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ASK THE EXPERTS

A weekly Q&A where CareerBuilder experts offer advancement strategies.

I would like to find a new job, but I am worried that if another company contacts my manager, he would fire me. This field is close-knit, and I need a job before I give notice. How can I handle this? Also, can an employer require salaried employees to work as many as or more than 70 hours a week without compensation?

Expert 1: You are an at-will employee. A company can terminate the services of an at-will employee who is looking for a job, especially if that search occurs during work time. Also, it is at the company's discretion when a resignation takes effect.

Employees searching for jobs may have lost interest and may not perform well. Also, a slight risk of theft of property or data exists if employees are kept on the payroll after resigning.

During the interview process, an applicant can request that a current employer not be notified, and an applicant can provide a list of references.

Finally, under the Fair Labor Standards Act, a salaried, exempt employee is not entitled to overtime compensation regardless of the number of hours worked in a week. If the person is salaried but non-exempt, the person is entitled to receive compensation for hours that exceed 40 worked in a week.

Expert 2: I would tell prospective employers that your job search is confidential at his time and ask them not to contact your manager until you have received an offer or are a finalist for an offer. Companies commonly receive such requests. They are not legally required to agree, but most employers, particularly if they compete with your current employer, will not contact your manager without your consent.

Whether an employer can require a salaried employee to work 70 hours a week without compensation depends on whether the employee is classified as exempt or non-exempt under FLSA. If the employee is non-exempt, FLSA requires an employer to pay overtime compensation for all time worked

Lori Higuera Fennemore Craig

New generation, new rules in workplace

Accommodation for Millennials boon to business

By Patricia Bathurst
SPECIAL FOR THE REPUBLIC

Millennials, meet Workplace. Workplace, brace yourself.

The Millennial Generation, those born 1977 to 1995 (give or take a year or two), is more numerous than the bountiful baby boomers. More and more of them, also labeled Generation Y, are entering the workforce and making up rules as they go along.

Those already working will have to learn to play by some of those rules, as well, given that these 75 million people will be the bulk of the labor force for the next 45 years.

"You can't make them fit into your view of the world," said Renee McWenig, senior director of training for Cold Stone Creamery in Phoenix.

Her team trains franchise owners, a group made up of mostly Millennials.

"They don't automatically respect anyone because of age," she said.

What does work is a bit of compromise and a bit of understanding on both sides, so says Mary Gendron, a clinical professor of management at Arizona State University's W.P. Carey School of Management.

"This is a great opportunity for managers, too, to sharpen skills," Gendron said. "Start with an individual approach, a real sense of respect and remember (that) it's not a bad approach, just different."

She said Millennials too often get a bad rap.

"It's a different work ethic that's more connected to the whole family/work/life balance," she said. "It can challenge our assumptions."

Creating a team environment with clearly stated goals, presenting the "why" behind a structure or plan, helping them understand the pace and demands of the business environment, and developing a



Staci Segal and Keith Biczo, members of the Millennial Generation that comprises about 75 million, participate in a franchise-owner training program at Cold Stone Creamery's offices in Scottsdale.

The next generation

The Millennial Generation, known as Generation Y in some circles, comprises about 75 million people born approximately 1977 to 1995.

In general, their common traits include being flexible, adaptive, technologically savvy, easily bored, team-spirited and driven. They also say they want their lives to make a difference.

Experts describe them as "open to new solutions to problems, being passionate, responsible and reliable." They have a high sense of integrity, though are not always certain about ethical issues. They also have an intense sense of family and prefer to be around optimists.

While they'd like to be successful, they don't want it to be at the expense of a well-rounded life. Lessons they received about volunteering

helped them develop a keen sense of civic responsibility.

These expectations and little real understanding of business environments still can trip up 20-somethings as they search for jobs and in their first at-work experiences. Experts aplenty offer input about how this group can have successful careers. Here are two examples:

ASU Professor Mary Gendron suggested that they "spend enough time thinking" about a career before embarking on the endeavor.

