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## Millennials: rough diamond of an organization

**The care for building the involvement of the representatives of the so-called Generation Y has accompanied the managers of service companies for years. Young employees are seen as "a tough nut to crack," and yet they have the potential that can be released and used to achieve business objectives. How to use the expectations and opportunities of "Gen Y" representatives to push the organization to a completely new direction?**

The challenges associated with the needs of the so-called Generation Y, i.e. persons born in 1980s and 1990s (also called Millennials), have been giving managers and employers sleepless nights for some time now. "Gen Y" in Poland means about 11 million people, which is roughly a half of the population of productive age. Many of them are already working in the SSC and BPO sector, and some younger ones still study – and they will soon begin their work in the sector. There are many reports and studies on the Millennials' approach to work, providing managers with special recommendations. We decided to have a look at them.

### Millennials in studies

Firstly, we selected 12 key studies on the expectations of the generation, carried out in the last 5 years by consulting and head hunting companies and research agencies.<sup>1</sup> We created a list of the most frequently mentioned needs of Generation Y. In Table 1 we listed them in two columns. In the first one we included those that are important for this generation, increase their involvement, but do not directly add value to employers. In the second column we listed the expectations which, when used properly, may be translated directly into the improvement of the organization's efficiency, and thus into the accomplishment of business objectives.

Table 1 Meta-analysis of 12 studies: Millennials' needs

| Millennials' needs that do not directly add value to employers | Millennials' needs which, when fulfilled properly, may add value to employers |
|--|---|
| Emphasis on <i>work-life balance</i>                           | Transparent, fair work environment  |
| Flexible working hours and place of work                       | Emphasis on relationships, teamwork   |
| Socially responsible employer, driven by values                | Emphasis on personal development, learning                                    |
| Adequate remuneration and benefits                             | Need for feedback   |
| Need for stable employment                                     | Need for a sense of the impact of the effects of the team of the company      |
| Desire for quick promotion                                     | Desire to perform interesting, varied tasks                                   |
| Willingness to work abroad, in multiple locations              | Desire to improve work environment  |
| No attachment to one employer                                  | Desire to be appreciated, valued  |
| Emphasis on online contact instead of "face to face" contact   |   |
| Casual clothes at work   |   |
| Working in a modern office                                     |   |

<sup>1</sup> Millennials - how to recruit young and talented employees, MonsterPolska employment service, 2016

Millennials at work Reshaping the workplace, PwC, 2011

Young people in the labour market, SW Research, 2016

Motivation of young people Bigram, 2015

Generation Y and the world of work, HAYS, Poland 2014

Generation Y at work - young, ambitious, and still is effective? Research, TNS Polska, 2015

Randstad Award, Randstad, 2016

World generations: a global study of the challenges in the area of balance between work and personal life, Ernst and Young, 2015

The 2016 Deloitte Millennial Survey. Winning over the next generation of leaders, Deloitte, 2016

The Future of Business Citizenship, MSL Group, 2014

Workforce Mindset Study, Aon Hewitt, 2015

YouthSpeak 2015, PwC, 2015

The first group of needs (left column) is undoubtedly important from the point of view of building engagement in Generation Y. For example, in a study conducted by TNS Polska "Generation Y at work - young, ambitious, and still effective?" we find that more than half of Millennials (55%) believe that they would work more efficiently with flexible working hours. 4 out of 10 of them believe that work from home would increase their performance. And the report "Generation Y and the world of work" by HAYS indicates, among other things, that representatives of Generation Y want to work in an international environment and that the motivating factors for them include the possibility of gaining a bonus and proper base pay. The study conducted by Deloitte entitled "Millennial Survey" highlights motivators such as social responsibility and values of the employer. The vast majority of the studies analysed by us also point out that young workers want to strike a balance between private and professional life – they do not want to work at the expense of passion, entertainment and family life.

All these needs indicate a unique nature of expectations of the Millennial generation in comparison with their older colleagues. They are often regarded as crucial in reports and studies. We believe that although they should not be neglected, the greatest potential lies in the second group. You just need to find the key to responding to those expectations consistently and comprehensively.

