



**INSIGHT REPORT**

# **Engaging Millennials in the Workplace**

**FIVE EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR THE  
GROWING NUMBER OF YOUNGER WORKERS**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Common estimates predict that the Millennial generation—those born between 1980 and 2000—will make up 60% of the workforce by 2020. As with each previous generation, this group of employees brings its own set of expectations, attitudes, and approaches to the job, which creates both challenges and opportunities for the organizations that employ them. Temkin Group research found that compared to other generations, Millennials desire opportunities to learn and advance their careers as well as opportunities that allow them to be creative and work flexible hours. To engage Millennials more effectively in the workplace, companies should deploy five strategies across Temkin Group's Five I's of Employee Engagement. These five strategies are: *Expand Job Descriptions, Create Connections, Make Work Matter, Allow for Flexibility, and Develop Millennial Leaders*. We also added a checklist to help HR departments drive these five strategies across their core processes.

## MILLENNIALS PRESENT CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR EMPLOYERS

Whenever a new generation of employees enters the workforce, it is always viewed as “different” and “challenging to manage” by older generations. The Millennial generation—employees born between 1980 and 2000—has been no different. Like their predecessors, what they seek and expect in the workplace, as well as what they have to offer to their employers, has been shaped by historical events, cultural changes, and technological innovations (see Figure 1). While the following characteristics are not exclusive to this generation, Millennials are (see Figure 2):

- **Group-oriented.** Millennials prefer team-based, collaborative work. Relationships are important to them, and they interact with an extensive network of communities. Temkin Group's research found that compared to other employees Millennials look for opportunities to work with people they can learn from.<sup>1</sup>
- **Technologically savvy.** Millennials grew up “connected” and expect their workplace to keep up and enable them to access information and resources right when they need them. Millennials have increased the amount of time they spend online for work more than any other generation over the past year. They have also spent the most time using their mobile phone to access the Internet or an app.<sup>2</sup> This group is used to juggling multiple conversations with ease, and they prefer shorter messages and smaller doses of information more frequently.
- **Progress driven.** This generation wants to make a difference at work right away. Our research shows that compared to employees from other generations, Millennials favor jobs that offer opportunities for advancement and they prefer to work for a boss

<sup>1</sup> Source: Temkin Group Q3 2014 Consumer Benchmark Study

<sup>2</sup> See Temkin Group Data Snapshot, “Media Use Benchmark, 2014” (March 2014).

who teaches them and helps them progress in their careers.<sup>3</sup> To direct their progress, Millennials want clear and specific criteria for success along with regular feedback confirming that they are on the right track.

- **Socially conscious.** Millennials seek meaningful work and will look to work for employers whose principles align with their personal values. Despite this desire for meaningful work, Temkin Group research found that nearly 40% of Millennials don't understand the overall mission of their company, making them the least mission-connected of the three generations primarily employed in the workplace today.<sup>4</sup>
- **Autonomous.** Millennials prefer choices over mandates. This generation feels less tied to traditional office hours and cubicles and prefer options for when, where, and how they get their work done. Compared to respondents from other generations, Millennials do not want bosses who micro-manage by providing specific directions for getting work done. Instead, Millennials seek jobs that have flexible work hours and encourage creativity.<sup>5</sup>

### **Adapting the Five I's of Employee Engagement**

Engaged employees are valuable assets, yet organizations are having difficulty engaging the fastest growing portion of the workforce, Millennials. Our 2014 survey of over 5,600 U.S. full-time employees—33% of which were Millennials—found that just over half of this generation are moderately or highly engaged, putting them behind both Generation X and Baby Boomers (see Figure 3).<sup>6</sup> To raise engagement levels with this young group of employees, companies need to consider how to adjust what Temkin Group calls the Five I's of Employee Engagement (see Figure 4):

- **Inform.** To capture Millennials' attention, companies need to evolve communications both in content and style to make them more relevant, more straightforward, and shorter, and they need to expand the channels that they use, especially interactive social media tools.
- **Inspire.** Motivate Millennials by reinforcing the importance of the company's values and by painting a clear picture of how they can impact the company while doing the things that matter to them.
- **Instruct.** Millennials want to understand what success looks like, and they want to be able to learn as much outside the classroom as they can inside the classroom. This learning should be supplemented with frequent feedback from supervisors and mentors.
- **Involve.** Millennials' combined desires to both contribute in a meaningful way and collaborate with others makes it especially important for companies to give these employees a voice and a role in improving processes, solving problems, and planning for the future.

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<sup>3</sup> Source: Temkin Group Q3 2014 Consumer Benchmark Study

<sup>4</sup> Source: Temkin Group Q3 2014 Consumer Benchmark Study

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> See Temkin Group Insight Report, "Employee Engagement Benchmark Study, 2014" (March 2014).

- **Incent.** Their desire for growth and advancement means that Millennials appreciate structured expectations and clear measures of success. They also want regular reinforcement and confirmation that they are progressing in the right direction.

## **FIVE STRATEGIES FOR ENGAGING MILLENNIALS IN THE WORKPLACE**

To understand how best to capitalize on this generation, we interviewed a number of companies and vendors that are finding ways to engage Millennials.<sup>7</sup> We found that most organizations recognize both the challenges and the opportunities associated with this generation and are using a variety of approaches to engage Millennials with both their work and their employer. Our research uncovered five specific strategies that we believe are critical for engaging Millennials (see Figures 5 and 6):

- 1. Expand job descriptions:** Clearly define performance expectations and create a variety of opportunities for Millennials to expand their knowledge and skills.
- 2. Create connections:** Foster network building within and across generational lines, organizational levels, and functional roles.
- 3. Make work matter:** Help Millennials connect to the company's brand values, its culture, and the causes they care about.
- 4. Allow for flexibility:** Demonstrate adaptability in when, where, and how the company communicates, trains, and expects work to be done.
- 5. Develop Millennial leaders:** Help non-Millennials understand and effectively engage this generation.

### **#1: Expand Job Descriptions: Enable Supportive Learning Environments**

Millennials want opportunities to grow their skills in meaningful ways, and they desire frequent feedback confirming that they are making valued contributions on the job. To emphasize growth and development with Millennials, companies can:

- **Expose Millennials to new skills through stretch assignments.** Millennials bring a thirst for knowledge and a desire for personal development and progress to the workplace. Organizations can meet these needs by proactively working with Millennials to expose them to special assignments that grow their skills and position them for advancement. At Halogen Software, new graduate hires have the opportunity to spend up to 20% of their time on work outside of their primary job and are encouraged to join projects outside of their usual responsibilities to build their business knowledge. The company also offers these employees the opportunity to apply their growing knowledge by participating in a mini-business simulation, where they create a fictional company, progress through all of the processes of that company, and then give feedback to the simulated business on the experience as if they were customers.

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<sup>7</sup> Companies interviewed for this report include: Adobe, Boston College Center for Work and Family, Ernst & Young, Future Workplace, Halogen Software, Hilton, Inward Consulting, Kaiser Permanente, LexisNexis, Rikleen Institute for Strategic Leadership, Root Inc., Tribe.

- **Help Millennials control their own career path.** Compared to previous generations, Millennials have a more accelerated view of “career pace,” and they are more than willing to manage their own career. Companies who want to retain their Millennial employees should develop clear career paths that highlight knowledge and skill development and include more frequent advancement milestones than typical time-based promotions do. Halogen Software’s career management program helps employees get a better understanding of their strengths, weaknesses, and personal values and then offers advice about how to drive their career within the company. It shifts the understanding of a career path from a straight line to a more circuitous route that encourages employees to build a personal network of relationships across the organization and to reach out to other organizational areas for job shadowing or special projects. Sodexo’s i-Gen employee network includes career management training, which covers career competencies, development opportunities, career navigation, and how to prepare for a promotion within the company.<sup>8</sup>
- **Manage performance with clear goals and frequent feedback.** Traditional performance management processes are built on backward-looking evaluations and feedback that’s provided once or twice per year. This type of approach often leaves a negative impression on the employee (and are not usually enjoyable for the manager). Millennials want more. This includes clear definitions of what success looks like up front, explicit expectations, goals that have meaning to them, and frequent informal feedback that supplements regular performance discussions. Technology firm Adobe abandoned its performance review process and replaced it with a new program called the *Check-In*, which places an emphasis on having the employees themselves driving the right kind of performance discussions (see Figure 7). The Check-In is composed of three elements: an expectation-setting step at the start of the year, frequent informal feedback in addition to quarterly expectations discussions, and employee-owned personal development plans.
- **Prepare Millennials to assume leadership roles.** Millennials no longer only occupy entry-level positions at organizations; they have begun advancing into supervisory and leadership roles. Organizations need to start ensuring that their Millennial employees are equipped with the leadership skills necessary to guide the company into the future. LexisNexis’s *Management Associate Program* increases emerging leaders’ breadth of knowledge about the company and the industries it serves by offering three 8-month rotations through different parts of the business. Participants receive feedback on their performance both from their direct managers and from an HR leader, who they meet with every two to three weeks to discuss their progress and receive coaching. The company reinforces the importance of employee engagement to program participants with a variety of activities across LexisNexis, such as community service days and special events for employees and their families. As part of Baptist Health Lexington’s *Evolving Leaders Program*, in-house experts mentor employees and teach a series of courses aimed at helping participants build their capabilities in areas like finance and performance accountability, clinical care improvement, and organizational culture and customer relations (see Figure 8).<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Rikleen, L. (n.d.). *Creating Tomorrow’s Leaders: the Expanding Roles of Millennials in the Workplace*. Boston College Center for Work and Family Executive Briefing Series.

