Generational Differences in Training, Job Satisfaction, and Intent to Leave among the State Governmental Public Health Agency Workforce

Author
Castrucci, Brian Christopher

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Abstract
"Entitled," "lazy," "narcissistic," "glued to their phones," "high maintenance in the workplace." These descriptors of Millennials come from a brief sampling of blogs from trusted publications like Inc. and Entrepreneur. In a 2013 cover of Time Magazine, Millennials were deemed the "Me Me Me Generation" with the subheading "Millennials are lazy, entitled narcissists who still live with their parents." However, for the state governmental public health agency workforce, no previous studies have examined this negative Millennial narrative. This work tackles three separate, but related research questions to provide the first ever insight on generational differences in the state governmental public health agency workforce.

The analyses completed here yield many findings. The key messages that most directly inform change include:

– Millennials working in state governmental public health agencies have better attitudes toward workplace training compared to other generations
– Millennials working in state governmental public health agencies have greater odds of self-identified training needs compared to other generations
– Millennials working in state governmental public health agencies are just as satisfied with their jobs as other generations
– Millennials working in state governmental public health agencies are considering other workplaces compared to other generations
– Millennials working in state governmental public health agencies have at least equal, if not better, workplace attitudes and experiences compared to other generations

This discordance between the popular impressions of Millennials and information presented here highlights the presence of a destructive Millennial myth narrative. Persistence of this myth has the potential to alienate Millennial staff and allows for a more aligned effort to skill building in the workforce, which could potentially yield cost and time savings.

This work informs a plan for change that must undo a narrative about Millennials in the existing state governmental public health agency workforce that is simply not supported by the evidence. This will require deliberate steps to undo this narrative and provide leaders in state governmental public health agencies with solid steps to increase engagement and retention among this group.

Advisor
Devlin, Leah
Committee member
Baker, Edward; Cockrell-Skinner, Asheley; Greene, Sandra; Tilson, Hugh

University/institution
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Department
Health Policy and Management

University location
United States -- North Carolina

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