

**Deloitte.**

Future  
of Work

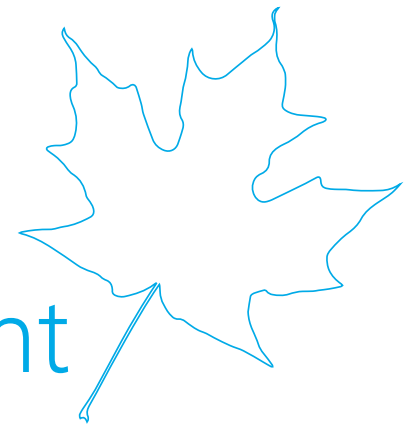
The future of work  
– *A reorientation guide*





# Millennials

## Not so very different

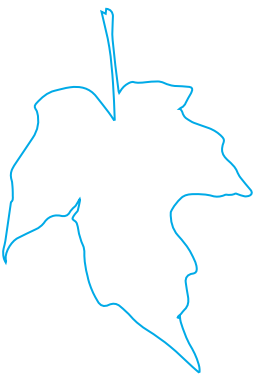


Forget everything you've heard about millennials at work. Separated by years – even decades – in age, millennials and non-millennials share what some may consider surprisingly similar attitudes toward work. Where they differ is in *how* they work and get things done – and this dynamic has the potential to change the workplace profoundly, leading to a future that is more social, more flexible, more technological and less hierarchical.

Those are the findings of our comparative survey of 502<sup>1</sup> professional Canadians and their perspectives on working life. People are people, it turns out, and much of what we are told “divides” millennials from other generations really comes down to differing approaches to work itself and the ever-faster adoption of new technology and media.

But, importantly, *values about work* are largely compatible across generations – the two groups simply happen to be at different stages in their respective lives and careers.

The big questions we need to start asking, then, are these: How do these differences play out when it comes to workplace culture and recruiting? Can we be more flexible in allowing people to work in a way that makes them productive and engaged, even if it's not conventional? Are we committed to building innovative workplaces that allow today's leaders to thrive and prepare the leaders of tomorrow?



<sup>1</sup> 167 millennials and 335 non-millennials

# Where we were who we are

The results of our survey show that millennials are, as expected, less formal than non-millennials. They are also more likely to extend the boundaries of their professional lives, to interact with colleagues outside of the office or through social networks and to consider them friends, and to share personal information with them. They are also more likely to check non-work-related websites during the day and are more apt to participate in non-work-related activity in the office.

But this all takes place within clear limits. Millennials are distinctly aware of their “work persona” and their role at work, often more so than non-millennials. Millennial respondents to our survey are also more aware of age and more likely to act differently at work than with friends and differently again with their direct supervisor than with office peers.

Millennials *take work seriously*, though. And that means these alleged differences are not insurmountable. It’s just about developing the most effective approaches.

Let’s consider the numbers.

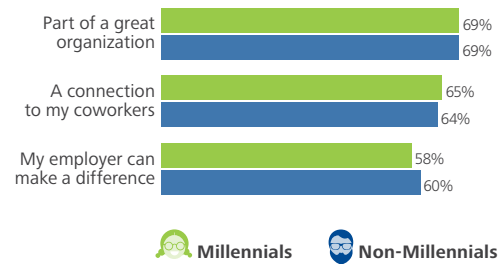
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69% of us want to be part of a great organization. Only 56% of millennials and 49% of non-millennials say they currently are.

## What work is

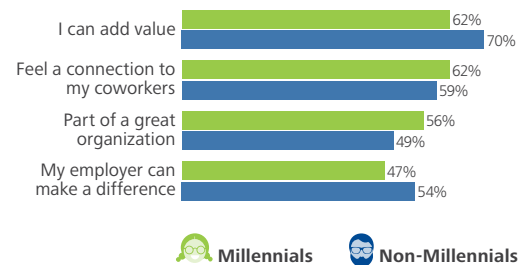
Millennial and non-millennial survey respondents alike (see Figure 1) say they want to add value to what they believe are great organizations that can make a positive difference in the world. At the same time, they want to feel connected to their coworkers.

