

# THE **YOUNG** AND THE **RESTLESS**



(talent management/development  
strategies for new managers)



*They're ambitious. Full of fresh ideas. Tech savvy. And frankly, less expensive than their more experienced counterparts. This eBook teaches you how to motivate, train and develop young managers into your organization's future leaders.*

## In this guide, you'll find:

- Keys to understanding what motivates your young employees.
- Tips for giving your employees what they need – so they can return the favor.
- Best practices for mentoring, training and career planning, to improve retention and performance of your young talent.





# Meet the Kids: Who Are These Young Professionals?

Young professionals belong to the generation born after 1980. Known as the “Millennials” or “Generation Y,” these 20-somethings and early-30-somethings live online as much as offline, and they see change as a way of life.

As Millennials step into management positions, they bring their energetic view of the world with them. They also bring:

- **Self-management skills.** "DIY" is their mantra. When they have the tools and information they need to do a job properly, Millennials don't mind buckling down.
- **A need for feedback.** Though self-directed, they prefer ample and immediate feedback on their work to provide context. When they understand the “big picture,” they proceed with more confidence and better attention to detail.
- **Commitment to a work-life balance.** These young professionals love what they do – but they also love their families, hobbies, and volunteer opportunities. Technology facilitates the work-life balance they crave.
- **Love for challenge and change.** Millennials are aware that the work world is changing quickly, and they adapt easily to keep up.



# Do You Need Young Professionals?



**Absolutely!**

**Here's why you can't afford to ignore your youngest cohort:**

- **They're natural learners.** Millennials never stop learning. They can't afford to. Today's professional and personal worlds are changing so quickly that adapting to new ideas, new technology, and new processes is a way of life. From absorbing new job responsibilities to identifying new business opportunities, young workers' natural adaptability offers an unparalleled resource for your business.
- **They see opportunity everywhere.** In spite of the recent recession, young professionals still see their work as an endless string of opportunities. This optimistic, growth-focused outlook helps them innovate – and nothing seems impossible to improve.
- **They know tech.** Young professionals are comfortable with social media and technology devices, seeing these items as part of the “norm” rather than innovations. Their comfort with technology can help companies make the most of their technological investments.

**And that's just the start...**



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# 4 Business Reasons to Develop Young Managers

- **Succession planning.** Eventually, even your most dedicated employees will retire. Promoting qualified, established employees into leadership openings helps transitions proceed smoothly – but that requires cultivating young talent now.
- **Talent building pays off.** Developing burgeoning managers improves motivation, productivity, and retention. All great for your business!
- **Mind the gap.** The looming talent shortage and skills gap will make it even harder for your company to find the right people. Develop the talent you have and avoid the rat race.
- **Talent + loyalty = competitive advantage.** Young managers are willing to move on if their current employer doesn't give them the opportunities and support they need. Help your best people thrive, and you'll keep them off the job market – and out of competitors' clutches.

**Developing young managers is smart business. But how can your company get the results it needs? Focus on mentoring, professional development, career planning, and retention strategies.**

**Keep reading to find out how.**



# 1 Mentoring

**Mentoring your young talent is a low-cost way to harness their skills, develop their potential, and train them to lead. The benefits include:**

- **Using the talent you have to train the talent you need.** Pair employees with one another according to their strengths. This facilitates knowledge transfer and minimizes the potential for critical knowledge loss.
- **Sharing across generations.** Use a cross-generational approach to encourage the transfer of ideas and information in *both* directions.
- **Building networks.** Encourage “external” mentoring of young managers, which connects mentors and mentees across organizations, strengthens your company’s professional networks and encourages cross-pollination of ideas and methods.





# Do it Right! Best Practices for Mentoring Young Managers

**Mentoring offers powerful tools for change and growth.**  
**When mentoring young managers:**

- **Know your goals.** What skills do your young managers need now – and what skills will they need as they rise through the organization? The best mentoring programs look at both the “now” and the “later.”
- **Consider cross-generational mentoring.** Older, more experienced staff members offer perspective and guidance to young managers navigating the company’s culture; young managers can provide technical guidance and a fresh outlook. Encourage “two-way” mentoring in which partners learn from one another.
- **Focus on feedback.** Members of the Millennial generation are used to prompt and plentiful feedback on their work. Mentors should focus on providing feedback, but allowing young managers to determine on their own how to apply it.
- **Cross your t’s and dot your i’s.** Use a written mentoring and confidentiality agreement to clarify each participant’s role in the program. Young managers understand these agreements as a form of feedback they can use to gauge the effectiveness of their mentoring relationships.





# 2 Training and Professional Development

Mentoring builds relationships and encourages loyalty and professional growth. But it shouldn't replace more conventional training and professional development for young professionals, especially when they are promoted to management for the first time.

Without training, new managers may find themselves in crisis. Used to “getting it done” under their own power, they are now responsible for delegating, juggling the demands of their superiors with the need to build a productive team.

Millennials thrive on feedback and guidance. Provide it, and you'll provide the foundation they need to succeed.

