

## Timely Information for Personal Success

# What do Millennials Really Want?

By Lisa Earle McLeod and Elizabeth McLeod

**A**ttracting and keeping top Millennial talent is a burning issue for leaders. Millennials represent 35% of the workforce. By 2020 they'll be 46% of the working population. Organizations like G Adventures, Google, and Hootsuite are filled with Millennials who are on fire for their jobs. Yet many organizations struggle to attract, and retain, top Millennial talent.

Below, Elizabeth shares her insights about what top-performing Millennials want, and how leaders can ignite the “energy of a thousand suns.”

### **An Open Letter to Management:**

You hired us thinking maybe this person might be in it for the long haul. We've been on the job for six months, then drop a bomb on you. *We're quitting.*

We know the stereotypes. Millennials never settle down. We're drowning in debt for useless degrees. We refuse to put our phone away. We are addicted to lattes even at the expense of our water bill. Our bosses are not wrong about these perceptions.

But, *pointing to our sometimes irresponsible spending and fear of interpersonal commitment isn't going to solve your problem.* You still need us. We're the ones who've mastered social media, who have the energy of a thousand suns, and who will knock back \$5 macchiatos until the job is done perfectly.

I've worked in corporate America, administrative offices, advertising agencies, and restaurants. I've had bosses ranging from 24 to 64. I've had bosses I loved, and bosses I didn't. I've seen my peers quit,

and I've quit a few times myself. Here's what's *really* behind your Millennials' resignation letter:

### **1. You tolerate low-performance.**

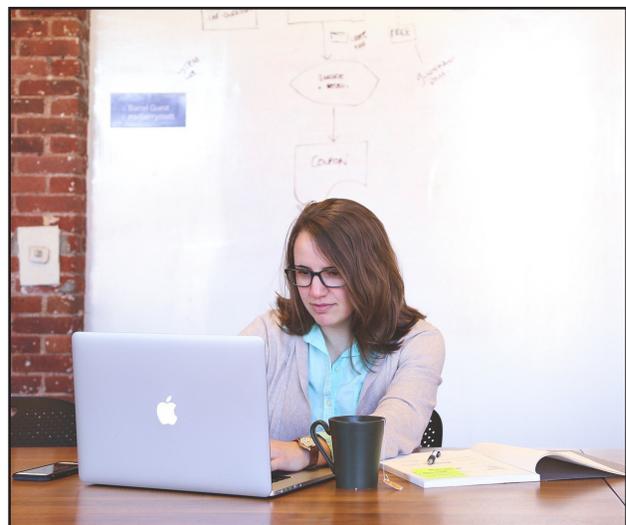
I'm working my heart out and every time I look up, I see “Donna-Do-Nothing” contemplating how long is too long to take for a lunch break. I start wondering why leadership tolerates this. Is that the standard here? No thanks.

**Fact:** Poor performers have a chilling effect on everyone.

### **2. ROI is not enough for me.**

I spent Sunday thinking about how I can make a difference to our customers. Now it's Monday morning, what do I hear? Stock price. Billing. ROI.

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## Healthy Recipe: Egg Sandwich

### INGREDIENTS:

- 2 strips turkey bacon
- 1-1/4 cups egg whites
- 4 slices whole-grain bread, toasted
- 1/2 cup shredded, nonfat cheddar cheese
- 1-1/4 cups diced, seeded tomatoes
- Cracked black pepper and salt to taste
- Cooking oil spray

### NUTRITIONAL VALUE:

- Calories per serving: 338
- Carbohydrates: 47 g.
- Protein: 34 g.
- Fat: 5 g.
- Saturated fat: 1 g.
- Fiber: 7 g.

### DIRECTIONS:

- 1 Microwave turkey bacon strips for 3 minutes or until crisp. Set aside.
- 2 Whisk together the egg whites, salt and pepper. Coat a non-stick skillet with cooking spray and heat the skillet.
- 3 Add the egg white mixture. Cook and stir about 1-1/2 minutes or until egg whites are set.
- 4 To serve: Spoon the egg whites onto the toast. Top with cheese, turkey bacon, and diced tomatoes.

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Suddenly, my Monday to-do list seems useless, as I'm sitting in a conference room listening to you drag on about cash flow.

I was making more money bartending in college than I am at this entry-level job. You say I'll get a raise in a year if the company hits a certain number? So what? I need something to care about today. *Talk to me about how we make a difference, not your ROI report.*

**Fact:** Organizations with a purpose bigger than money have a growth rate that is triple that of their competitors.

#### 3. Culture is more than free Panera.

Yes, I am a cash-strapped Millennial who really appreciates free lunch. But I'm not inspired to be more innovative over a Bacon Turkey Bravo. *I need to be surrounded by people who are on fire for what we're doing.* I need a manager who is motivated to push boundaries and *think differently*.

Working in a cool office with free foosball is really awesome. So is free lunch. But a purposeful culture is more important.

**Fact:** A culture of purpose drives exponential sales growth.

#### 4. It is okay to get personal.

Treat me like a number? I'll return the favor. This job will quickly become nothing more than my rent payment. I'll start living for Friday and counting down the minutes until 5. After a few months of

that, I'll probably have a drunken epiphany and realize I want more out of my life.

Then I'll prove your assumptions right. Eight months in, I'll quit and leave. Or worse, I'll quit and stay, just like Donna-Do-Nothing. That's not good for either of us. Here's what you need to know:

**Fact:** I was raised to believe I could change the world. I'm desperate for you to show me that the work we do here matters, if even just a little bit. I'll make copies, I'll fetch coffee, and I'll do the grunt work. But I'm not doing it to help you get a new Mercedes. *I'll give you everything I've got, but I need to know it makes a difference to something bigger than your bottom line.*

Signed,  
**A Millennial**

#### Summary

People want to make money, but Millennials *also want to make a difference*. Successful leaders put purpose before profit, and [ironically] they wind up with teams who *drive revenue through the roof*.

*Lisa Earle McLeod is the creator of the popular business concept, Noble Purpose, and author of the bestseller, "Selling with Noble Purpose: How to Drive Revenue and Do Work That Makes You Proud." Elizabeth McLeod is a Millennial, cum laude graduate of Boston University, and daughter of Lisa Earle McLeod.*