

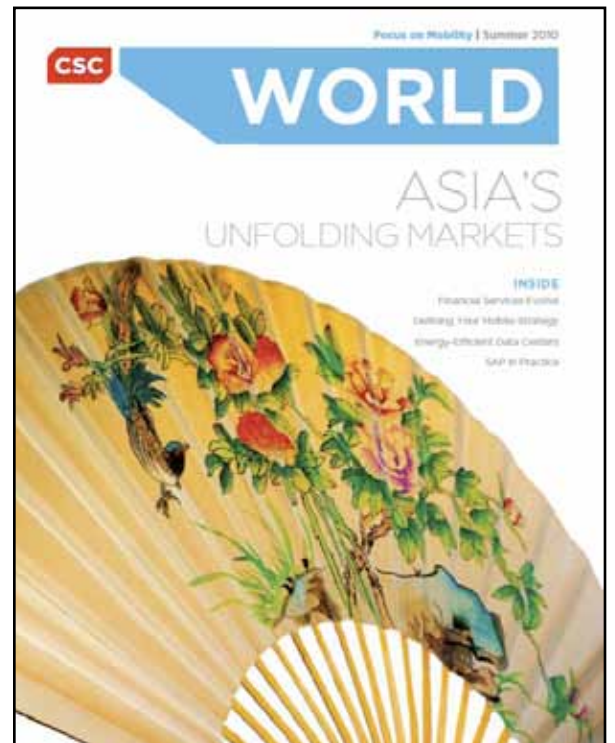


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FEATURES

People Power: Tailoring Your Business to Attract 'Gen Next'



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PEOPLE POWER: TAILORING YOUR BUSINESS TO ATTRACT 'GEN NEXT'

by Mark Milleker

For the first time in history, there are four generations in the workforce. A shaky economy has older workers postponing retirement and a dwindling skilled labor pool has younger ones being recruited on campus. The result is an increasingly complex working environment, in which leaders face management rules that are interpreted differently and not clearly defined.

While each generation has its own values, world views and motivating factors, in many cases the most sought after are the youngest: the Millennials (aka Gen Y). In our industry, technology makes the world go around. And these "Digital Natives" who grew up on Xboxes, cell phones and PCs, represent a highly talented and educated group of workers primed to develop into the next generation of leadership.

That doesn't mean we're forsaking the Matures, Baby Boomers and Gen Xers. Every generation is highly valuable to an enterprise. But we already know how to recruit and retain them. It's the Millennials that are a developing challenge because they force us to rethink what makes a workplace work.

Recruiting a generation

According to a recent survey of midsized and large U.S. companies by the U.S. Department of Commerce Office of Technology Policy, approximately 190,000 IT jobs are unfilled because of a shortage of qualified workers. Gone are the days of deep pools of engineering grads and others capable of doing high-end technology work.

The report found the formal, four-year education system is producing only a small proportion of the IT workers required and that severe shortages of such workers could undermine U.S. innovation, productivity and competitiveness in world markets.

Additionally, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics employment projections for 2008-2018 show employment growth is concentrated in the service-providing sector, continuing a long-term shift from the goods-producing sector of the economy. Among industries projected to have the most employment growth in this period are professional and business services: management, scientific and technical consulting; computer systems design; and employment services. Altogether, these industries are expected to add 2.1 million jobs.

This shrinking workforce means competition for the brightest talent will be decided by who is the most creative during recruiting. For any company, unfilled jobs mean unrealized revenue. It's time to do what it takes to be the employer of choice for Millennials. In order to survive, you must generate a robust pipeline of candidates.

Traditional job-recruiting practices of the past, such as newspapers, job sites and career fairs, don't appeal to Millennials. As today's leaders, we have to find tailored approaches to attract these people. In addition to using social media for recruitment, another way is to seek them out while they're still in school.



Matures: > 63 years old, born before 1946

Baby Boomers: 46 to 63 years old, born 1946 - 1964

Gen Xers: 30 to 45 years old, born 1965 - 1980

Millennials: < 29 years old, born 1981 - 2000

We're actively recruiting this generation on campus, getting them involved in a position with CSC that they can move into full-time after graduation. Students are savvier today in obtaining work experience before graduation than previous generations, who may have looked at summer jobs more casually.