<sup>9</sup> AHA Committee of Performance Improvement (2013) *Managing an Intergenerational Workforce: Strategies for Health Care Transformation*.

- **Engage Millennials early with an effective Intern program.** For many organizations, the battle to attract top talent starts on the college campus. Intern programs influence who Millennials choose to work for after graduation by giving them an up-close view of the culture and work environment of potential employers. LexisNexis offers a 10-week summer intern program that is centrally organized and places employees into both the technology group and business verticals (see Figure 9). Interns are embedded with full-time teams and participate in the same performance management program as full-time employees, which includes goal setting and mid- and end-of-summer reviews. This group, which consisted of 30 interns from the U.S. and Brazil in Summer 2014, receives coaching and guidance from line of business leaders and presents the final results of their work to key leaders, including the business unit CEO.

## #2: Create Connections: Foster Relationship-Building

The Millennial generation is used to working on teams and collaborating with others, and they actively seek out opportunities to form relationships both inside and outside of their organization. To fulfill Millennials' need to build relationships, companies should:

- **Create opportunities for Millennials to interact with senior leaders.** Millennials are not content to “stay at their level” when it comes to making connections within the organization. Millennials want to work at organizations whose leaders are accessible and transparent. Adobe's leaders make themselves available to Millennials in a number of ways. For example, they interact with interns by participating in their *Bootcamp* at the start of the interns' employment. Leaders also participate in ongoing *knowledge showcases* to share their perspectives and answer questions about the company's different business units. Marriott hosted in-market *Evenings of Engagement*, during which high-potential Millennials interacted with area vice presidents to discuss career aspirations and how to pursue their goals inside the company.<sup>10</sup>
- **Facilitate cross-company networking.** Activities that bring together employees from different functions and levels to meet and form relationships with each other not only appeases Millennials' desire to expand their networks, but such activities also foster an environment of sharing and learning that benefits all employees. At Northrop Grumman, local volunteers lead the company's *Connect1NG* program, organizing social events, community service projects, and professional development across all of the company's regions. These volunteer leaders not only benefit from the networking opportunities, but also from leadership training, stretch assignments, and coaching that comes through working with the local *Connect1NG* executive sponsor.<sup>11</sup> MITRE Corporation organized monthly lunch sessions where groups of 16-20 employees from different roles, ages, and departments met to talk about a variety of topics, ranging from how to brief a senior person to a basic introduction of systems engineering. The company also introduced *Networking Circles*, a program co-led by two employees from different generations, which provides additional opportunities to

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<sup>10</sup> Rikleen, L. (n.d.). *Creating Tomorrow's Leaders: the Expanding Roles of Millennials in the Workplace*. Boston College Center for Work and Family Executive Briefing Series.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

network with and learn from a diverse group of co-workers. Employees can be nominated to participate in this program or can choose to opt-in themselves.<sup>12</sup>

- **Help Millennials bond with each other.** Many organizations effectively use affinity groups to engage groups of employees who share similar interests, backgrounds, or experiences. Millennial-centered affinity groups enable the company to specifically focus on engaging and retaining this generation. Created by Millennial volunteers, *genKP* is one of Kaiser Permanente's many business resource groups. It provides Millennials with a range of activities and resources that are designed to meet their needs and show them that there is room to grow inside the company (see Figure 10). Today, over 1,100 *genKP* members interact at their own pace at a variety of events organized by three executive sponsors and 30 volunteer leaders. Events are offered once or twice a month—both live and virtually—and these events include an Innovation and Technology speaker series, talks by internal and external guests sharing career success stories, and an array of local service projects.
- **Organize formal reverse mentoring arrangements.** While Millennials appreciate periodic interactions with leaders in large groups or through internal social networks, companies that really want to build mutual understanding between Millennials and senior leaders should establish reverse mentoring programs (see Figure 11). Hewlett-Packard (HP) uses reverse mentoring within its IT organizations, pairing a recently hired Millennial mentor with a CIO mentee. The mentor and mentee use HP's social networking tool to engage in a variety of discussions. The Millennial mentors share their perspectives on IT, new technology tools, and their ideas to help the business, while the CIO mentees teach their younger mentors how to navigate the company's organizational hierarchy and share their executive perspectives on corporate life.<sup>13</sup> At PricewaterhouseCoopers, a reverse mentoring system pairs senior leaders with younger employees who are highly skilled at using social tools. Thus, the leaders benefit from increased social media competency while the mentor gains exposure to a senior leader, which in turn provides the employee with a mentoring relationship as well.<sup>14</sup>
- **Enable peer-to-peer learning.** One of the primary reasons Millennials set out to build a strong network of relationships is so they can find expertise when they need it. TELUS uses its online social platform, *TeamHub*, to connect its workforce with the ever-growing amount of knowledge across the company. To help efficiently find and contact internal experts, all employees have personal profiles that capture their education, experience, certifications, and awards. Within the *Jam* section, employees can participate in company-wide wikis, microblogging, and specific group-based discussions on topics they are interested in, connecting those with questions to those with answers.<sup>15</sup> BT started its *Dare2share* program after employee feedback showed a high desire among employees to learn from their peers. Employees share knowledge through short audio and video podcasts, online discussions, and training documents.

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<sup>12</sup> Fraone, J., Harmann, D., & McNally, K. (n.d.) The Multi-Generational Workforce: Management Implications and Strategies for Collaboration. Boston College Center for Work and Family Executive Briefing Series.

<sup>13</sup> HP Blogs: Careers at HP. (2014). Reverse Mentoring and Dominating Corporate Life. Retrieved November 21, 2014, from <http://h30507.www3.hp.com>

<sup>14</sup> See Temkin Group Insight Report, "Social Employee Engagement" (August 2014)

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

Employees can rate the different learning modules, and if they need more information, they can reach out to the content contributors directly.<sup>16</sup>

### #3: Make Work Matter: Recognize the Importance of Meaningfulness

Millennials not only want to make a difference in their company, but they also want to make a difference in the world at large. To bring meaningfulness to the workplace, companies can:

- **Reinforce the importance of company values.** Millennials want their personal values to be aligned with the values of the organization they work for. To engage this generation, organizations need to clearly define what they stand for and then use these core values to guide their decision-making and actions in ways that are tangible to Millennials. Ernst & Young designed its *culture coin program* to publicly recognize employees who make the firm's culture part of their daily life and live out the firm's values. Recipients get an actual minted coin for themselves and also receive a second coin so they can "pay it forward" by recognizing a coworker who embodies the culture through his or her actions. The firm also collects a library of stories that describe employees performing values-based actions, which it then posts every week on its intranet and internal newsletters. When Omicron Canada refreshed its brand, it started by defining and clarifying its five guiding principles: *Building Trust, Be a Leader, Be Efficient, Be Involved, and Be Proud*. As part of the launch, employees were asked to share what the principles meant to them and make personal commitments about how they would live by the principles over the first 90 days.<sup>17</sup>
- **Support employee philanthropy and community service.** Organizations can earn the commitment of Millennial employees by finding ways to make them proud of what the company does, not only in its business but also in its communities. LexisNexis provides employees with the chance to participate in activities across the company including community service *Cares Days*—two paid days off each year to volunteer at organizations of the employee's choice—and the annual *Day of Caring*, where employees participate in community service projects as a team. In Ernst & Young's *Corporate Social Responsibility Fellows* program, employees use their accounting skills to help entrepreneurs by providing free services they couldn't otherwise afford. As an added benefit, the program increases high-potential young employees' attachment to the firm by providing an opportunity for them to develop their own skills while giving back. UBS introduced a gap year program that allows new campus hires to defer their start date for a year and instead spend that time involved in community service or acquiring new skills. After the company approves the service or learning plan, gap year participants receive the equivalent base salary and health insurance stipend for the year until they assume their offered position at the company.<sup>18</sup>
- **Involve Millennials in innovation efforts.** Millennials want to make an impact, and companies can satisfy this desire by involving them in innovation and new product development efforts. Kaiser Permanente's *genKP* volunteer leaders have earned such a positive internal reputation that different departments call on them to represent this

