



**DOORBUSTERS**

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MIÉ. A SÁB., 23 A 26 DE NOV.

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VE UN AVANCE

CAREER STRATEGIES

# Millennials vs. Baby Boomers: Who Would You Rather Hire?

By [Dan Schawbel @danschawbel](#) | March 29, 2012

A new poll reveals just how different Gen Y workers are from their Baby Boomer forefathers. Among other things, millennials (those in their 20s and early 30s) want flexible work schedules, more “me time” on the job, and nearly nonstop feedback and career advice from managers. They’re also more likely than average to think the boss could learn a thing or two from their young employees. Oh, and they really want to be able to wear jeans at work.

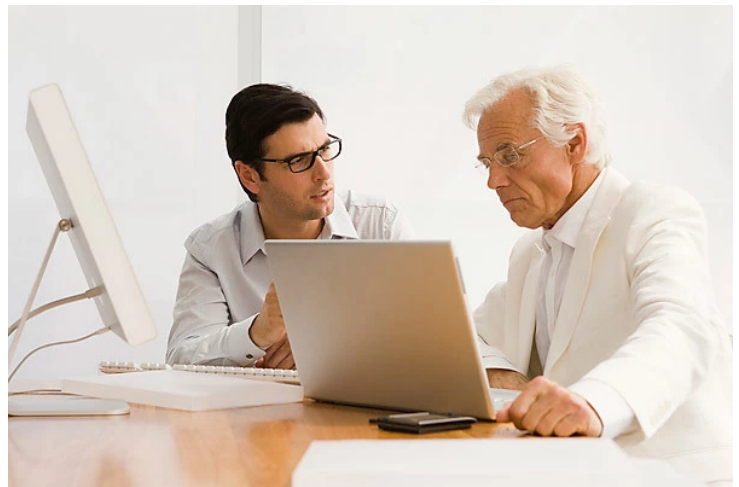
All in all, it’s a pretty bad time to be a young worker (or aspiring young worker) in America.

Unemployment and underemployment remain especially high among teens and 20-somethings, and increasing numbers of the so-called “Boomerang” generation have little choice but to [live with their parents](#) while weathering the economic storm. Even though young workers are less likely than previous generations to actually be in the workforce, the youth of today have very strong opinions about the workplace—how it should be run, and what their place should be in it.

A new study by MTV called “[No Collar Workers](#)” focuses on Gen Y’s perspectives about the workplace and careers, and what often comes to light is how different their views are from that of their parents’ generation, the boomers.

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Right now, there are about 80 million millennials and 76 million boomers in America. Half of all millennials are already in the workforce, and millions are added every year. Approximately 10,000 millennials turn 21 every day in America, and by the year 2025, three out of every four workers globally will be Gen Y. “This generation is reshaping today’s consumer and media markets, and even MTV itself,” says Nick Shore, a senior vice president at MTV



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stand out, millennials, who have come of age with the text message and social media, are an impatient bunch: They're hyper-connected, tech savvy, entrepreneurial, and collaborative. They also favor fast-paced work environments, want quick promotions, and aren't fans of traditional office rules and hierarchies.

Among the study's specific findings that demonstrate how millennials and boomers differ in their approaches to careers:

**Millennials require your immediate attention.** Millennials grew up texting and using [Facebook](#) and Twitter. They're grown accustomed to instantaneous connection and nearly immediate responses each time they Tweet or post. In the workplace, they expect the same environment. They want to be able to ask questions and get career advice all the time; in the survey, 80% of millennials said they want regular feedback from their managers, and 75% yearn for mentors. "Parents were more like mentors to them and now they expect managers to be too," says MTV's Shore. For the most part, millennials aren't fans of having to wait six months or a year to get a formal review of their work. Boomers, on the other hand, are more likely to prefer a structured system where feedback is given at certain times of the year. Instead of seeking constant feedback, boomers prefer to take the "Give me my objectives and get out of my way" approach.

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**Millennials want casual Fridays almost every day.** The study found that 79% of millennials think they should be allowed to wear jeans to work at least sometimes, compared to only 60% of boomers. An overwhelming 93% of millennials say they want a job where they can be themselves at work, and that includes dressing in a way that makes them comfortable. Boomers, on the other hand, are more prone to believing in the importance of maintaining a standard professional look in the workplace. It seems as if millennials also prefer casual attire because they don't separate their personal and professional lives in the same way that [baby boomers](#) do.

**Millennials work when they want to work.** The [9-to-5 workday is fading](#) as the standard, and the change is at least partially being driven by millennials. Research shows that 81% of millennials think they should be allowed to make their own hours at work, compared to only 69% of boomers. Whereas more boomers feel the office environment and the traditional workday is the best way to get the job done, millennials prefer a flexible approach, including the right to be [remote workers](#) who go into the office only sometimes, or perhaps never. They maintain that as long as the work gets done, the amount of time spent in the office shouldn't matter. In the MTV poll, 70% of millennials also said that they need "me time" on the job, versus 39% of Baby Boomers.

**Millennials aren't all about the money.** Half of the members of Gen Y surveyed said they would "rather have no job than a job they hate." Among the top options for job desirability, "loving what I do" outranked salaries and big bonuses. If not money, what do millennials want most? The vast majority (83%) are "looking for a job where my creativity is valued," while more than 9 in 10 millennials are "motivated to work harder when I know where my work is going" and want supervisors, managers, and executives to listen to their ideas. "Millennials walk into the CEO's office to tell them how to fix things," says Shore. The MTV study found that 76% of millennials think their boss could learn a lot from them, compared to only 50% of boomers. Generally speaking, millennials want to feel as



**Millennials really like transparency.** A report by [LifeWay Research](#) shows that transparency was one of the four characteristics millennials wanted in a leader. Think about it: Parents of millennials talked about everything in front of their children, from finances to sex, so millennials are comfortable with the same approach from businesses and managers. Millennials want to feel like they are part of a community at work—nearly 9 in 10 want a workplace to be social and fun—and have a genuine desire to listen into organizational strategy sessions. Instead of being a small cog unaware of any larger mission, millennials like being in the loop regarding their company’s vision, and how it is going to innovate to stay ahead of the curve.

**Millennials see the work environment as flat.** Vineet Nayer, the CEO of HCL Technologies [says that](#) millennials “have little interest in hierarchy and are not particularly impressed by the titles and positions within the traditional pyramid structure.” Growing up, millennials all received trophies in sports leagues regardless if they won or lost, and they probably had parents who would patiently listen to them and take what they had to say into consideration before making family decisions. In the workplace, millennials see no reason for a strict hierarchy. “They find hierarchies difficult to understand because they didn’t grow up with it,” said Shore. An “ideocracy” should reign in the workplace, most millennials believe, in which everyone should be heard from and the best ideas win out, regardless of who has been on the job longer, or who has a corner office.

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