

## MEET THE MILLENNIALS

**Born:** between 1980 - 2000

**When you think of this generation think:**

Optimistic

**Formative events:**

Oklahoma City Bombing

911 Terrorist Attack

The Internet boom

The War in Iraq

Columbine Shootings



**Think of:**

Tara Lipinski

LeAnn Rimes

Prince William

Mandy Moore

Brittany Spears

**In the workplace, Millennials:**

- Search for the individual who will help them achieve their goals.
- Want open, constant communication and positive reinforcement from their boss.
- Find working with someone of the Mature generation easy to do.
- Search for a job that provides great, personal fulfillment.
- Are searching for ways to shed the stress in their lives.

## MILLENNIALS: AN OVERVIEW

Born in a time where cell phones, laptops, remote controls, and travels to outer space are the norm, the Millennials are living in a world ubiquitous with technology. And the studies show they'll still see more change in their lifetime than any other generation. Along with ever-present technology, the Millennials have mostly known affluence in their lives. For the majority of their lives they've only seen a growing economy. The recent economic downturns are the first change in the nation's economic pace they've experienced.

Children of the Boomers and the oldest Xers, the Millennials have lived protected by their parents. Threats to them are of a different variety than any of the other generations have lived with as children - rogue individuals with nuclear weapons, unchecked violence from their peers, and terrorism in their home nation (and, in one case, by their own countrymen). The parent's response is to insulate and protect their children, to carefully guide them through life, and to constantly build their self-esteem. Their lives thus far are epitomized by the yellow placards ubiquitous a decade ago on every minivan and station wagon on the nation's roads - "Baby On Board." "Precious cargo on board. Please keep a safe distance." they essentially say.

Today the Millennials are entering the workforce in droves. A population whose size will rival the Boomers, the Millennials come into the workplace looking for the opportunity learn and move about. They want to be close with their peers and search for leadership from their bosses and supervisors. They're an army waiting to be guided, but they play & measure success differently.

## MEET THE MATURES

**Born:** between 1909 - 1945

**When you think of this generation think:**

Duty

**Formative events:**

The Great Depression  
Pearl Harbor  
WW II  
Hiroshima

**Think of:**

Jimmy Carter  
Charlton Heston  
John Glenn  
George H.W. Bush  
Billy Graham

**In the workplace, Matures:**

- Are loyal to their employer and expect the same in return.
- Possess superb interpersonal skills.
- Enjoy flextime arrangements so they can work when they want to.
- Believe promotions, raises, and recognition should come from tenure in a job.
- Measure a work ethic on timeliness, productivity, and not drawing attention.



## MATURES: AN OVERVIEW

The Matures are actually a combination of two generations, the Veterans (1901 - 1924) and the Silent Generation (1925 - 1942), whose characteristics in the workplace are very similar. They either fought in World War II or were children during the war. The eldest members of the Matures remember the Great Depression and their memories of those times have made an indelible mark on them. Many of their behaviors today can be traced back to their experiences during the Depression.

Of the four generations, the Matures are the smallest in numbers at 30 million members. They're also the wealthiest. They either first entered the workforce after WWII or came home from the war and got a job with companies that took care of their employees. Both the company and the employee believed that loyalty to one another created even more loyalty. Most of the Matures worked for only one company in their lifetime and stayed with their employer until they retired and the company rewarded them with a gold watch. The post-war workplace they inhabited was primarily male dominated. The mothers stayed at home and kept up the house and raised the children.

Today the Matures are being acknowledged on every front for their efforts. They're being written about by Tom Brokaw (The Greatest Generation), featured in films ("Saving Private Ryan", "Band of Brothers") and are courted by politicians since they vote en masse. They have one of the nation's most powerful lobbies in the AARP.

## MEET THE BOOMERS

**Born:** between 1946 - 1964

### When you think of this generation think:

Individuality

### Formative events:

The Civil Rights Movement

Vietnam War

John F. Kennedy, Robert Kennedy,

Martin Luther King assassinations.