Figure 1. Workplace ideals



That’s what everyone wants. The reality is somewhat different. When respondents are asked about their *current* workplaces (see Figure 2), millennials feel slightly more connected than non-millennials to coworkers and more millennials than non-millennials believe they *already* work at great organizations. On the other hand, fewer millennials than non-millennials believe their current employers can make a difference in the world.

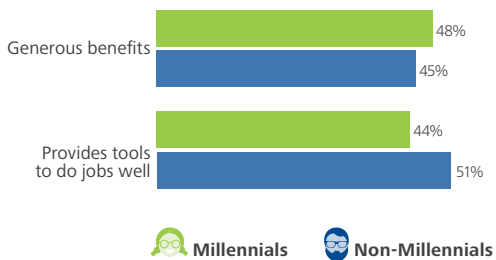
Figure 2. Current satisfaction in the workplace



## Why we work

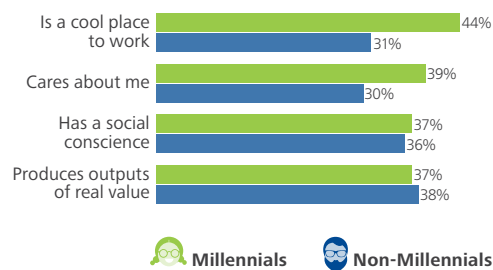
Similarly, both cohorts claim to be largely satisfied with their current work situation. However, while majorities of both groups answer affirmatively when asked if they “love” their jobs or “really like working for my company/employer,” less than half (see Figure 3) have positive perceptions of their company’s benefits, training and public image.

Figure 3. Current impressions of benefits and training



When asked about four facets of their company’s public image (see Figure 4), clear minorities of both groups answered favourably about their respective employers. While millennials are more likely to feel their company is a “cool” place to work and that it cares about them, respondents in both groups agreed on the questions of whether their companies have a social conscience and produce outputs of real value.

Figure 4. Current impressions of company image



Majorities of both groups also prioritize a *sense of purpose* in their work, but this is true of more non-millennials than it is of millennials.

More than half of us say we love our jobs.  
Less than half of us like our employers’  
benefits, training and public image.

# How we work together

Cohorts also report few problems communicating with one another, notwithstanding some variations in how and when they *most prefer* to communicate (see Figure 5) – millennials slightly prefer more casual gatherings than non-millennials do, while non-millennials unequivocally prefer meetings to be scheduled. Both groups tend to think communications should be formal (including the use of proper grammar), but are less concerned about observing strict procedures and hierarchy.

Ultimately, well-intentioned and emotionally stirring poetry videos on YouTube<sup>2</sup> notwithstanding, “face time” is still perceived to be important across generations – but predictably more so for non-millennials (see Figure 6), a small majority of whom cite face-to-face as their overall preferred means of communication with colleagues. We’re still very much social animals after all – indeed, as we’ll see, rumours of the impending death of the office have been greatly exaggerated.

Figure 5. Preferred means of engaging with colleagues

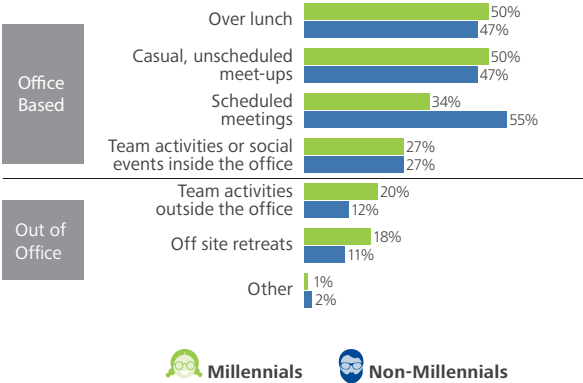
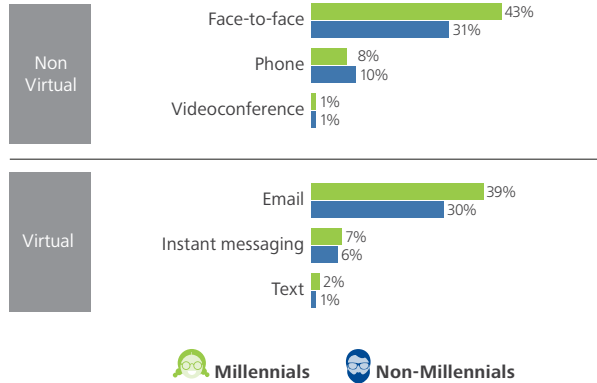


Figure 6. Preferred methods of communication



Majorities of both millennials and non-millennials still prefer face-time to interact with colleagues.

