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Why Millennials Are Job Hopping

BY **JENNIFER ROBISON**



STORY HIGHLIGHTS

- Millennials don't want to job hop -- they want to be engaged
- They are less satisfied with mediocre jobs than their elders are

- Leaders who consider these four job expectations inspire their loyalty
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For years now, millennials have been criticized as job hoppers, easily bored and over-entitled.

The critique is so widespread and well-known that it hardly seems worth investigating. It should be -- because it's not true. Millennials are as likely as anyone else to be loyal to their workplace.

If they get what they need from it. But most, apparently, do not.

According to Gallup data, only 29% of millennials are engaged at work. The national engagement average is 34%, which means many more millennials than their elders feel uninspired, unmotivated and emotionally disconnected from their workplace.

Those are the millennials with the least reason to stay, so they leave. In droves.

Millennials are three times more likely than their elders to say they've changed jobs within the past year, 10 percentage points less likely to expect to be with their current employer in a year, the most likely to be looking for a new job, and the most open to whatever opportunities might come along.

What Millennials Want

This may seem mystifying to business leaders -- why would millennials be so disengaged? They're treated the same as everyone else, so why would they leave?

The answer is in the question. Millennials *don't* want to be treated like everyone else. Their elders may be satisfied (though satisfaction is a poor workplace metric) with a mediocre job, but millennials are not. They'll keep looking until they get what they need, which includes:

Opportunities to learn and grow: 59% of millennial job seekers, compared with 44% of Gen Xers and 41% of baby boomers, report that opportunities to learn and grow are extremely important to them when applying for a job.

A sense of purpose: More so than others, millennials are motivated by mission and purpose. Of those who say they don't know what their organization stands for and what makes it different, only 30% say they plan on staying in their position for at least another year.

High-quality management: 58% of millennials say "quality of manager" and "quality of management" are extremely important to them when applying for a new job. For a millennial, their job is their life, so a bad manager will quickly drive them away.

Chances of advancement: Perhaps because they have lower net worth and higher student debt than other generations, millennials (50%, compared with 42% of Gen Xers and 40% of baby boomers) are most likely to say advancement is extremely important when looking for a new job.

Millennials are as likely as anyone else to be loyal to their workplace.

Not coincidentally, what millennials want is the same thing everybody wants in a job. Millennials just want it more and are less likely to wait around to get it. Their refusal to settle for less increases businesses' turnover costs, which bleeds \$30.5 billion from the U.S. economy every year, according to Gallup estimates.

However, leaders who focus on employees' growth and advancement, who select managers for talent, and who know their company's purpose *can* engage millennials.

Those who do will keep millennials.

Those who don't will train another company's employees -- and wonder why millennials just won't stay.

Give your millennial employees a reason to stay:

- Learn more about what they want in [Gallup's free perspective paper *How Millennials Want to Work and Live*](#).
- [Use Gallup's online engagement tools on Gallup Access](#) to give employees more than a paycheck and keep them from checking out.
- Make learning and development central to your engagement strategy from the top down with [Gallup courses](#).

Jennifer Robison is a Senior Editor at Gallup.

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CONTACT: Gallup World Headquarters, 901 F Street, Washington, D.C., 20001, U.S.A

+1 202.715.3030

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