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<sup>16</sup> Meister, J. & Willyerd, K. (May 2010). Mentoring Millennials. Harvard Business Review. Retrieved from <http://hbr.org>

<sup>17</sup> See Temkin Group Insight Report, "Social Employee Engagement" (August 2014)

<sup>18</sup> Hewlett, S., Sherbin, L., & Sumber, K. (July 2009). How Gen Y and Boomers Will Reshape Your Agenda. Harvard Business Review. Retrieved from <http://hbr.org>



generation when they need Millennials' input on other programs—from designing HR initiatives to contributing to enterprise and service line strategy discussions and innovation projects. genKP works with the department that's seeking Millennial input and finds the right match for the type of feedback needed and then recruits volunteers to provide their feedback. Ernst & Young runs *innovation challenges* to tap younger employees for original ideas about new product development or client needs based on these employees' experiences. Challenges run across countries and service lines with prizes for challenge winners, who are celebrated and publicized across the firm. MetLife uses its social-based innovation tool to share ideas and questions with employees at all levels of the organization and solicit their input. Employees can submit responses, build upon the postings of others, and vote ideas up and down to influence where the company takes action.

- **Tap Millennials to help lead change.** Organizations that want to appeal to Millennials' desire for meaningful work need to integrate this generation's unique perspective into discussions about the direction the company is taking and use them when introducing changes. General Electric (GE) brought together 21 Millennials from various parts of its business all over the world to help it identify ways to attract and retain employees. This three-month project was called *Global New Directions*, and it generated a number of recommendations that were ultimately presented to GE's chairman. Recommendations included providing more flexibility and choice through a personalized suite of benefits, creating new ways to reach prospective employees through gaming and other interactive technologies, and expanding leadership development programs to support more culturally adaptive global leaders.<sup>19</sup> During Adobe's *Customer Learning Experience* sessions, employees on a panel share personal stories about what actions they have taken that relate to the customer experience transformation underway at the firm. These stories make the change very real in terms that coworkers can understand and provide specific examples other employees can model.

#### **#4: Allow for Flexibility: Adapt How Things Get Done**

Millennials have grown up in a world that affords them many opportunities to choose where, when, and how they communicate, learn, and complete their assignments. To accommodate this generation's new way of working, companies can:

- **Offer role-appropriate flexible work arrangements.** One of the most noticeable ways that Millennials are changing the traditional workplace is by pushing to get their work done away from the office, outside of 9 to 5 work hours. With the right candidates, flexible work policies can improve engagement and productivity while saving the company money. American Express's *Blue Work* program categorizes employees as one of four work styles: Hub, Club, Roam, and Home based on their role/type of work or on discussions with their managers regarding their personal needs. For example, "Club" employees have flexible roles that balance a mix of in-person work at the office with virtual meetings and work that can be done in other locations. Blue Work is run by a cross-functional team, and this team governs its policies, designs specialized training programs for virtual workers, and manages the

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<sup>19</sup> Peters, S. (February 2012). How GE is Attracting, Developing, and Retaining Global Talent. Harvard Business Review. Retrieved from <http://hbr.org>

program's communications. After four or five months in their new Blue Work arrangement, employees are surveyed about their experience with the program. Questions cover topics like what is working well and how the transformation can be improved for employees and their leaders.<sup>20</sup>

- **Embrace employee social networks for communication and collaboration.** Temkin Group research shows that companies with high employee engagement use social tools more than companies with low engagement levels (see Figure 12).<sup>21</sup> As Millennials are the most digitally-connected generation, they expect technology to do more than just deliver information to them; they expect it to allow them to engage in two-way dialogues, to help them keep up with what's happening in their world, and to connect them with other employees across the organization. Adobe's private Facebook groups create peer communities within the company and help the company communicate with its new interns as soon as it starts to recruit them. Adobe uses a community manager to promote information that members need to know—such as company information or product updates—while also encouraging them to make their own posts and comments. Historically, a limited number of executives attended Schneider Electric's annual leadership conference in person, and the rest of organization had to wait until after the conference for news and updates. This changed when reporters from the company's internal communications team used Schneider's social network during the event to post real-time updates and generate two-way conversations. Employees monitoring the online updates got involved in the conference by commenting and providing feedback in the moment. Thus, an event that usually impacted 200 people directly had an impact on over 5,000 employees as a result of the social sharing.<sup>22</sup>
- **Use technology to deliver more relevant, appealing training programs.** Technology has been part of the way Millennials learn for much of their lives, and thus, they want to be able to learn what they want, when they want, even outside the walls of the typical corporate classroom. U.K. coffee shop Harris + Hoole's team of barista trainers use the company's social platform to share key information with their baristas on new product lines and coffee blends such as their origins, extraction times, and serving temperatures. The platform also offers a private space for baristas to come together with trainers to ask questions and request more information, which trainers respond to using a mix of text and video responses. Video posts have the added benefit of bringing knowledge to baristas that the company could never duplicate live. For example, a buyer went to observe the coffee harvest and captured video footage of the process that was later shared with the employees not on the trip. Adidas has replaced classroom training with online learning modules, which are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The platform generates suggested modules for each topic that an employee is interested in learning about. Modules can include videos and quizzes along with links to external content, like TED Talks. Employees rate and rank

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<sup>20</sup> Meister, J. (2013, April 1). Flexible Workspaces: Employee Perk or Business Tool to Recruit Top Talent. Forbes. Retrieved from <http://www.forbes.com>

<sup>21</sup> See Temkin Group Insight Report, "Social Employee Engagement" (August 2012)

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

each learning module, and the platform displays the ones that are the most popular or expert recommended.<sup>23</sup>

## #5: Develop Millennial Leaders: Prepare Others to Work with This Generation

Millennials play an important role at every level of an organization, and as such, savvy companies need to help other groups across the organization understand generational differences so that each group can evolve its approaches and processes. To prepare these other to work with Millennials, companies should:

- **Raise the level of generational IQ across the company.** With multiple generations coexisting in the workplace, it is important for everyone to increase their awareness of the characteristics and styles of each generation and understand how these differences affect their lives and their work. Ernst & Young uses learning webinars to help employees understand generational differences. These webinars teach participants how to identify the potential challenges that come with having to understand different perspectives and how to manage the expectations of different age groups. The webinars also provide language suggestions, which allows employees talk about generational differences in non-judgmental terms and helps build a mutual understanding between generations. TD Ameritrade uses its generational IQ program to teach employees about generational differences in both co-workers and customers. The bank recognizes that employees are not the only ones getting younger; Millennial customers in certain target segments also may look and act differently than older members of the same group, so employees need to be aware of differences in behaviors and preferences. General Mills uses a board game, *Leading Through Generations*, to educate employees about differences in communication and work styles between generations. This game has the added benefit of prompting valuable conversation amongst the coworkers playing the game, further fostering their learning.<sup>24</sup>
- **Help managers provide feedback that Millennials value.** Millennials' desire for more frequent performance feedback requires companies to use tools and training to help managers and supervisors change their approach to coaching and development conversations. Halogen Software requires all managers to have a one-on-one meeting with every direct report at least every other week so they can discuss how things are going. For these conversations to be effective, the company believes managers need to understand what motivates their employees, and so each employee takes an abbreviated Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)<sup>25</sup> test. This information gives managers a better understanding of individual motivations and helps them discern the most effective way to talk to each employee during coaching conversations. Ernst & Young trains managers on how to provide feedback to team members, how to effectively mentor an employee, and how to adapt their managing style to suit the person they are working with. The firm continues to evolve this training to explicitly cover formal vs. informal feedback, generational differences, and cultural differences.