Many do of course prefer to use virtual tools to communicate.

A significant proportion of millennials claim email as their preferred communications method, compared to less than a third of non-millennials. The exception is scheduling meetings: majorities of both millennials and non-millennials prefer email to arrange meetings, though non-millennials are more inclined than millennials to in-person arrangement of meetings specifically with their direct supervisor. So while it seems millennials always have their heads down staring at a screen, they realize that different channels of communication achieve different objectives.

<sup>2</sup> Turk, Gary. “Look Up.” YouTube. Accessed Oct. 30, 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z7dLU6fk9QY>

# The future of work

## A reorientation guide

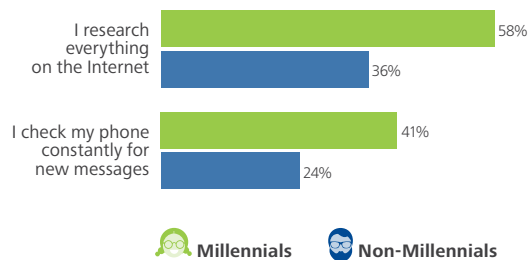
We see three main trends that all employers and employees across the country should keep in view as we collectively navigate the future of work.

### 1. Technology immersion

#### Hands on the heads-up display

A majority of the millennials we surveyed “research everything on the Internet” and two-fifths of them “constantly” check their phones for new messages (see Figure 7). Millennials are significantly more likely to rely and depend on technology than everyone else, in other words, as expected; but it’s not like non-millennials avoid technology – more than a third of them say they research everything online and nearly a quarter of them are glued to their phones.

Figure 7. Technology use



We expect these numbers only to rise, which means that how work is designed, performed and evaluated will change in ways that are unique to individual organizations and their workers.

## 2. Communications

### Don't even try to be an island

Technology immersion comes with trade-offs, though. Despite being more aware of behaving differently at work than with friends, millennials are less protective of their privacy. This applies to social media activity in particular (see Figure 8). Millennials are also significantly more likely than non-millennials to connect to colleagues specifically on Facebook (see Figure 9).

Figure 8. Privacy and social media

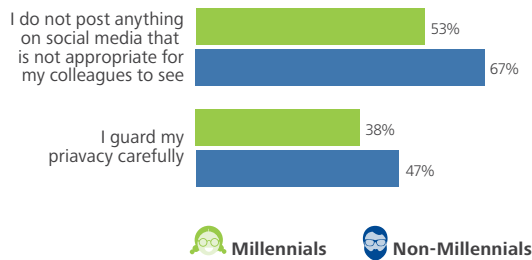
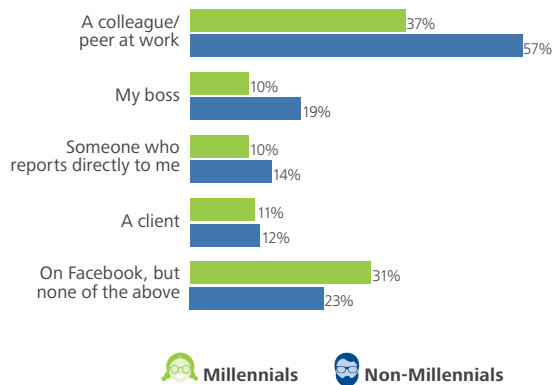
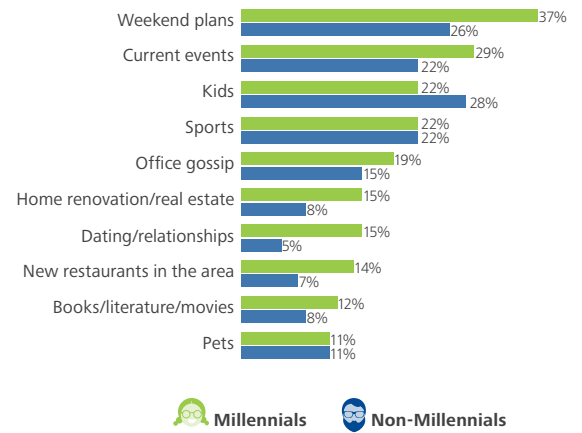


