

# Millenials – How Do They Learn?

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Millenials are a new breed of employee that are quickly saturating the workforce. Born between 1980 and 2000, these high achievers with a “can do” attitude take no prisoners – they can do anything, be anything and have anything they want. But they still need to be integrated into business environments where their co-workers and managers are Boomers and Gen-Xers. So how do we teach them? What techniques best foster their ability to learn?

*"Millenials thrive on challenges but they also insist on the structure to back it up."*

First, it's important to understand that Millenials are well-educated, optimistic and collaborative. They're incredibly technologically astute; the internet is their library, cell phones and email are their social playgrounds, and text messaging is their communication of choice. With this kind of knowledge, it's imperative to transform what was once a “lecture-based” classroom into an inter-active, fun and challenging learning experience. Consider:

## **Design:**

Set up the environment so that Millenials can physically share and communicate their ideas and learning. Instead of filling the space with rows and rows of chairs, gather chairs and tables into clutches to encourage and facilitate teamwork.

## **Method:**

Instead of the conventional lecture/meeting room teaching environment, entertain the idea of a podcast training program. As mentioned, Millenials are a

whiz when it comes to using technology, so this method of learning, if suited to the subject matter, may be the best route to go.

## **Evaluation:**

Assign tasks to groups of people who will then be evaluated as a group for reaching their goals. Also known as the Jigsaw technique, each person's part is essential for the completion and full understanding of the final product. If each person's part is essential, then each person is essential, and this plays directly into the Millenials' understanding of team-based success.

## **Mentor:**

Millenials insist on and respond well to personal attention, guidance and constant feedback. This may be due to the way in which they were raised: parents who encouraged, and praised their participation in any, and all, activities. Don't just stand behind a lectern and speak – make your way into the fold, compliment them, commend them, support them.

Millenials thrive on challenges but they also insist on the structure to back it up. This may mean breaking goals into steps and offering assistance to help them achieve their aspirations. Keep in mind that they are great multi-taskers – after all, they've grown up having to juggle school, their social lives, sports and various and sundry extra-curricular activities. They know how to work hard and keep all the balls in the air, so keep them stimulated and interested with a wide variety of projects and responsibilities