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<sup>23</sup> Meister, J. (2014, July 21). A New Way of Working and Learning: Adidas Style. Forbes. Retrieved from <http://www.forbes.com>

<sup>24</sup> Fraone, J., Harmann, D., & McNally, K. (n.d.) The Multi-Generational Workforce: Management Implications and Strategies for Collaboration. Boston College Center for Work and Family Executive Briefing Series.

<sup>25</sup> The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® and MBTI® are registered trademarks of the MBTI Trust, Inc.

The training always emphasizes how important it is for the managers to know themselves first. Only once a manager knows where she is coming from herself, she can adjust her style and behavior when delivering feedback to someone else.

- **Show leaders how to communicate more effectively with Millennials.** While Baby Boomers and Gen X'ers can help Millennials communicate better in the workplace by coaching them on issues like formality, confidentiality, and when to use a telephone versus send an email versus meet face-to-face, these older generations can also adjust their communication style and methods to be more Millennial-friendly. This means sending shorter, more frequent messages and using a less formal style when conditions permit. To help with this, for example, Millennial participants in a telecommunications company's reverse mentoring program can offer advice to their executive mentees on using language that is more direct, clear, and matter of fact. That same organization's Internal Communications and HR departments can work to reduce the amount of corporate speak and jargon in its messages across communication channels as an example for everyone to follow.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES MUST STEP UP AND DRIVE EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT**

Temkin Group research shows that Human Resources (HR) groups have not been very active in driving employee engagement (see Figure 13). We believe that this must change. HR organizations should consider employee engagement one of their most important strategic objectives. Here's a primer for HR groups that want to actively engage Millennials (see Figure 14):

- **Hiring and onboarding.** Millennials evaluate potential employers across many dimensions, including brand reputation and alignment of values. Thus, HR organizations should have a well-defined employer brand and should communicate that brand through the channels that Millennials naturally gravitate towards, particularly in the digital/social realm. Branding stories should center on "employees like me" and highlight how Millennials are making an impact at the organization. During the onboarding process, HR should reinforce the brand and values "fit" and help new Millennial hires form meaningful internal relationships quickly.
- **Training and development.** Most Millennials are used to more interactive forms of learning. So while traditional classroom-based, instructor-led programs might be the norm today, HR organizations need to incorporate technology-based training and collaboration tools into their Millennial learning plans. HR also needs to facilitate Millennials' growth and development outside of the classroom through stretch assignments, special projects, and formalized coaching or mentoring programs. HR organizations should encourage managers to provide more frequent feedback that recognizes both the good and the bad. They should also train managers on how to offer clear and specific guidance to Millennial employees when there is a need for improvement.
- **Performance management.** Millennials are ambitious and have high expectations about how they will progress within their organizations. They look for very clear success criteria and want to see the path ahead of them. To appease their need for advancement, HR organizations should develop clear career paths that include more

frequent milestones, that emphasize individual skill development, and that recognize growth, even without formal “promotions.” This also means that HR needs to help managers “let go” and allow Millennials to take new jobs inside the company, otherwise these young employees may leave the organization altogether to find opportunities elsewhere.

- **Recognition and incentives.** Millennials, like all generations before them, want to hear that they are doing a good job—they just want to hear it more frequently. Millennials are accustomed to structure and regular praise, and in the workplace, this translates into a desire to know how they are measured and a need to receive recurring validation and approval that they are on track. HR organizations should establish non-monetary recognition programs that encourage managers and peers to find Millennials who are demonstrating the behaviors required for success. HR should also examine its formal incentive programs and incorporate rewards for demonstrating the company’s values and for exceptional team performance—both workplace elements that are important to Millennials.

### Defining the Generations

Characteristics and Events that shaped U.S. generations

	Millennial (Gen Y)	Gen X	Baby Boomer	Traditionalist (Silent Generation)
<b>Birth Year / Ages</b>	1980-2000 15 to 35 years old	1965-1979 36 to 50 years old	1944-1964 51 to 71 years old	1922-1943 72 to 93 years old
<b>Characteristics</b>	Upbeat. Group oriented. Technologically savvy. Able to multi-task. Accustomed to structure, yet value flexibility. Confident. Socially conscious.	Independent. Pragmatic. Entrepreneurial risk-takers. Self-reliant. Resourceful. Less formal. Prioritize work-life balance.	Idealist. Strongly adhere to their own sense of values. "Protest" generation. Educated. Loyal. Goal oriented. High expectations.	Respectful. Strong sense of extended family. Seek to avoid conflict and risk. Hard working. Financially and socially conservative.
<b>Defining events</b>	Growth of Internet Columbine Shooting OKC Bombing 9/11 2 <sup>nd</sup> Gulf War Great Recession	Rise of PCs Challenger Disaster Fall of Berlin Wall AIDS epidemic Exxon Valdez Oil Spill	Civil Rights Act Assassinations of JFK and MLK Vietnam War Moon Landing Cold War Woodstock	Great Depression World War II GI Bill Korean War
<b>Prominent technology advancements</b>	Internet everywhere Mobile devices Instant networking (SMS, online) 1,000s of TV channels	Cable television Video games Desktop personal computer Email	Color televisions Jet air travel Institutional computers	Automobiles more common Talking motion pictures Party telephone lines

Compiled from: The Multigenerational Workplace by Abrams and Frank (2013); Generational Cycles: Millennials and You presented at USC Marshall School of Business (2011); The Multigenerational Workforce from Boston College Center for Work and Family (2007)

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Figure 1

## How Millennials' Characteristics Impact the Workplace

As Millennials make up a larger and larger proportion of the employee base, their unique characteristics impact how they show up at work.

Characteristic	What this brings to the workplace
<b>Group-oriented</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ This generation thrives on opportunities to work in teams and collaborate across organizational levels.</li> <li>▪ They seek out connections and build networks both inside and outside company walls.</li> </ul>
<b>Technologically savvy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Millennials take access to technology and connectivity for granted, and tools are central to their professional and personal lives.</li> <li>▪ They like to communicate in shorter messages, and they prefer continuous smaller doses of information and knowledge on-demand exactly when they need it.</li> <li>▪ This generation nimbly shifts between conversations and tasks, easily keeping multiple things going at the same time.</li> </ul>
<b>Progress driven</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Millennials want defined performance expectations and explicit deadlines along with frequent feedback (formal or informal) affirming that they are moving in right direction.</li> <li>▪ They expect to jump in and make an immediate impact on the company, and they want to be respected and promoted for their contributions, not the length of their service.</li> </ul>
<b>Socially conscious</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ This generation is motivated by personal fulfillment and looks for opportunities to be a part of causes that matter to them through their workplace.</li> <li>▪ As members of the most diverse generation, they are more inclusive and globally aware.</li> </ul>
<b>Autonomous</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Traditional work time and space have less meaning to Millennials, who want to be able to chose when and where to get their work done within their lives.</li> <li>▪ They want to seek out their own experts to determine the best way to get assignments done.</li> </ul>



