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Millennial Job-Hoppers: What They Seek

MILLENNIALS WHO LEFT EMPLOYER TO
CHANGE ROLES

93%

GALLUP

by Brandon Rigoni and Amy Adkins

Story Highlights

- Millennials don't stay with their current company to find new roles
- They see jobs as steppingstones and growth opportunities
- Workplaces that are fun or encourage creativity are not a priority

Millennials really are the job-hoppers people say they are. In fact, millennials -- those born between 1980 and 1996 -- are the generation in the workplace most likely to look for and change jobs, according to Gallup.

Gallup's latest report, [How Millennials Want to Work and Live](#), provides an in-depth look at what defines the millennial generation as employees, people and consumers. We found that 21% of millennial workers had switched jobs in the last year, a number that is more than three times higher than non-millennials who report doing the same. Six in 10 millennials say they are open to different job opportunities, which is also the highest percentage among all generations in the workplace.

And millennials who want different roles or new opportunities aren't staying with their current company to find them. A separate Gallup study shows that an overwhelming majority of millennials (93%) say they left their employer the last time they changed roles. Only 7% took a new position within the same company.

Millennials are a flight risk, making it vital for organizations to understand [how to engage and retain these employees](#). On the flip side, millennials' willingness to switch jobs and companies presents a substantial attraction opportunity for organizations. But to capitalize on that opportunity,

organizations need to offer them what they want out of a role and company.

The Most Important Job Attributes

Millennials are consumers of the workplace. They shop around for the jobs that best align with their needs and life goals. More than ever, employers need to know and act on the factors that make their company appealing to these candidates. They have to make it easy for prospects to *choose* them over their competition.

But what exactly do millennials look for in their job searches?

Gallup asked workers how important particular attributes were to them when applying for new jobs. Among millennials, we discovered that the top five factors are:

- opportunities to learn and grow
- quality of manager
- quality of management
- interest in type of work
- opportunities for advancement

At their current stage in life, millennials fundamentally think about their role as a steppingstone and a growth opportunity. They want to feel deeply committed to their role and want to work for a manager who will invest in their development. Millennials care about having a great manager and being part of a company with a great management culture.

Millennials continue to be a popular topic of conversation in the workplace. Leaders and managers want to understand what makes these employees different from the generations before them. Yet our research has found that millennial and non-millennial job seekers value some of the same attributes in a role and company. Quality of manager and quality of management are highly important to all employees. However, millennials place a greater emphasis on opportunities to learn and grow and opportunities for advancement than do older generations. Given millennials' relative newness to the workforce, these findings are understandable and provide organizations a clear idea of what to focus on with their younger employees.

Contrary to popular belief, millennials, when applying for jobs, place little importance on whether a company encourages creativity, is a fun place to work or offers an informal work environment. In fact, baby boomers are more likely than millennials and Gen Xers to say that creativity and fun are "extremely important" to them when applying for a job.

As more millennials have entered the workforce, companies have tried to build up their perks and amenities as part of their attraction strategies. They've put in game rooms and implemented casual dress codes, but it turns out that few millennials factor these perks into their job moves. As consumers of the workplace, millennials need to be convinced of why and how an organization will help them learn, develop and advance their careers.

Download Gallup's latest report, [How Millennials Want to Work and Live](#), to get further insight into what millennials really want from a job, manager and company, and what organizations can do to become this generation's employer of choice.

A version of this article first appeared on the [HBR Blog Network](#).

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