Developing human capital

Just as important as recruiting workers, is what you do after you hire them. Millennials aren't interested in being chained-to-a-desk workaholics like their Boomer parents. For managers, this requires creative thinking.

One of the key things about Gen Y is they work all the time, but prefer not to work under a time-clock approach. I get a lot of productivity out of my people, but I don't require them to do it during set hours. If they're prone to come up with innovative ideas or creative thoughts outside the core 9-to-5 setting, provide them with the technology that enables them to do that (if that's possible, depending on client needs).

We must teach our leadership teams to be creative in the way we use our human capital. Part of it is educating them on what makes this generation tick and how you can leverage them.

Overcoming clash points

Every generation has strong views about the one it follows or precedes, and there are genuinely different value systems and behaviors among them that reveal themselves in the workplace.

It's important to understand your workforce, know their belief systems and tailor your approach accordingly. There's no "one size fits all." Conflict has been around since the beginning of time, even between employees of the same generation. However, potential generational "clash points" often arise in career perspectives, work-life balance and performance feedback expectations.

Managers need to recognize that Millennials work differently than they themselves did. But it's even more complex than that. Within the individual generations, the impact of culture cannot be dismissed. For example, a Millennial from Canada grew up with different beliefs, people of influence and life events than a Gen Y'er from India. So while most Millennials want to build a career parallel to their life, not one that dominates it, a manager's job is understanding the unique characteristics of each generation and then learning how best to provide opportunity for them.

This issue is all about leadership. There's a big difference between being a manager and being a leader. A leader innovates, develops, focuses on people, inspires trust and has a long-range view. The rigid practices of the past are no longer necessary. Today's practices should offer the right level of flexibility that allows employees to be more satisfied and productive, which in the end, means more satisfied customers. ■

Visualizing Innovation in a Millennial Age

Aristotle called it a natural and primary means for learning. Einstein used it to arrive at some of his theories. And Millennials are poised to lead tomorrow's successful businesses by applying age-old visualization techniques to modern-day software development.

We're calling it Vis-EDGE, an entirely new and innovative process that allows company stakeholders to visualize and interact with working models and simulations depicting complex technology software solutions. iRise, the underlying technology, provides a simulation of desired processes in advance of solutions being coded, interfaced and put into operation.

"Gen Y is perfectly suited for this work," says Paul Taroli, global director for CSC's Center of Excellence for Visualization. "They have been raised in a digital and wireless world, growing up with the Internet and mobile devices, and playing in 3D Avatar worlds. They work seamlessly between mind and hand, to create and communicate." Millennials are a natural match for what Taroli calls a key role in the Vis-EDGE process — the Visualization Designer.

"The benefits are numerous," he says of Vis-EDGE. "Our client stakeholders get to participate and see the final end-state solutions before we build code. That means we can achieve a higher fidelity requirement with better end-state quality, greater customer satisfaction, and in typically less time-to-market. Our customers get the most out of their software development investments."

Unlike other solutions, Vis-EDGE does not require software implementation. It's a visualization process that bridges the gap in communications between business and IT, with significant customer-documented ROI. Vis-EDGE's catchphrase, "Win More, Deliver More," is based on an unambiguous set of metrics validated by more than 30 case studies to date, documenting a proven 20 percent improvement in project timeline/cost reduction.

CSC has trained more than 60 consultants in Vis-EDGE globally. Armed with 56 hours of training, 46 of which are classroom-based training hours, these newly minted visualization consultants are taking user-interface design and software development to unparalleled levels in as many as three continents.



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The mission of CSC is to be a global leader in providing technology-enabled business solutions and services.

With the broadest range of capabilities, CSC offers clients the solutions they need to manage complexity, focus on core businesses, collaborate with partners and clients, and improve operations.

CSC makes a special point of understanding its clients and provides experts with real-world experience to work with them. CSC is vendor-independent, delivering solutions that best meet each client's unique requirements.

For more than 50 years, clients in industries and governments worldwide have trusted CSC with their business process and information systems outsourcing, systems integration and consulting needs.

The company trades on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol "CSC."