The first group of needs (left column) is important from the point of view of building the involvement of "Gen Y", and often considered as crucial in reports and studies. However, we look at the issue differently. We believe that although the first group expectations should

### How to respond to the expectations

How to use this potential? The SSC/BPO approach developed by the 4Results team and used in dozens of organizations may be helpful, as it increases the efficiency of operational teams in service centres. We called this method Positive Productivity®. It corresponds directly to the 8 needs in the diamond, and above all – the two key expectations in its "hard core".

In the first place, it **ensures transparency through continuous measurement of the work of the entire team, which is**

not be neglected, the greatest potential lies in the second group. You just need to find the key of how to respond to those expectations consistently and comprehensively.

### 8 needs of Gen Y

Let us describe briefly needs from the second column found in the study reports. The first one is (1) **transparency** in the working environment. People representing Gen Y expect transparency and fair assessment in work life, in which their true achievements are taken into account. At the same time they want to build (2) **relationships in the team** and anticipate collaboration with other employees. What is more, Millennials want to (3) **improve their working environment**, (4) **get interesting and varied tasks**, and, simultaneously, (5) **take care of their personal development and learn**. On the other hand, they want to (6) **have a sense of impact**, (7) **receive constant feedback** and (8) **feel appreciated**.

The eight needs, interconnected in that way, create a certain pattern. We called it a Diamond of Millennials' Needs (Figure 1). It consists of a "hard core", i.e. the needs of transparency and teamwork. Those two, well developed, translate into an appropriate answer to all the other six expectations. In the scheme we presented it in such a way that the hard core is in contact with all the other needs. At the same time, the expectations in each of the two "threes" are strongly correlated with each other – the need for improvements may be addressed by interesting optimization tasks and contribute to personal development. The provision of appropriate feedback, in turn, translates into meeting the need of having an impact on the reality and being appreciated.

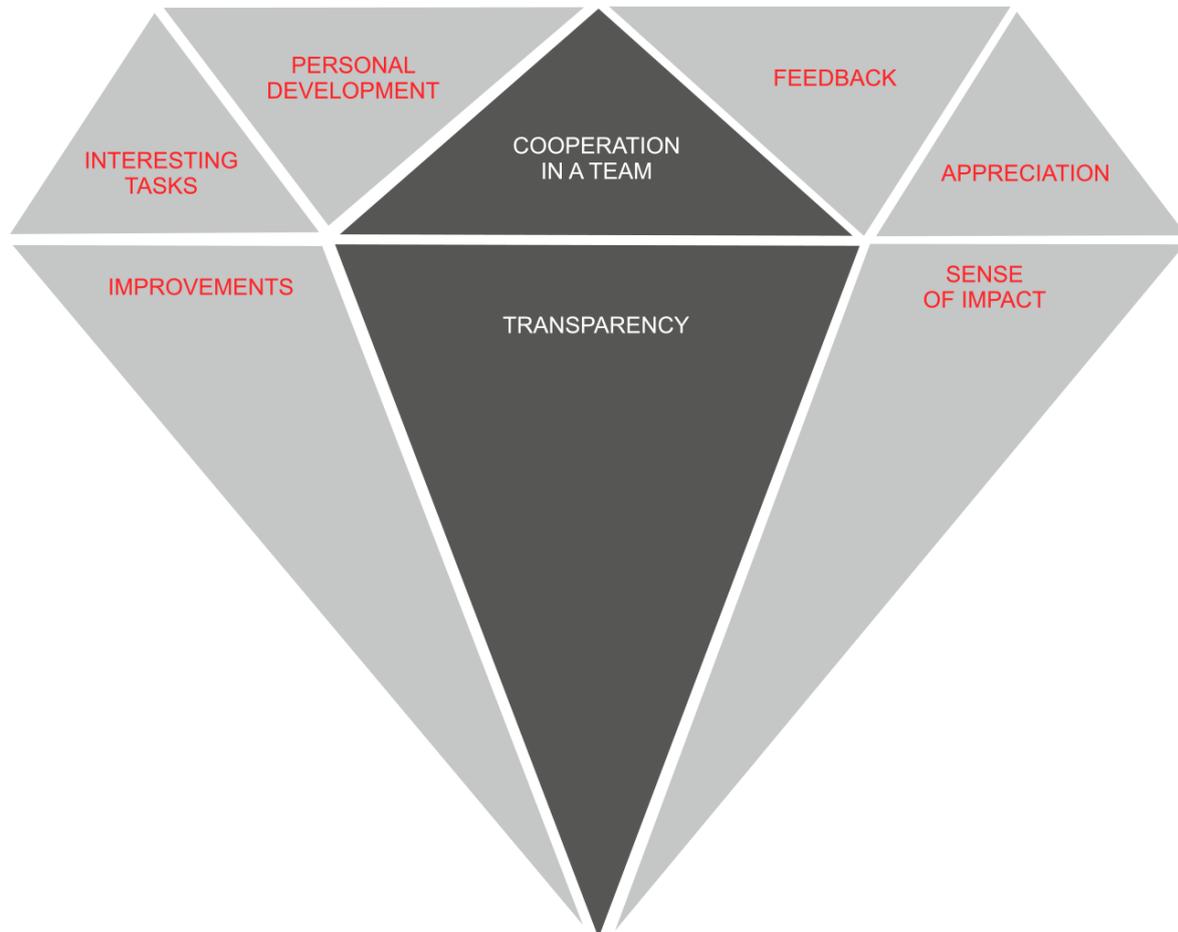
**implemented on an ongoing basis and provides a comprehensive and accurate picture of the effects of tasks and, at the same time, of the problems and their sources.** This measurement can be performed using a simple IT tool. In the words of Peter Drucker, "If you cannot measure something, you cannot manage it."

