

GENERATIONAL ISSUES

# What Millennials Want from a New Job

by Brandon Rigoni, Ph.D. and Amy Adkins

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Millennials, it seems, really are the job hoppers people say they are. Those born between 1980 and 1996 are the most likely to look for and change jobs, according to Gallup's new [What Millennials Want from a New Job](#) report "How Millennials Want to Work and Live."

Our research – which provides an in-depth look at what defines Millennials as employees, people, and consumers – both confirms and casts aside some of the myths about this particular generation. It paints a nuanced picture that can help inform companies looking to hire and retain Millennial employees – a group that is now the largest generation in the U.S.

On the job-hopping question, we found that 21% of Millennial workers had left their job in the last year to do something else, a number that is more than three times higher than that of non-Millennials who report doing the same.

We don't have data on what these Millennials left to do; it's possible some may have decided to continue their education, for example. But six in 10 Millennials also say they are open to different job opportunities, which is again the highest percentage among all generations in the workplace. And these opportunities are not within their current company: A separate study shows that an overwhelming majority of all workers – 93% – say they left their employer the last time they changed roles. Only about 7% took a new position in their company.

Why? Well, we know that American workers aren't particularly engaged at work as a whole. And Millennials lead the pack: 71% are either not engaged or actively disengaged at work, making them the least engaged generation in the U.S. Moreover, engagement is essential to retaining employees. Our analysis reveals that 47% of actively disengaged Millennials strongly agree that they will switch jobs if the job market improves in the next 12 months, compared with 17% of engaged Millennials.

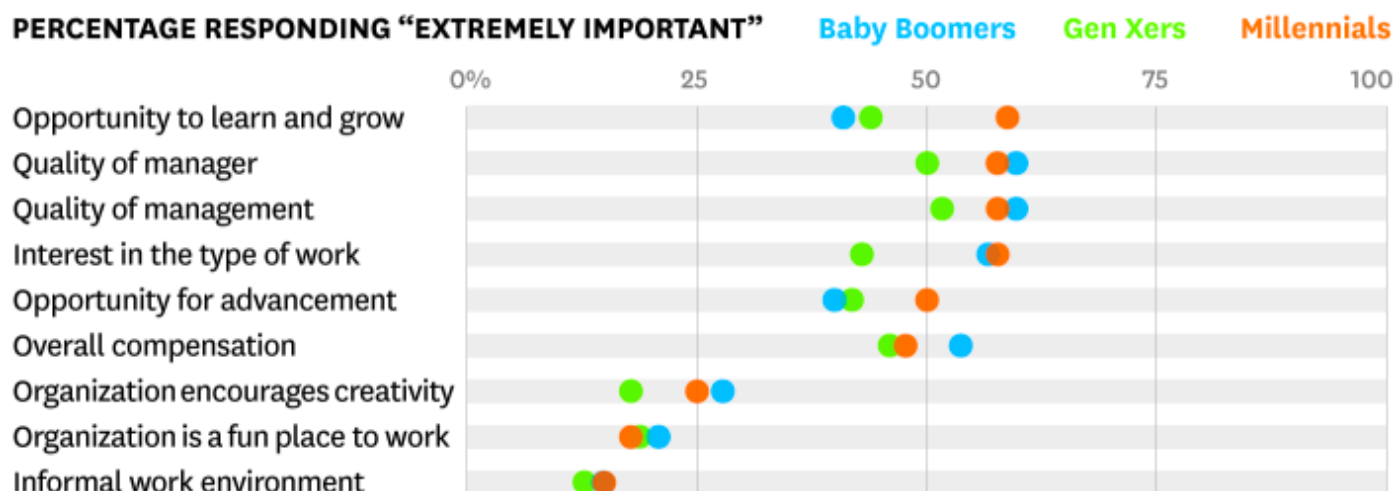
On the flip side, Millennials' willingness to switch jobs and companies presents a substantial attraction opportunity for organizations. Ultimately, Millennials are consumers of the workplace. They shop around for the jobs that best align with their needs and life goals. More than ever, employers need to know and act on the factors that make their company appealing to these candidates. They have to make it easy for prospects to *choose* them over their competition.

But what exactly do Millennials look for in their job searches?

We asked workers how important particular attributes were to them when applying for new jobs. Here's how they break down by generation. For all employees, opportunities to learn and grow and the quality of their manager lead the list. But these issues are often more important for Millennials.

## What Different Generations Look for When Applying for a Job

According to a survey of 1,700 U.S. workers.



SOURCE GALLUP

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At their current stage in life, Millennials fundamentally think about their role as a stepping stone and a growth opportunity. But they also want to feel deeply committed to their role and to work for a manager who will invest in their development, which isn't entirely different from what other generations value. Our research shows that having a great manager and being part of a great management culture are important to all employees. However, Millennials place a greater emphasis on opportunities to learn and grow and opportunities for advancement.

What about ping-pong tables and free beer? Contrary to popular perception, Millennials place little importance on a company encouraging creativity or being a fun, informal place to work. In fact, Baby Boomers are slightly *more* likely than Millennials and Gen Xers to say that creativity and fun are "extremely important" to them when applying for a job. But Millennials do need to be convinced why and how an organization will help them learn, grow, and develop, and further their careers.

And although income is not among Millennials' top five factors when applying for jobs, it still matters to them when looking for a job, as it does to all employees. Millennials have high levels of student debt and are living in an era of anemic wage growth. This might be why, as we derived from a separate study, half of Millennials said they would consider taking a job with another company for a raise of 20% or less. It is understandable that they would seek roles that make better use of their qualifications and increase their income. But companies should also know that Millennials sometimes value other job attributes, including learning and advancement, even more.

If your company wants to do a better job of retaining Millennials, it's important to understand what motivates them, what doesn't, and the delicate balance between the two. And while they differ in some ways from a recruiting and retention standpoint, Millennials largely want the same things from their employers as most generations. They look for growth opportunities, great managers, and jobs that are well-suited for their talents and interests. When organizations can provide these attributes, they may keep their Millennial employees from continually searching for – and pursuing – the next best thing elsewhere.

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Brandon Rigoni, Ph.D., is the Associate Director for Selection and Development at Gallup and a thought leader and strategic advisor on Gallup's research and science. He advises leaders and organizations on how using a scientific, systematic approach to employee selection and development can improve business outcomes, engage employees, and increase shareholder value.

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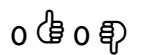
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**Jim Symcox** an hour ago

This is an interesting article. Where the surveys conducted for other generations when they were the same age as the millennials are now?

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