

editor's note



IS MY DAUGHTER A MILLENNIAL?

Well, she certainly came of age in the early years of the new millennium. But she is the furthest thing possible from the stereotype of someone who is lazy, narcissistic and prone to jump from job to job (as *Time* magazine defined the entire generation back in 2013). Rather, she's a studious, successful, hardworking young woman with a lot of close friends, and someone who volunteers for several organizations and charities.

And I don't think she's simply an outlier. When I look around at the young people I see on a daily basis, they run the gamut. Some go through the day with a look of bewilderment on their face while others are driven towards action and success. Some are very involved in social issues and some are more interested in the latest fashions. When I look at my two sons, they're almost complete opposites of each other. One is purely cerebral, the other wants to hang out and play soccer or hockey with his friends.

In a March 6 article in the *New York Times*, John Quiggin pointed out that the same stereotypes that we often apply to millennials ("they've been derided as lazy and narcissistic or defended as creative and committed to social change") are the same characteristics that older generations always prescribe for younger generations. Isn't it a running joke that parents always

complain about their kids' taste in music, fashion and haircuts?

Countless business articles have been written about how older managers need to adapt their management style to accommodate this new generation. But is that really true?

Yes, society has become more casual, and as a result, so too has the workplace. However, it's just as likely that a casual workplace is desired by a 57-year-old manager who favors jeans while the 21-year old recent hire loves to dress more stylishly.

But whether you're dealing with a 70-year-old or a 30-year-old, don't the same principles hold true? Shouldn't you treat everyone with respect and politeness? Shouldn't you help every employee and colleague reach their potential, to grow both in their professional and personal lives?

As Quiggin points out, "Much of the apparent distinctiveness of the millennial generation disappears when we look at individuals rather than aggregates."

When you look at your employees and coworkers, don't simply lump them into some meaningless demographic category. Just as I treat my three kids as individuals, we need to treat the people with whom we interact as individuals and maybe even embrace the concept of *hygge* (see page 26).


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