Young Adult Views on Work, Life and Success

A recent survey of more than 1,100 young adults aged 22-35 by the Boston College Center for Work & Family (BCCWF) explores how young adults navigate their careers and lives.

How Millennials Navigate Their Careers: Young Adult Views on Work, Life and Success provides much needed insight into the aspirations and desires of the newest generation in the professional workforce. As Millennials are becoming the largest generation in our workplaces today, it is essential to understand what drives them to select an employer and what aspects of the employee experience foster their growth and loyalty to an organization.

“I think the managers I respect most are the ones that are direct and care about the people that work for them. They have realistic expectations.”
-33 year old female

In this study, BCCWF researchers surveyed Millennial-aged men and women to answer a number of questions such as:

- How do young adults search for jobs?
- Is there a difference between how young women and young men perceive success?
- What are employers and HR departments doing that young people see as most helpful to their career success?
- What organizational characteristics are most likely to increase or decrease employee work-effort, retention and satisfaction?
Recommendations were provided for employers, higher education institutions, and Millennials themselves based on the information collected and analyzed by lead author Brad Harrington along with BCCWF colleagues Fred Van Deusen, Jennifer Sabatini Fraone, and Jeremiah Morelock.

“There were many interesting findings from our study. One of the key takeaways was how important career navigation skills were for young adults - knowing their career goals, what they had to offer employers, and how to communicate their career goals effectively. These navigation skills were highly linked to job satisfaction, work effort, and other important people metrics. Few universities or corporations invest in teaching these skills to their people. But they are critically important for employees and their employer.”

-Dr. Brad Harrington, Boston College Center for Work & Family

KPMG LLP, the sponsor of the Boston College study, is one of the world’s leading professional services firms and widely recognized for being a great place to work and build a career. Currently more than 59% of KPMG’s 27,000 U.S. professionals are millennials and the firm expects to hire approximately 6,500 millennial-aged employees in the coming year.

In conclusion...

- Job loyalty still exists
- Millennials are redefining career success
- The importance of “life over work” was reinforced by study participants
- Gender roles are shifting
- A supportive spouse impacts career and life satisfaction
- Opportunities for growth both attract and retain millennials
- Solid career navigation skills lead to job satisfaction
- Managers and culture matter

You can read the full report here or contact us to arrange for a presentation on the results of the study at your organization.