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Figure 2

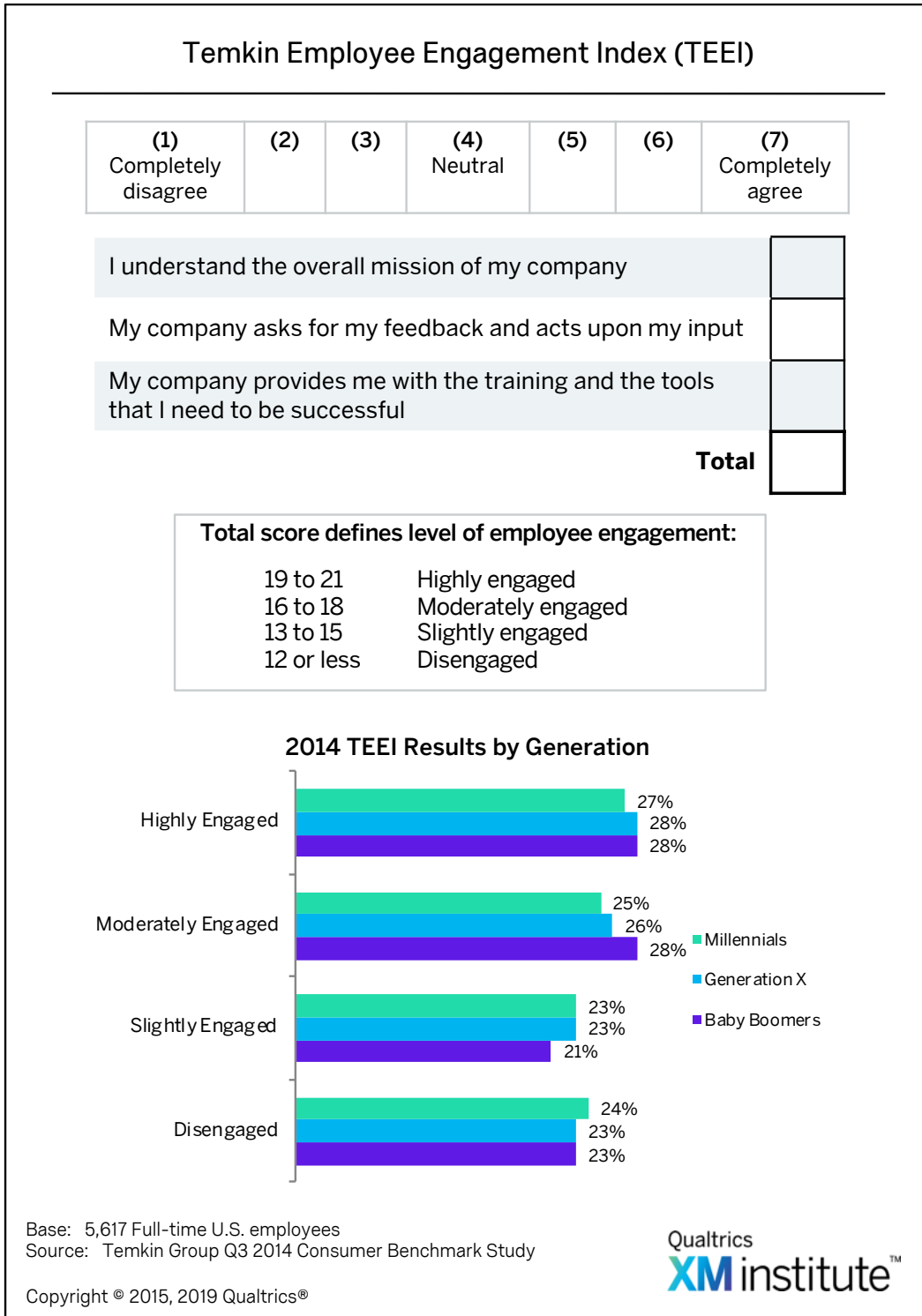


Figure 3



## How Characteristics of Millennials Shape the Five I's of Employee Engagement

### **Inform**

*Provide employees the information they need to understand what's expected*

- **Technologically savvy:** Social media usage has shaped Millennials' preference for shorter, more continuous exchanges of information.
- **Progress driven:** Millennials want to know they are part of a organization where they have a future and that supports their advancement. They look for examples to follow and want a clear picture of what success looks like.

### **Inspire**

*Connect employees to the organization's vision and values*

- **Group-oriented:** Millennials find meaning not only in causes, but also in the relationships they form with coworkers around shared values and areas of interest.
- **Progress driven:** Millennials strive to shrink the gap between themselves and senior leaders and want the chance to interact with them.
- **Socially conscious:** Millennials want to align with companies that value the same things they do and that provide the opportunity to give back to causes that matter to them.
- **Autonomous:** Millennials' often blend their professional and personal lives and value options to balance how and when to get their work done.

### **Instruct**

*Support employees with the training, coaching, and feedback they need to be successful*

- **Group-oriented:** Millennials like to collaborate and share knowledge with others peer-to-peer and via social collaboration.
- **Technologically savvy:** Many Millennials have experience with media-rich, on-demand learning modules that they can access through any device.
- **Progress driven:** Millennials want targeted training, assignments where they can learn new skills, and they need regular "in the moment" feedback letting them know what is and is not working against a clear set of performance expectations.
- **Autonomous:** Millennials are used to finding their own experts and seeking out information when its needed to complete an assignment.

### **Involve**

*Take action with employees to improve processes and solve problems*

- **Group-oriented:** Millennials are less likely to recognize boundaries between levels and want chances to not only learn from, but offer ideas and suggestions to company leaders.
- **Technologically savvy:** Millennials are used to forming virtual connections, so work well across geography, time, and department boundaries.
- **Progress driven:** Because they want to make impact, Millennials are eager to get involved in stretch assignments or special projects as part of company improvement, innovation, or change efforts.

### **Incent**

*Deploy appropriate systems to measure, reward, and reinforce desired behaviors*

- **Group-oriented:** Because they value teamwork and collaboration, recognition of collective team effort should be emphasized.
- **Progress driven:** Millennials want to know explicitly how they will be measured and want frequent updates on performance vs. expectations.
- **Socially conscious:** For Millennials, company values should be more than words; they should be embodied in daily behaviors and appropriately recognized.

Also see: Temkin Group report The Five I's of Employee Engagement  
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Figure 4


<b>Five Strategies for Engaging Millennials in the Workplace</b>	
<b>Five Strategies</b>	<b>Best Practices</b>
<p><b>Expand Job Descriptions</b></p> <p>The organization clearly defines performance expectations and what success looks like and creates a variety of opportunities for Millennials to expand their knowledge and skills.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Expose Millennials to new skills through stretch assignments</li> <li>▪ Help Millennials control their own career path</li> <li>▪ Manage performance with clear goals and frequent feedback</li> <li>▪ Prepare Millennials to assume leadership roles</li> <li>▪ Engage Millennials early with an effective Intern program</li> </ul>
<p><b>Create Connections</b></p> <p>The organization fosters network building within and across generational lines, organizational levels, and functional roles.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Create opportunities for Millennials to interact with senior leaders</li> <li>▪ Facilitate cross-company networking</li> <li>▪ Help Millennials bond with each other</li> <li>▪ Organize formal reverse mentoring arrangements</li> <li>▪ Enable peer-to-peer learning</li> </ul>
<p><b>Make Work Matter</b></p> <p>The organization recognizes the importance of meaning to Millennials and helps them connect to its brand values, its culture, and causes employees care about.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reinforce the importance of company values</li> <li>▪ Support employee philanthropy and community service</li> <li>▪ Involve Millennials in innovation efforts</li> <li>▪ Tap Millennials to help lead change</li> </ul>
<p><b>Allow for Flexibility</b></p> <p>The organization demonstrates adaptability in when, where, and how it communicates, how it trains, and how it expects work to be done.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Offer role-appropriate flexible work arrangements</li> <li>▪ Embrace employee social networks for communication and collaboration</li> <li>▪ Use technology to deliver more relevant, appealing training programs</li> </ul>
<p><b>Develop Millennial Leaders</b></p> <p>The organization works to help non-Millennials understand and effectively engage this generation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Raise the level of generational IQ across the company</li> <li>▪ Help managers provide feedback that Millennials value</li> <li>▪ Show leaders how to communicate more effectively with Millennials</li> </ul>



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Figure 5

How to Apply Millennial Strategies to the Five I's of Employee Engagement					
	Inform	Inspire	Instruct	Involve	Incent
<b>Expand Job Descriptions</b>	Help Millennials connect the work they are doing to how it helps the company's and their personal success.	Share employee success stories that relate to Millennials' desire for alignment and advancement.	Extend learning beyond the classroom to on-the-job assignments, stretch goals, and leadership opportunities.	Push ownership of one's personal career path and include Millennials in goal setting.	Recognize progress between formal role promotions around criteria like new skills learned or other contributions.
<b>Create Connections</b>	Share updates about employees and teams to help Millennials get to know more about the organization.	Create networking opportunities to close the gap between Millennials and senior leaders.	Integrate ways for Millennials to learn in teams and to share knowledge with each other.	Bring groups of employees together to collaborate on shared areas of interest or to solve company problems.	Include team performance within company's formal reward and recognition program.
<b>Make Work Matter</b>	Consistently communicate the company's mission and values and how they're displayed daily at work and in community.	Offer community service projects and support Millennials' desire to affiliate with causes that matter to them.	Live up to promise that Millennials can advance by ensuring they get feedback and support needed to be successful.	Give Millennials the chance to share input and be a part of shaping company's mission and driving change.	Recognize employees who embody the company's values in their daily behaviors.
<b>Allow for Flexibility</b>	Use employee social networks to share information and encourage dialogue on important company messages.	Offer options to help Millennials blend and balance what's important in their personal and professional pursuits.	Leverage technology to deliver training in shorter, dynamic modules and allow Millennials to explore topics of interest to them.	Use input from across the company to examine company policies and spot opportunities to support new adaptable ways of working.	Hold managers and leaders accountable in supporting work/life balance and flexible work arrangements.
<b>Develop Millennial Leaders</b>	Help leaders incorporate more effective communication techniques to better reach Millennials.	Educate leaders on the importance of interacting authentically with Millennials (and all employees).	Help leaders adapt their feedback approach to include more frequent, timely feedback on how Millennials are progressing towards goals.	Encourage leaders to listen to input from across generations as they pursue new initiatives or directions.	Coach managers and leaders on the importance of less formal recognition to complement periodic formal rewards and incentives.