Here's how:



# Do it Right! Training and Professional Development for Young Managers

Develop proficient, successful managers by teaching them how to delegate, build trust, and maintain self-confidence.

## Delegation

Teach skills like giving clear instructions, setting timetables, and eliciting progress reports from team members. Young managers who understand how to delegate are less likely to feel as if the results are out of their hands – and more likely to lead their teams effectively.

## Building Trust

When a young employee is promoted over older or more senior workers, building trust can be complicated by lingering resentment.

Give new managers the tools to build trust among their team members:

- Warn them about the potential for hurt feelings or damaged pride.
- Teach them to seek feedback and guidance from subordinates without abdicating leadership or responsibility.
- Provide backup when needed, but don't solve problems for them.





## Confidence

A promotion to management can bolster a young professional's confidence – but it can also damage it. Leadership skills aren't learned through osmosis; they're learned by practice.

Guide the practice of new managers in confidence-building directions by:

- Offering regular feedback on their work – both good and bad.
- Creating open lines of communication they can use to seek help when they need it.
- Evaluating them on their overall management abilities, not merely on deliverables.



# 3. Career Planning

**Protect your assets and investment by helping young professionals chart their career paths with your organization. Proactive career planning:**

- Aligns their goals with those of the organization,
- Demonstrates a genuine commitment to their growth, and
- Cultivates loyalty.

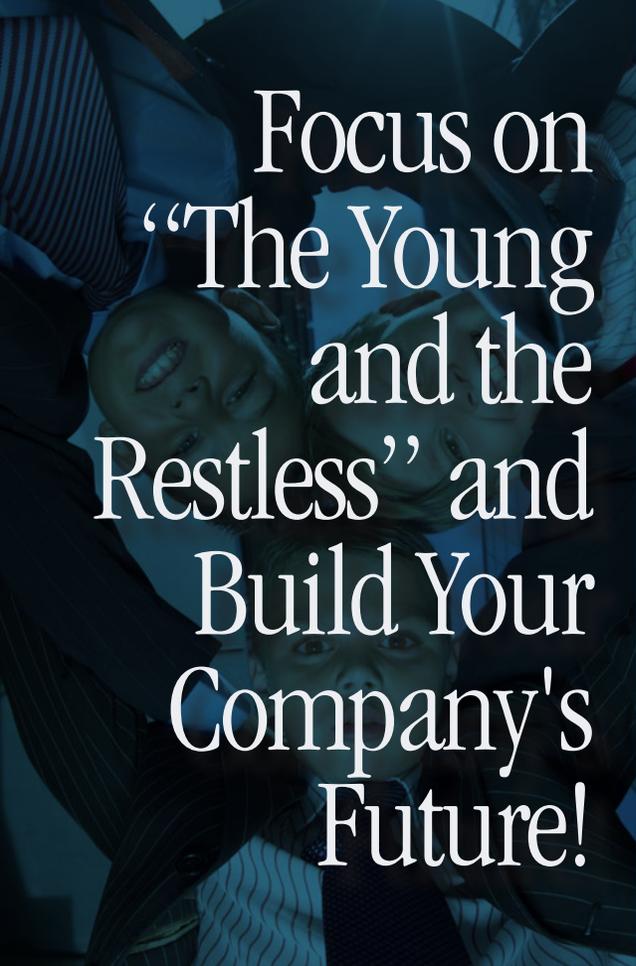


# Do it Right! Tips for Career Planning

When developing career plans with your young managers, keep the following points in mind:

- **Millennials expect change.** They thrive when they perceive opportunities to be rewarded for their efforts, rather than for “external” factors like seniority.
- **Millennials find the “old guard” stifling** – but this doesn’t mean they don’t need guidance. On the contrary, these young workers tend to do best when they have clear goals, expectations, and feedback. Present joint career planning as an opportunity to clarify their goals, rather than as a mandate to take the “old-fashioned” route.
- **Millennials demand work-life balance.** Keep their need for balance in mind while building career plans that work for both the employee and the organization.





# Focus on “The Young and the Restless” and Build Your Company's Future!

Training young managers to lead is a process. Companies that invest in this process early in a young manager's career reap the rewards:

- **Strong working relationships.** Focusing on young managers through mentorship and career development helps them build the working relationships that will sustain both the individual and your company through the years ahead.
- **Decades of productivity.** A single career with a single employer means 30 to 40 years of productive, focused work – all to the benefit of your organization.
- **The chance to shape the future.** Raising a young manager through the ranks gives your company the chance to shape the leadership it needs, without having to “undo” habits learned at other companies.
- **Competitive advantage.** Retaining the talent you have reduces turnover costs. And every young professional you keep lends their talent to your company's goals, putting you ahead of your competition.



## Your Staffing Provider Can Help

Your staffing firm does more than just connect you to young talent. Staffing partners specialize in understanding the entire employment cycle.

Talk to your provider about your current and future talent needs. Together, you can create strategies to hire, develop and retain the right people – individuals who will ensure your organization's continued success for years to come.

