.
- Social impact is they want to be seen as *cool*.

✓ **ERGONOMICS**

- Target **EARLY ADOPTERS** first
 - Use their influence to make the *new* behavior or equipment feel like the **NORM** or default behavior in their community of peers
 - Ergo for all (not just claims)

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Understanding Millennial Core Values Can Help You



CORE VALUE 2

- Recognition
- You are different. *You are SPECIAL.*

✓ **ERGONOMICS**

- Build social currency and buy in
 - Peer group must value and recognize improvements through ‘likes’ and comments
- Highlight new behaviors as “cool”
- Make new products and workstations “cool”

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Understanding Millennial Core Values Can Help You



CORE VALUE 3

- Need for ease
- Focus on the path of least resistance

✓ **ERGONOMICS**

- Try newer products. Let them try/play.
- “Adopt” products with least resistance
 - Game controllers, joysticks
 - Evoluent (vertical) mouse
 - Morency rests for arm support

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Other Corporations and Millennials



- Apple, Google, eBay...
 - Ergonomics Eval is part of New Hire Onboarding
 - Equipment is given to them up front (work and home)
 - Actively look for discomfort (symptom survey)
- Pixar: Develop culture of trust, respect, creativity
 - Being part of a whole
 - Together, team is moving towards something better
- **Reminder: ALL employees want inclusiveness**
Don't focus 'only on Millennials'

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To Summarize:
Millennials Were Brought Up With
INSTANT GRATIFICATION

- Ergonomics:
 - Have a *ready supply* of ergo devices, let them touch, play and trial all the 'latest and greatest'
 - Approach them as a *team of problem solvers*, set stage and let them find equipment that works
 - Follow up often (weekly). Reinforce every time. Respond quickly.
 - Quick delivery expectations from vendors

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To Summarize:
Millennials Were Brought Up With
A TROPHY JUST FOR 'SHOWING UP'

- Ergonomics:
 - Be prepared to work with entire 'office' or team... not just one claim or one request/preventive
 - » Educate on MSD's, habits, comfort may not be indicator of 'risk free', and as a team... what would work best?
 - Listen to them. *Their parents did.*
 - Create social currency...
 Create the social buzz...
 Make ergonomics cool

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To Summarize:
Millennials Were Brought Up Wanting
WORK/LIFE BALANCE

- Ergonomics:
 - Be prepared to offer same changes done at work to their HOME needs
 - » Mobile devices, gaming, etc.
 - » Talk to text software (texting)
 - » Laptop stands, external keyboard
 - » Tablet stands, holders
 - Don't bore, ignore or trivialize

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Sneak Peak at Gen Z

They are just barely finishing high school

- In the early stages of defining

<u>Millennials:</u> - Raised in boom times & relative peace of 1990s - Sunny world was dashed by 9/11 and two economic crashes 2000 and 2008 - Theirs is a story of innocence lost	<u>Gen Z:</u> - Has had its eyes open from the beginning - Arriving in aftermath of the war on terror and Great Recession - More grounded, conscientious, hard working, anxious about future
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Sneak Peak at Gen Z

<u>Millennials:</u> - Technology: iPods/Nintendo - Multi-tasking - TEXT everything - I am sad ;-(- Blast 'fantastic' lives on Facebook-eating, drinking - Multi-Cultural and Accepting	<u>Gen Z:</u> - Technology: Smart Phone - Multi-tasking: Takes info instantaneously... Loses interest just as fast. - IMAGE focused - Selfie, Surface tablet - Privacy/Anonymous - Secret, Whisper (disappear) - Multi-Racial - Mixed race kids
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Sneak Peak at Gen Z



The privacy, the caution, the focus on sensible careers —
Generation Z starts to look less like the brash
millennials and more like their grandparents (or,
in some cases great-grandparents)

Those children of the late 1920s through the early '40s,
(so-called Silent Generation), were shaped by war
and the Depression and grew up to be the diligent,
go-along-to-get-along careerists of the '50s / '60s

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75 million Millennials entering workforce
Generation Z is right behind them...

We need to work together!

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