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Figure 6

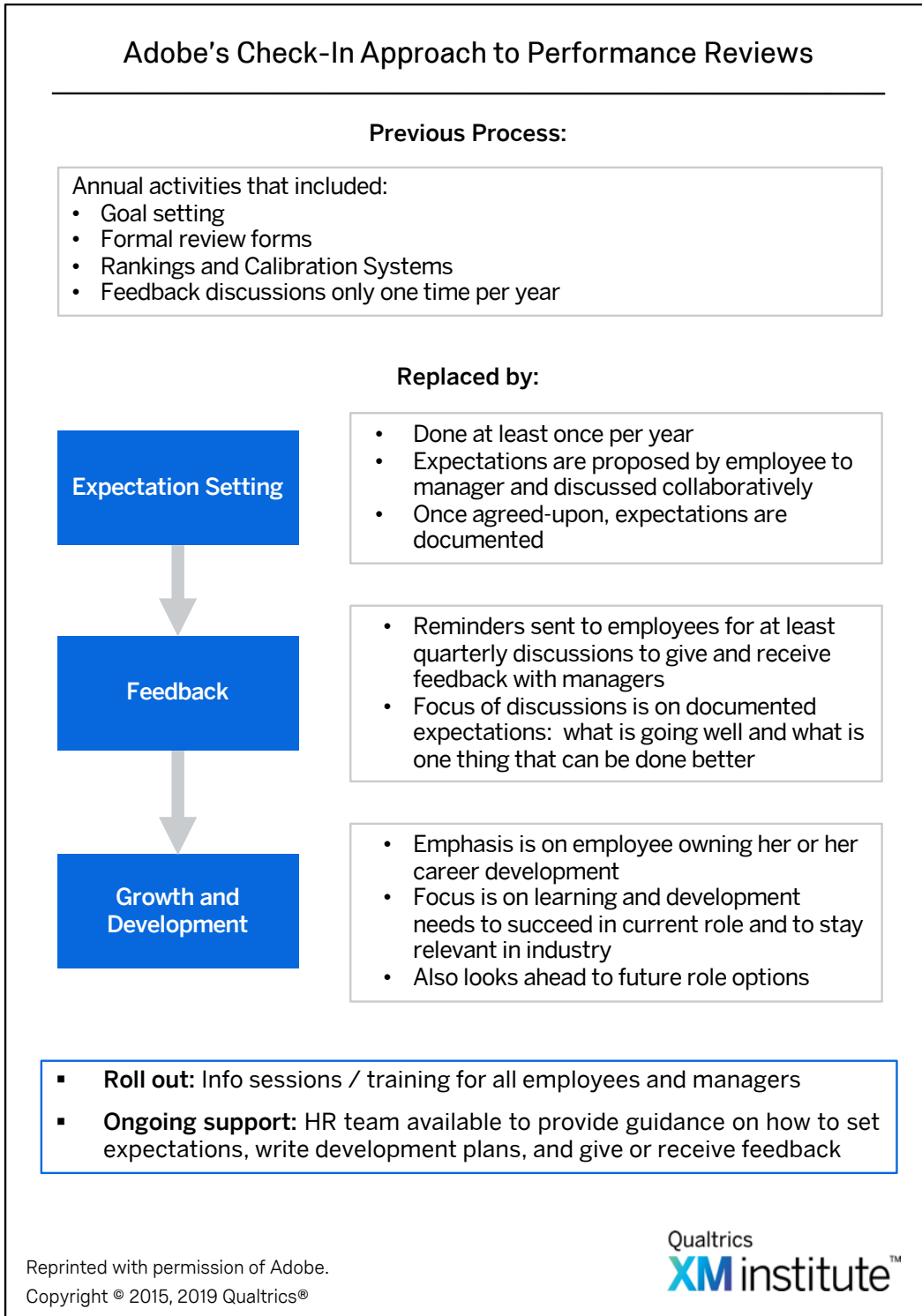


Figure 7

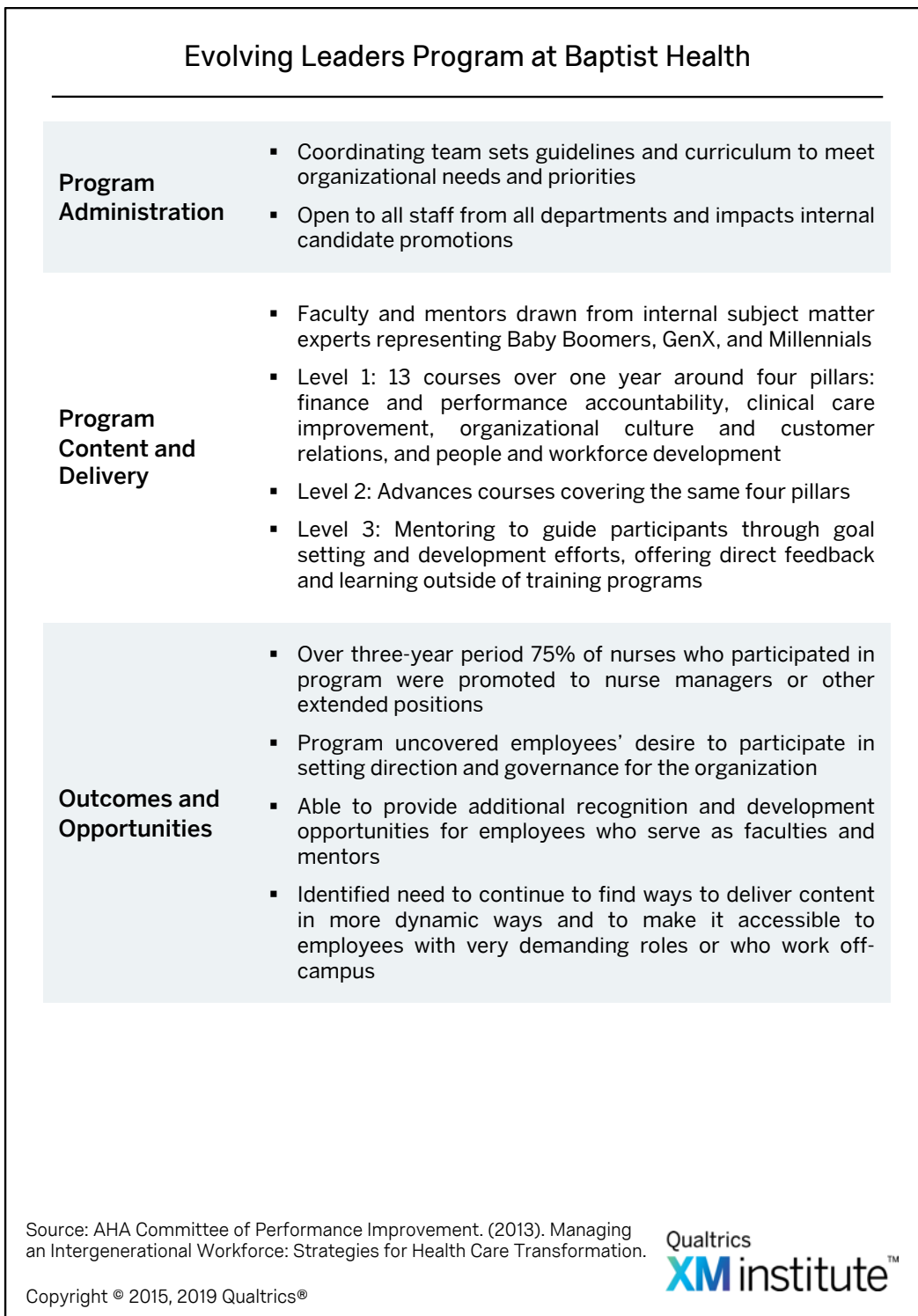


Figure 8

## LexisNexis Summer Intern Program

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### 10-Week Program Overview

To identify and engage high potential undergraduate, graduate, and PhD program candidates with critical skills that are difficult to find in the candidate market to:

- Build a pipeline of diverse talent to fill upcoming hiring needs by converting interns to full-time roles upon graduation
- Establish LexisNexis as an employer of choice in local university communities

