



Rupert & COMPANY

Guides to a changing workplace

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Full Report available at www.rupertandcompany.com

For more information, contact:

Michael Nolan, mikeydavy@gmail.com or 415-282-9043

Paul Rupert, paulrupertdc@cs.com or 301-873-8489

MILLENNIALS SPEAK: BETTER MANAGERS KEY TO JOB FLEXIBILITY
Nine-Company Study Reveals “Planful” Generation Insistent on Family Balance

NEW YORK (Oct. 17) - New research portrays the Millennials in the workforce as purposeful individuals with clear goals and less tolerance for slow change than their predecessors. They want managers who set precise work expectations, give ongoing feedback and encourage flexibility “as long as the work gets done.”

Report author Paul Rupert will deliver the results and recommendations of the study, “**Millennials Speak: A New Generation Seeks Focus, Flexibility and Feedback,**” at the annual Work Life Congress in New York in a presentation this Wednesday, October 19.

The findings are contrary to much current opinion that views these young employees as self-indulgent, difficult to manage and more preoccupied with social media than their job assignments.

“The millennial workers told us they want direction, feedback and flexibility from their managers just like previous generations. Big difference is they’re far less patient and likely to leave eventually if they don’t get it.” Rupert stated. The evidence is based on the participation of 205 individuals, ranging in age from 23-33, in focus groups at nine major employers.

“While these millennials would prefer greater flexibility now, both men and women in the group assume and simply expect they will get the flexibility they need when they have families,” Rupert added.

Rather than self-indulgent and unmanageable, **Millennials Speak** portrays millennial employees as “planners” who take a long-term and strategic view of their professional and family goals.

“Our study does not reveal a self-absorbed cohort of workers unwilling to take direction or accomplish company objectives,” Rupert added. “However, they do insist on managers who can provide guidance and regular feedback on employee performance, as it happens, and not relegate it to the infrequent and vague annual review.”

In the words of one focus-group participant, “My ideal manager understands my personal aspirations, is accessible for counseling and questions, trusts me and provides regular feedback. The feedback should not be blaming but explaining how to succeed, and be encouraging and respectful.”

The study also affirms the Millennials deep familiarity and experience with digital technology and desire to use these communications tools to achieve greater efficiency on the job. They don’t want Facebook on the job, but appropriate and robust communication tools.

On matters of loyalty and job hopping, many of these young employees have watched their Boomer parents lose out after years of one-way loyalty to the firm. Instead, **Millennials Speak** shows that they embrace “conditional loyalty” based on a two-way street with their employer.

Based on study results and their extensive experience in the field, Rupert & Company concludes their report with the following recommendations to employers:

Make the commitment to fully equip managers to manage flexibly

The decades-old mantra “flex depends on my manager” has run its course

Companies should require clear work definitions and quality feedback

Millennials will not endure 60-hour weeks for no reason or stale annual feedback

Study your millennials thoroughly and let positive needs push change

Avoid the tendency to assume that this cohort just needs assimilation

Redesign your flexibility system around key principles rather than menus

Use the millennial anchor of “as long as the work gets done” for many forms of flex

Embrace flexibility as a better way of working and engaging staff

As newcomers to the workplace, millennials should partner in work redesign

Rupert concludes, “Working together millennials and their managers can create novel forms of flexibility that improve outcomes, processes and satisfaction all around.”

***Both the Executive Summary and the Full Report can be downloaded at:
www.rupertandcompany.com***

The methodology for the study was a series of 90-minute conference-call focus groups conducted from July to September this year. The nine participating employers were Bayer, Discovery Communications, Eli Lilly & Co., KPMG, McGladrey, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, MetLife, MTV Networks and Sodexo.

Rupert & Company, a global leader in advancing workplace flexibility, designed this project, developed the questionnaire, conducted all the groups and prepared this report. R&C's principals bring several decades of experience in focus group research, consulting and training to its projects. To learn more about the firm, go to:

www.rupertandcompany.com