Figure 9. Facebook friends



Millennials are also more likely to “share” at the office (see Figure 10), including personal topics. This blurring of the line between work and personal spheres provides organizations with the opportunity to rethink their approach to when, where and how work gets done.

Figure 10. Frequently discussed topics



But both cohorts agree it is more important to share *personality* than *personal life* at work – although significantly more of the millennials than the non-millennials we surveyed do think sharing their personal lives is indeed important. Ultimately, the trend is very much toward encouraging people to bring their “whole selves” to work, the better to advance improvements in productivity and quality alike.

Non-millennials are 15-20% more guarded about our privacy on social media *specifically* than we are generally.



### 3. Time and place

#### Results first

In an era in which there is a greater emphasis on work-life flexibility, it may be surprising to learn that, in the future of work, not everyone will *want* to work at home. And if the key word is *flexibility*, the bottom line is *productivity*: performance will increasingly be assessed on the basis of hard results and value added – in a word, *impact* – rather than where the clock is punched.

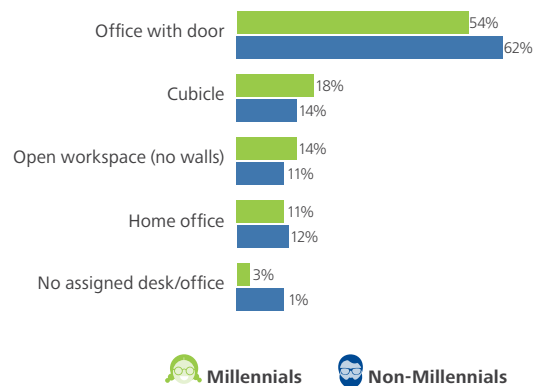
As it is today, vast majorities of both millennials and non-millennials spend most of their working time in the formal office environment (see Figure 11), and just one in 10 of each cohort would work at home if given the choice (see Figure 12).

Figure 11. We still work in the office



A quarter of us want the **option** to work remotely. Only 1 in 10 would **prefer** it. Even millennials favour the office.

Figure 12. Where we like to work



Telecommuting is no doubt a viable option for some and proportions may even grow, but the notion that Canadian office buildings will eventually stand forever empty if more workers were given the choice to telecommute probably won't bear out. As they continue to rise to leadership positions, millennials' predilection for social interaction and teaming – those traits alone – will see to that.

Still, majorities of both millennials and non-millennials do have a preference for offices with doors that close. Will they continue to? Undoubtedly yes. But not exclusively – it will depend on the organization. Deloitte, for instance, is moving to a more agile and flexible workspace that meets the needs of all our employees, regardless of generation, level and work-focus to capture and amplify the teaming and collaboration that happens in our environment. But each company will have to make that determination for itself.

# Where we go from here

In our view, what's unfolding in the workplace today is less a generational collision than an evolution that will make for both a happier and more productive workplace – for everyone.

As our study shows, contrary to popular wisdom, most of us already share the same values. Loyalty and commitment are not going out of style. The rising generation of workers and leaders today is not that different from previous ones. Millennial respondents to our survey want the same things as their older counterparts in the work force.

They just go about it a little bit differently.

We need to remember that incoming generations do bring new behaviors to multi-generational work environments, and that that shapes collective behaviour. We also need to recognize that older generations are adapting.

The challenge for companies and HR leaders in particular, then, is to make their workplaces as welcoming and productive as they can for all workers. Places where we can all be fully our individual selves while still contributing to the whole. Places where we can be productive and impactful, whatever we do and wherever we do it. Places, finally, where we won't need a reorientation guide to figure out where we're going.