Secondly, it implements in the organization **team habits, such as daily and weekly meetings**, which provide an opportunity to jointly review the results of measurements and to draw conclusions. This is appreciated by

Millenials, like Kasia, a specialist at a global law firm Dentons: "Regular meetings in my opinion affect the work of the entire team, giving the opportunity to exchange experiences

and observations. It is easier to find solutions to problems when we are able to talk about them on a regular basis."

Figure 1 Diamond of 8 Millennials' Needs



Complete transparency of the process and tasks performed shows a number of cases of wastage, which the team is able to eliminate through systematic work, focusing on the identification and removal of the root causes of problems. In that way we satisfy the need for improvements. It has been mentioned by a young employee of BPO Roedl and Partner, Marta: "I very much appreciate the daily and weekly meetings. They are extremely helpful for the team, improve collaboration – everyone knows what is happening. You can share some ideas, solutions. It's a very good idea."

Simultaneously, transparency expressed in the measurement of the effects of the implemented improvements is a response to the need to influence the employees' reality. What is more,

it gives possibility to take part in interesting task (such as optimization project) and, at the same time, to develop personal skills.

It is also directly connected with constant (daily, weekly) feedback delivered to the Gen Y representatives. The best feedback is the one which is based on the actual performance statistics, for example, on data from the previous day, or the trend for the past week. These motivators can be compared to a video game in which a player is able to evaluate on a regular basis whether he/she wins or loses on the basis of earned points. This is how continuous feedback is treated by young people who are accustomed to playing games – as a necessary appreciation of their work progress. Kasia of Dentons said: "Reports

prepared based on the measurement of our working time allow us to reflect on what action consumes the most time, whether it is possible to reduce unnecessary steps and what to do so we worked better and more efficiently."

As you progress and achieve results, optimization translates into appreciation of young workers who feel the satisfaction of the improvements implemented by them in the working environment. And in this way they satisfy the need to be an appreciated Millennial.

### **Cutting the diamond**

We are convinced that the "Gen Y" representatives are a kind of treasure, a diamond in the organization. Unfortunately, often the needs we have described are ignored when thinking about Millennials, or there is no coherent approach taken that would respond to them. The truth is that behind those needs there is the potential which, when freed, significantly helps in achieving company's business goals. It can be used well – the diamond can be "cut" properly – using the Positive Productivity® method.



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