



The Millennial Generation... Why we all need to care

"Generations are among the most powerful forces in history. Tracking their march through time lends order—and even a measure of predictability—to long-term trends. Generations follow observable historical patterns and thus offer a very powerful tool for predicting future trends."

--Neil Howe and William Strauss, generational scholars

- Millennials are considered those age 25 and younger (born after 1982).
- Approximately 100,000 Millennials are serving in today's Navy.
- We will recruit Millennials for the next 20 years.

According to the Pew Research Center and authors Strauss and Howe, the Millennial generation is more diverse, and accepting of diversity, than previous generations. Education focuses on cooperative learning and record numbers are gravitating toward large institutions and government agencies for jobs, seeking teamwork, protection against risk, and a solid work/life balance. Their culture is becoming less edgy, with a new focus on upbeat messages and big brands. Their close relationship with their parents and extended families is carrying over into their young adult lives. When asked about the most important problem they face, Millennials were more concerned about financial matters than previous generations at this age.

Notably, the Millennial generation is *less* cynical about the government and military leaders than previous generations of young people. Fully 48% believe the best way to ensure peace is through military strength. They are overall very positive about their lives and the way things are going in our country. They can be described as institutionally driven, with a profound trust in authority. They grew up as increasingly protected children, coming of age as team-working youth of a crisis (9/11). Howe and Strauss believe the "G.I. generation" of WWII and the Millennial generation have similar characteristics.

Communicating with Millennials

Evidence shows that young Americans are estranged from daily newspapers and rely more heavily on television and personal contact than on the Internet or newspapers for their news. Today, unlike most older Americans, many young people find a bit of news here and there and do not make it a routine part of their day.

Tips for Navy Leaders:

- Use more face to face communication and fewer emails and newspaper articles.
 - Whereas 35% of the population over age 30 claimed to read the news every day, only 16% of those ages 18-30 said they read the news daily. Research also shows that face-to-face communication is the #1 source of information across all age groups.
- Take time to first explain issues, then repeat the message.
 - Studies indicate that people can hear something over and over yet not recognize its existence if they have little prior knowledge or awareness of it. Their mind fails to recognize it amidst the noise of the hundreds of other messages that bombard us every day.
- Repeat messages in a variety of media (face to face, email, web site, etc.)
 - The ordinary "top story" reaches many fewer people today. Young adults are substantially less likely (43% vs. 62%) than older respondents to claim exposure to a leading story run in one medium only.

For more information, read:

- *A Portrait of "Generation Next: How Young People View Their Lives, Futures and Politics*
<http://people-press.org/reports/display.php3?ReportID=300>



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