Component	Description
<b>Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Prior to start of program:</b> Regular emails on what to expect, company norms (like attire), and other essential information.</li> <li>▪ <b>Throughout the program:</b> Group communications regarding tips for success at work, encouraging interns to participate in upcoming company events, reminders on Intern Program action items, etc.</li> <li>▪ <b>Following end of program:</b> Individual phone calls and emails from program coordinator to stay in touch and share major business updates and discuss full-time roles or future internships.</li> </ul>
<b>Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>First Day Orientation:</b> Delivered live at company headquarters with video connections to other locations. All interns, regardless of location, have lunch with their manager/team on their first day.</li> <li>▪ <b>“Meet the Intern” Kick-off Event:</b> Meet and greet with permanent employees to help the interns feel welcome and start developing their internal network.</li> <li>▪ <b>Performance Development:</b> Interns participate in same activities as full-time employees, including goal-setting, mid-program, and end-of-program reviews. Managers also coached to provide on-going informal feedback outside of performance development process.</li> <li>▪ <b>Regular Intern Meetings:</b> Designed to keep interns in touch with each other and provide setting to share what they are working on with each other. Also includes less formal sessions like recurring lunches and other social interactions to help them build connections with each other.</li> <li>▪ <b>Mentoring:</b> Managers charged with finding their interns each a mentor to provide more personalized attention and coaching.</li> <li>▪ <b>Committees:</b> Interns can join committees to get more involved through community service or social events.</li> <li>▪ <b>Intern and Manager of the Summer Awards:</b> Nomination process open to all interns and their managers, publicly awarded at End-of-Summer Internship Luncheon.</li> </ul>
<b>Leadership Involvement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Business Unit Overviews:</b> Senior leaders meet with interns to share current and future state news about their business and field interns’ questions about their work.</li> <li>▪ <b>End-of-Summer Presentations:</b> Senior leaders, front-line managers, and mentors participate in final presentation report outs of interns’ projects and their accomplishments from the 10-week program.</li> </ul>

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Figure 9

### Kaiser Permanente's genKP Millennial Engagement Group

Elements	Description	Keys to success
<b>Governance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Organized as one of Kaiser Permanente's Multicultural Business Resource Groups under the auspices of HR</li> <li>▪ 3 executive sponsors and 30 volunteer Millennials leaders. Leaders dedicate 10-15% of their time to support genKP's mission</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify the right sponsors, who believe in the need and share founders' commitment to group</li> <li>▪ Build commitment and alignment with a clear mission and defined by-laws/expectations of sponsor and leader roles</li> <li>▪ Partner with HR and tap into company's existing resources (e.g., Learning programs)</li> </ul>
<b>Professional Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ One to two events per month, both virtual and in-person</li> <li>▪ Offerings include: Innovation and Technology peer group, Mentoring program, Career Stories speaker series, and networking events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Create events that emphasizes room for growth within the company, a key interest of Millennials</li> <li>▪ Avoid creating siloed experiences so that people in one office know how to get involved in projects in another offices</li> </ul>
<b>Company and Community Involvement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Members give back through local service projects and community benefit events</li> <li>▪ Members also asked to provide input on company initiatives, innovation efforts, &amp; other planning discussions</li> <li>▪ genKP is represented at intern orientation to get interns connected early</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide the opportunity for members to serve as leaders among peers – creates a sense of purpose, helps individuals learn about themselves</li> <li>▪ Raise visibility of group so that leaders across company actively seek diversity of input from members for their own strategic planning or other efforts</li> </ul>
<b>Member Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Leaders use email, internal chat, and social collaboration tools to connect and organize work</li> <li>▪ Groups uses monthly e-newsletter and genKP website/blog to publicize group and keep members informed of events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Use an authentic and friendly communication style with limited corporate jargon</li> <li>▪ Raise members' awareness of existing resources and opportunities across the company that they might not be aware of</li> </ul>

