

## BRIDGING THE GENERATIONAL GAP

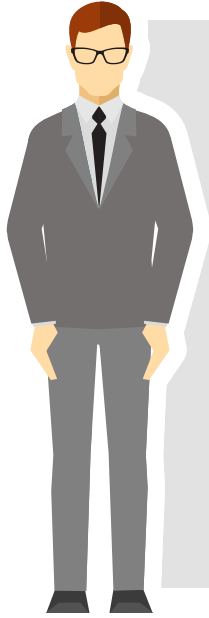
EQUIPPING MILLENNIALS WITH  
COMMUNICATION SKILLS FOR SUCCESS



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**With over 80 million curious, young, and innovative Millennials poised to flood the workforce,** companies are now revamping professional development curricula to include more comprehensive guidance on professional communication, workplace etiquette, and interpersonal skills.<sup>1</sup> Unlike the generations before them, Millennials have grown up with the latest technology designed to make communicating easier and faster; yet, they often lack the traditional workplace skills that leading companies require.

**Recent research has found glaring gaps in workplace readiness that are being left untaught in high schools and universities.**

The Chartered Institute for Personnel Development surveyed over 1,000 Millennials and found that

**42%**

of them agreed that their dependence on technology has impaired their ability to think abstractly and communicate effectively in the workplace.<sup>2</sup>



Business managers and human resource professionals worldwide are taking a proactive role. They are persistently rethinking how to train the new workforce and implementing sweeping initiatives to equip the up-and-coming young professionals with the skills they will need to assume key roles now occupied by retiring Baby Boomers.<sup>3</sup>

**It is estimated that by 2020, Millennials will spend more time sharing short messages via social media than any other form of communication, severely limiting their problem-solving and face-to-face social skills.<sup>4</sup>**

Business communication experts like at Speakeasy are working with companies of all sizes to help them assess their current new hire training and onboarding procedures to ensure new professionals are placed in environments where they can be nurtured, mentored, and supported with success.

**Workplace readiness consultants and interpersonal communication skills coaches agree that Millennials will need significant reinforcement in these three core workplace areas:**

## 1 WORKPLACE ETIQUETTE AND BUSINESS EXPECTATIONS

Millennials are vibrant and unique, and being able to showcase their individuality is essential. Teaching them how to be authentic to who they are, but modifying it to fit a professional setting, will be a much-needed refresher in any professional development program. Topics around business attire, networking norms, and general professionalism tips associated with phone usage, timeliness, and appearance should be included in onboarding training.



It is always good practice to set clear work and behavior expectations for all employees, not just the young professionals. This could come in the form of an employee handbook, a company mission statement, or establishing departmental requirements to ensure all staff are aware of what should be done, how it should be done, and in what manner work should be submitted.

## 2 INTERACTING AND WORKING WITH OTHERS

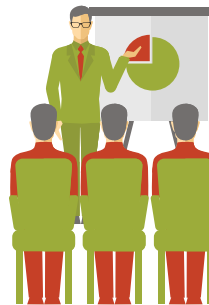
With technology being their primary form of communication with the world, Millennials may need reinforcement on traditional in-person conversation strategies. How to initiate conversations, working with diverse team members, sharing ideas, or even giving presentations would all be important areas to provide additional development. Mixing in opportunities for Millennials to connect and share via



social media are great ways to provide well-balanced training that is both relevant and interesting to them.

## 3 WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A PROFESSIONAL

This spans many topic areas and may be where Millennials lack the most prior knowledge. Colleges and universities have moved away from workplace readiness courses, leaving the young professionals in your organization unaware of how to present themselves to clients, how to structure an email, or even how to handle conflict appropriately. The Millennials in your offices, gracing your conference rooms and sitting in your meetings have great wealth to share with your company if given the chance. In many cases, having a more experienced professional



as a coach or mentor can go a long way in boosting their confidence with speaking up and sharing their ideas. Teaching new employees how to be customer-centric and the importance of considering others' points of view is an essential skill in any workplace.

# CONCLUSION



The technically savvy Millennials bring a new dynamic to the workforce, that may challenge our preconceived notions of what it means to be a business professional. The business communication consultants at Speakeasy have empowered business executives with proven communication strategies to increase their confidence and commitment when giving a presentation, during impromptu speaking engagements, and with day-to-day personal conversations.

With the growing communication gap between Millennials and their Generation X and Baby Boomer supervisors, Speakeasy created an innovative online micro-learning platform, SelfLink. Made with Millennials in mind, SelfLink is equipping young adults with valuable insight and knowledge of a host of much-needed workplace readiness skills to ensure they can begin contributing value to their organization on day one. With nine, easy-to-follow modules, interactive videos and quizzes, SelfLink was designed with the Millennial in mind. Affordably priced, SelfLink has become a practical way for organizations to bridge the generation gap and ensure that the young professionals coming through the door are well-prepared to fulfill their roles and achieve their career goals.

If you are a Millennial looking for communication skills enhancement opportunities, or if you know a young professional that could benefit from SelfLink's communication resources, visit [www.selflink.com](http://www.selflink.com) for more information and to register.



<sup>1</sup> <https://www.uschamberfoundation.org/reports/millennial-generation-research-review>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.cipd.co.uk/binaries/developing-next-generation.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.forbes.com/sites/nickmorrison/2015/06/04/the-four-key-skills-generation-y-is-missing/#216181857479>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.businessinsider.com/millennials-are-losing-social-skills-2012-3>