We'll already be there.

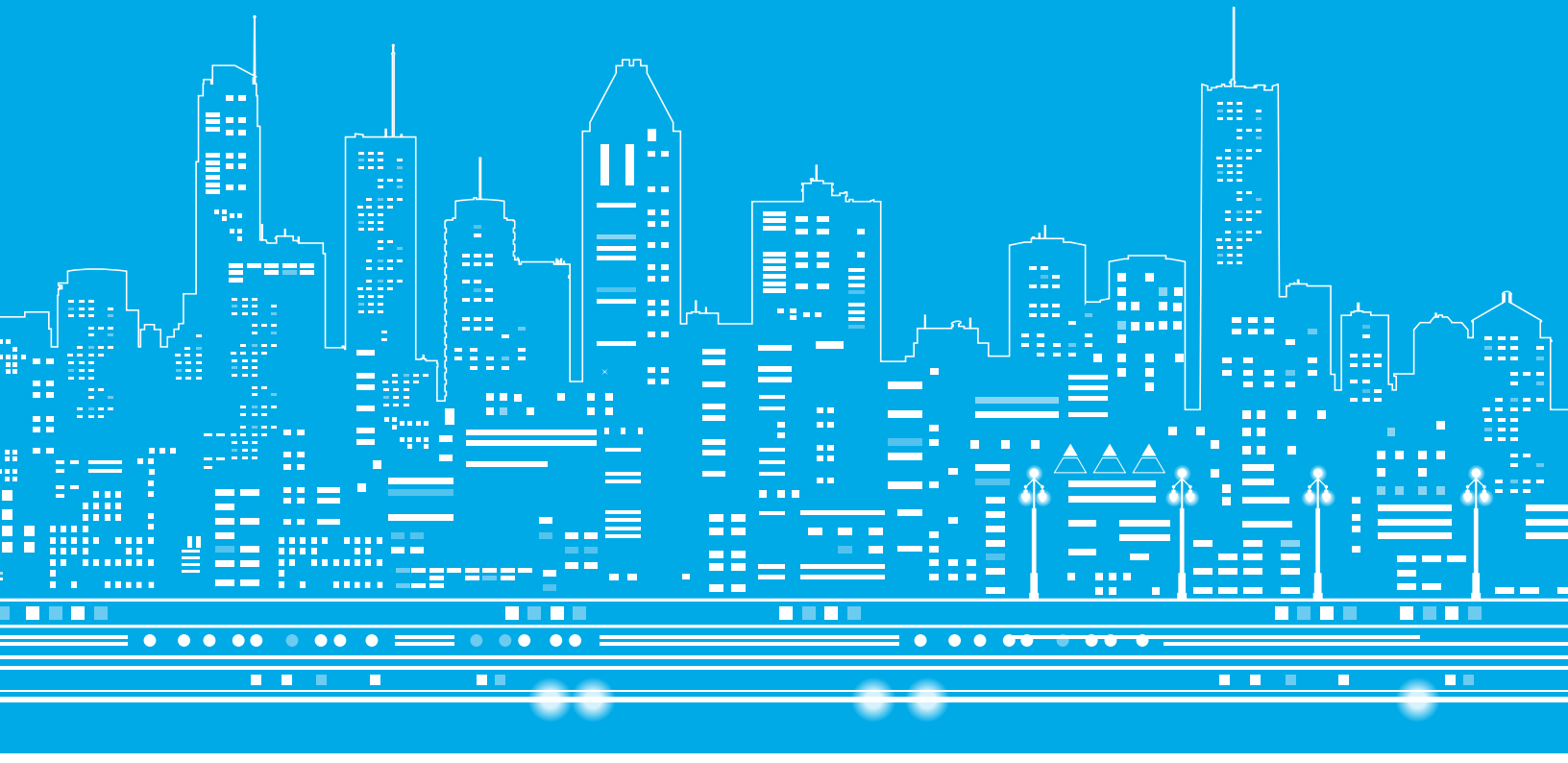
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