Jason Ryan Dorsey is author of *My Reality Check Bounced*. He suggested, "Try on the job through a job-shadowing or an internship. Don't just look at the pay scale; talk to people" who have that kind of job.

— Patricia Bathurst

flexible attitude can give employers and managers a Millennial team who is willing to go the distance.

"Getting to know them personally is extremely important to them," McWenig said. "You need to create the work environment that drives their engine. For instance, everyone else here (at Cold Stone headquarters) is on a flexible schedule."

Erin Jagodzinski, who owns Express Personnel in Phoenix, said that having a different approach to work is not necessarily a negative.

"They're a digital generation, all about high-speed stimulations," she said. "The thing we want to remember is that they really have learned from all the other generations: skepticism from Gen X, political savvy from boomers ..."

Jason Ryan Dorsey, 28, Texas-born author and speaker, says that while the workplace needs to learn how to connect with 20-somethings, his generation needs to absorb basic facts about workplace strategies.

Dorsey's newest book, *My Reality Check Bounced*, is a guide for the workplace. He said his generation views the workplace from a fundamen-

tally different perspective, beginning with an assumption that there is no such thing as lifetime employment, at least, not within the same organization.

"This shifts the employee-employer expectations," he said. "At the same time, we grew up anticipating instant gratification. We have real feelings of entitlement, and outside expectations about what we can accomplish."

"And many of us have never had to figure out what to do when things don't go our way."

Still, "life isn't about instant gratification," said Angelo Kinicki, management professor and Weather-Overby chairman at ASU. He labels Millennials "a mixed bag."

"I don't see them as so different from other generations," he said. "We all have a set of values influenced by our parents and childhood."

"There are some differences — loyalty, for instance. They learned early about downsizing and layoffs, and observed people on the 'loyalty' track who lost their livelihood."

"However, companies also are finding that they have gaps in some skills, such as interpersonal actions, planning and a sense of consequence."

To fill in those gaps, Millennials and those who work with them say interaction with mentors is an excellent way to improve skill sets.

While a need for instant gratification means they need continual feedback overall, it also means they want to see tangible results about how their work and participation have improved the business.

Their interdependence makes them great at teamwork but not so great at leading the team. Again, mentors help. Problem solving and leadership are skills that need to be nurtured and developed.

"We've been too quick to make negative judgments," Gendron said. "This generation has a lot to offer in developing more agile, adaptive companies. For both sides, there's an opportunity for success."

WHERE THE JOBS ARE

Job search guidelines evolve as world changes

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY

Most of us have formed opinions about how we should conduct our job search and we all have been given advice as to how we

interest in the company. It may not result in a job offer but it may result in a job interview in the future.

■ If you've applied for a position but have not heard back from, you've assumed the position was filled.

MEMORABLE JOBS

Jim Phipps, a public information officer for the city of Chandler, writes about a job experience that happened to him 20 years ago.

"Long since dismantled to make way for various (Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport) expansion projects, the Local Alcohol Reception Center facility on East Watkins Road introduced me to employment in the public sector. And what an intro-

enough to be interviewed and admitted for counseling or more specialized care.

"My most vivid memories are of occasional announcements over the public address system directing 'all male staff to SORT.' That meant a miniriot had erupted in the treatment room, and I would be needed to help quell the alcohol-

CALENDAR

Kohl's Grand Opening Job Fair: 11a.m.-7p.m. Monday and Tuesday at 14020 W. Bell Road, Surprise.

Drivetime Job Fair: 1-7p.m. Tuesday at 7300 E. Hampton, Mesa.

Goodwill Industries of Central Arizona Job Fair: 9a.m.-noon Tuesday at 364 N. Seventh Ave., Phoenix.

Spherion Customer Service Open House: 10a.m.-2p.m. Tuesday at 4041 S. McClintock Drive, Suite 301, Tempe.