Woodstock

The Cold War

Roe v. Wade



### Think of:

The Beatles

Bill Gates

Bill Clinton

Oprah Winfrey

Muhammad Ali

### In the workplace, Boomers:

- Believe in, champion, and evaluate themselves and others based on their work ethic.
- Work ethic for Boomers is measured in hours worked. Measuring productivity in those hours is less important.
- Believe teamwork is critical to success.
- Believe relationship building is very important.
- Expect loyalty from those they work with.

## BOOMERS: AN OVERVIEW

Today the Boomers are in control. They run our local, state, and national governments, they are the bosses, supervisors, managers, and CEOs of most companies, and they dominate the workforce because of their enormous numbers. They are an amazing workforce because of their dedication to a solid, strong work ethic that is uniquely defined by them as working long and hard and being seen doing it. The word "workaholic" was coined in the 1970s to describe the Boomers. They believe in "face time" with their bosses - they must be seen working hard or else that work ethic wasn't working for them.

The Matures laid the groundwork for the United States to become an influential member of the world community. The Boomers came behind then and set the wheels in motion. Through their enormous numbers, their intense work ethic, and their competitive nature, the Boomers got productivity in US to the forefront of the world community. The Boomers also believe in the sanctity and the importance of the individual. Developing themselves into a more "whole" person is very important. Part of becoming a better person is learning to operate as a fluid member of a team, and the Boomers are champions of teamwork.

Boomers today are still working as hard as they've ever worked but some are asking themselves if their intense work ethic has paid off the way they had hoped. The Boomers entered the workplace with company loyalty was still standard. They've seen that change dramatically, though, as tough economic conditions have required layoffs and downsizings. Their work ethic may have gone unrewarded and they are wondering if they've missed critical parts of their lives while giving the company 110%. The Boomers are evolving today and in the second halves of their lives will live with a different focus.

## MEET THE XERS

**Born:** between 1965 - 1979

**When you think of this generation think:**

Diversity

**Formative events:**

Watergate

Fall of the Berlin Wall

Challenger disaster

The Gulf War

The PC boom

Escalating divorce rate of their parents



**Think of:**

The "Brat Pack"

Ethan Hawke

Mary Lou Retton

Wynona Ryder

Tiger Woods

**In the workplace, Xers:**

- Eschew the hard-core, super-motivated, do or die Boomer work ethic.
- Want open communication regardless of position, title, or tenure.
- Respect production over tenure.
- Value control of their time.
- Look for a person to whom they can invest loyalty, not a company.

## XERS: AN OVERVIEW

They came onto the scene and were given an unflattering, vague name. They were defined as "slackers" and were characterized as unmotivated, lethargic, sarcastic, and irreverent. They were the first generation that parents could take pills not to have. And as youth they were told they'd be the first generation in the nation's history that would not be as successful as their parents. From their point of view, every institution in the United States that said "you can trust us" (government, the church, military, marriage, major corporations) has fallen flat on its face. Whereas to the Boomers and Matures these institutions still mean a great deal and they just briefly faltered, to Xers they have never been deserving of anything but skepticism.

Though they could easily be considered pessimistic about their world and their future, you'll find that their attitude has a "carpe diem" feel to it. "There is nothing we can count on in the future," they say, "so we'll focus short term and make sure each day has significance." It is not an attitude of irresponsibility. It is the contrary. In fact, Xers have willingly shouldered the responsibility for their day-to-day well being. "We've seen that the company won't provide it, nor will the government," they think, "So it is up to me." And this attitude permeates the workplace where Xers are steadily rejecting the Boomer work ethic attitude. Ironically, along the way, they're gaining Boomer converts.

Today you'll find the eldest Xers achieving management positions and the youngest have been in the workplace for at least three years or more. They'll inherit the many management positions vacated by the Boomers upon their retirement, and they'll run things a bit differently. Don't fear. They'll be effective, profitable, and responsible, but different.