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Figure 10

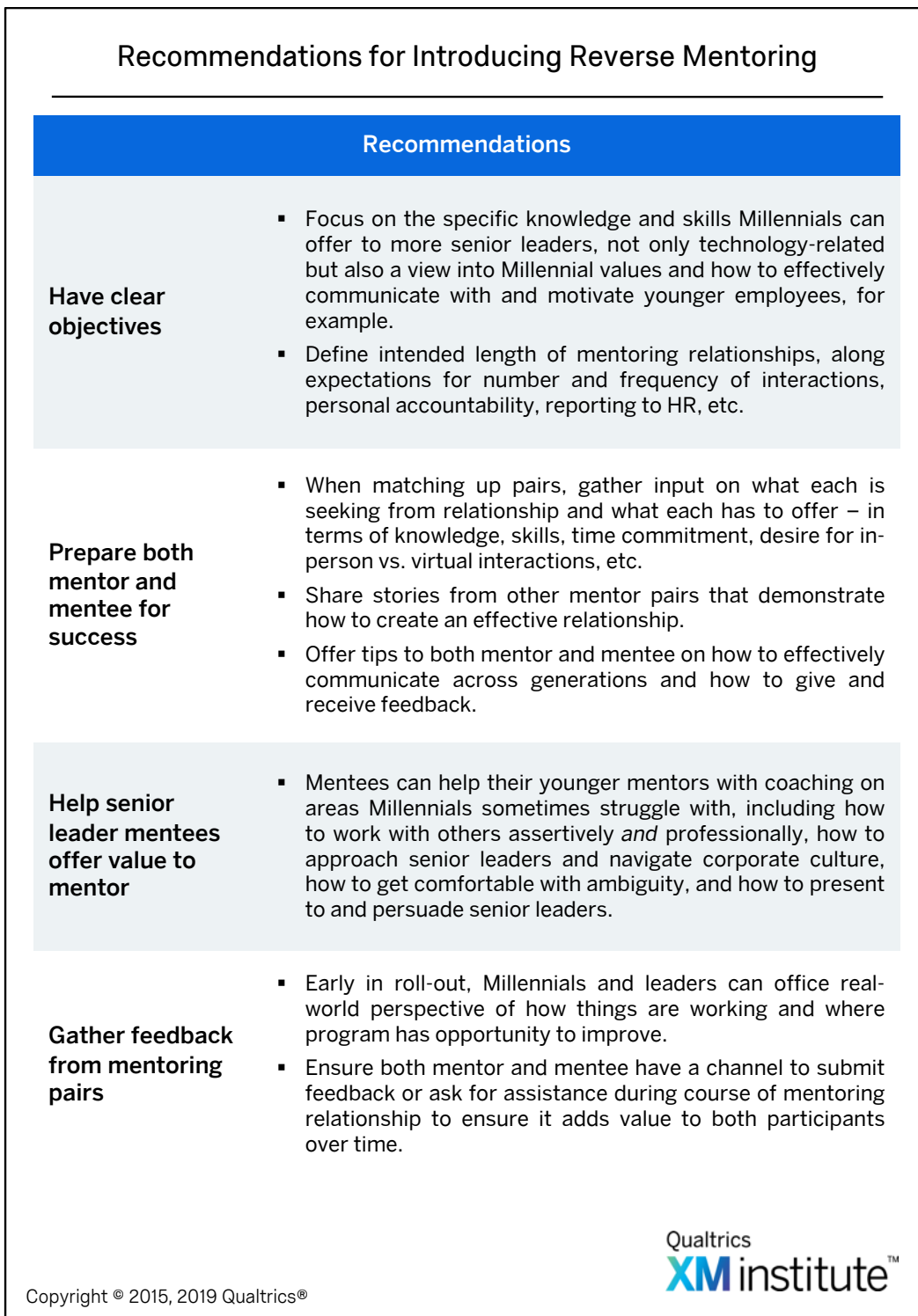


Figure 11



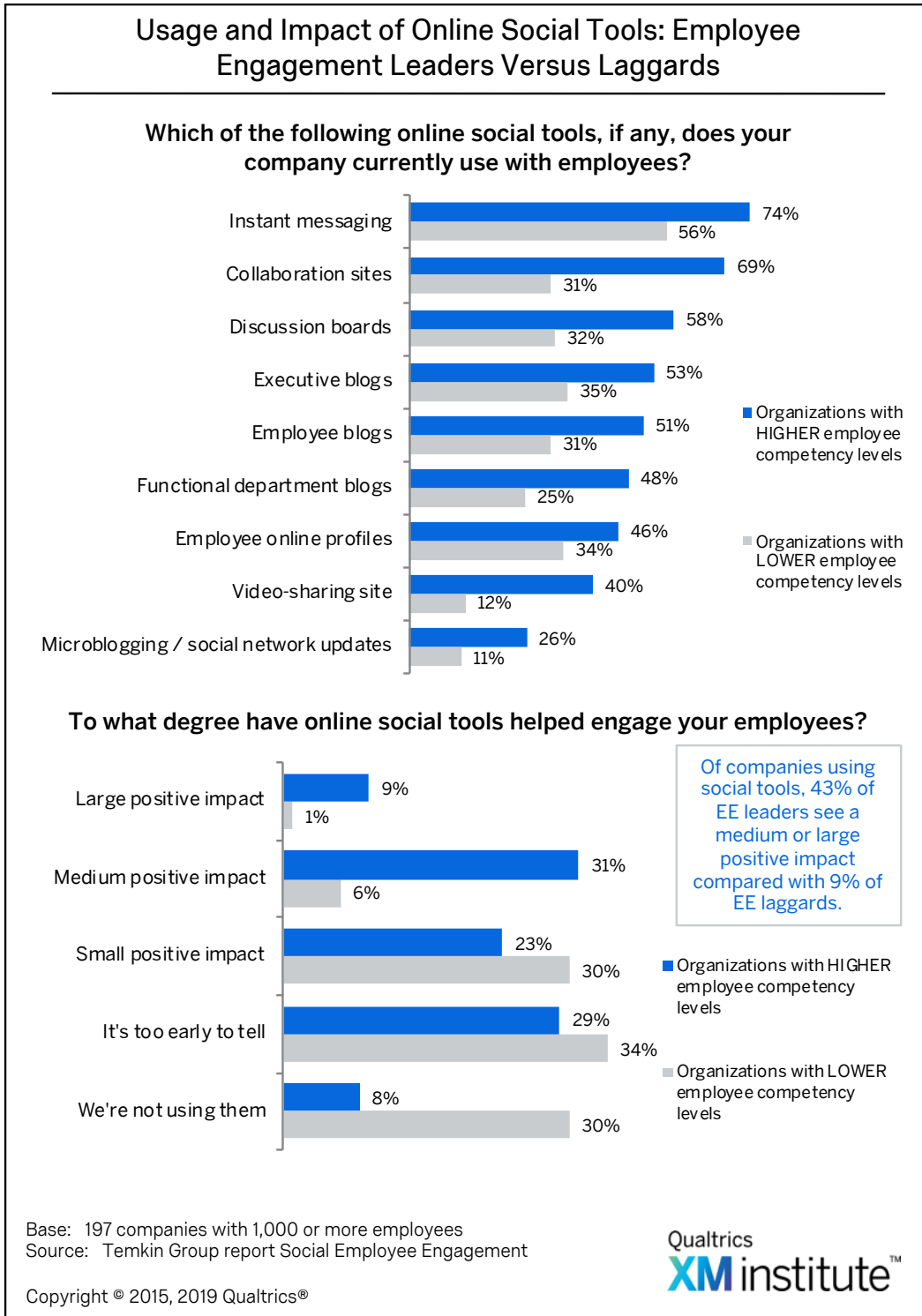


Figure 12

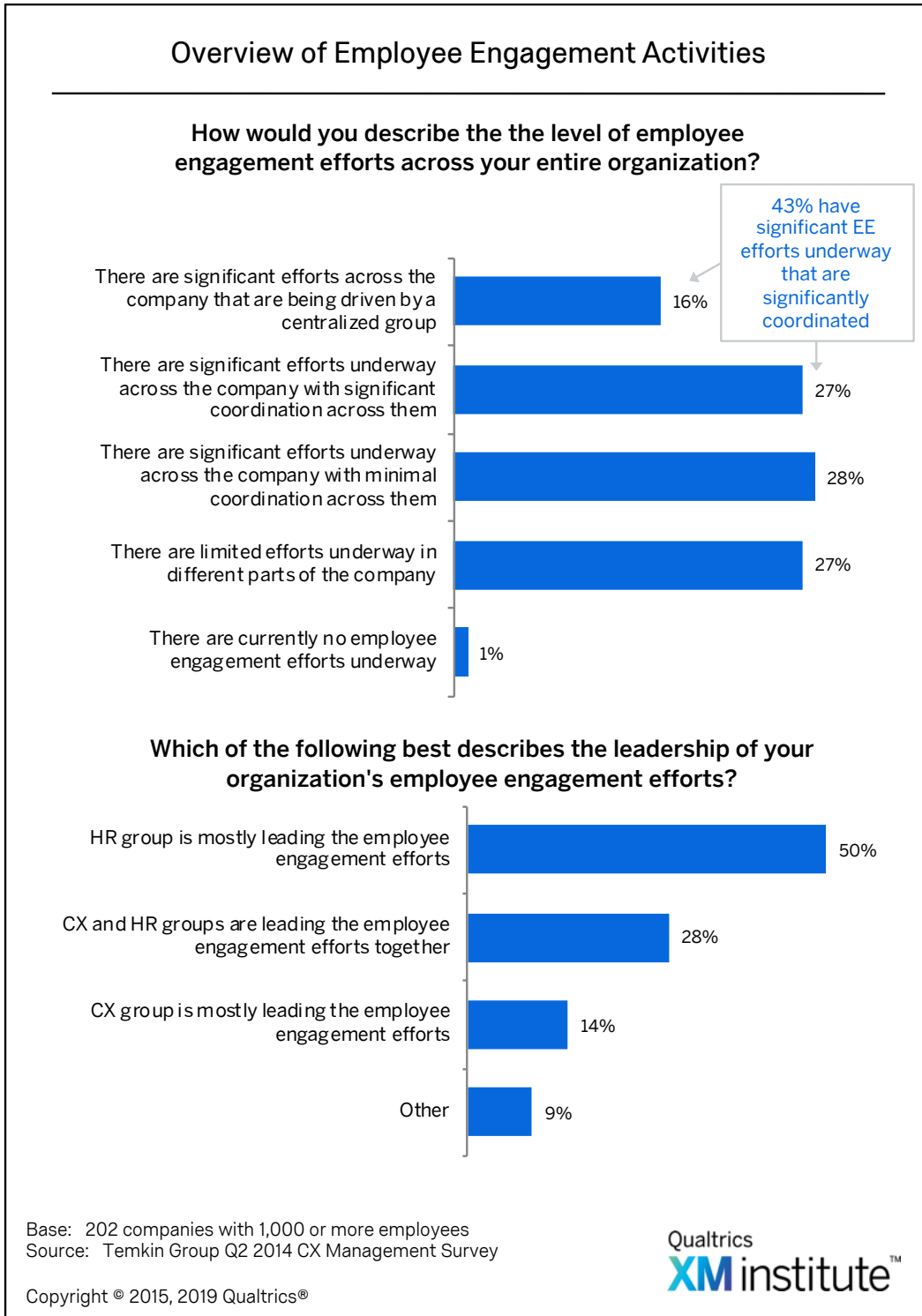


Figure 13

## HR Checklist for Driving Millennial Engagement Strategies

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### Recommendations to Successfully Integrate Millennial Engagement Strategies into HR's Core Processes:

- ❑ **Establish a clear employer brand:**  
Use traditional and social channels to promote the company's values and the promises it makes to its employees
- ❑ **Help new hires develop strong connection to company early:**  
During orientation, use success stories of other Millennials and introduce the people and resources available to help them succeed at the company
- ❑ **Tailor training delivery methods:**  
Incorporate e-learning modules and other on-demand training resources so Millennials can learn whenever, wherever
- ❑ **Expand learning opportunities outside of classrooms:**  
Work with business units to offer stretch assignments and special projects to provide on-the-job learning that also delivers real contribution to company
- ❑ **Help managers provide feedback Millennials value:**  
Encourage the use of frequent, timely, specific feedback, along with tactics like sharing checklists, recognizing appropriate innovation and risk taking, and providing mentors
- ❑ **Create career paths with frequent progress milestones:**  
Career paths should clearly define expectations and acknowledge progress milestones including specific skill development and lateral movement, not just upward promotions
- ❑ **Tap into the power of intrinsic motivators for recognition:**  
Help managers identify and recognize the intrinsic rewards that appeal to Millennials: sense of meaning, choice, competence and progress
- ❑ **Update formal recognition programs to appeal to Millennials:**  
Structure programs that recognize employees who demonstrate company values and exceptional team performance

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Figure 14