

2016 Edenred-Ipsos Barometer: Are Millennials so different from their elders in the workplace?

The *millennials*¹ are regularly described as employees with a team spirit who have difficulty accepting a hierarchical structure and who no longer view their salary as the only motivating factor but instead are looking for a sense of accomplishment in their work. The portrait often drawn up is that of a generation which is keen to stand out from that of its elders, and which is difficult to pin down. The eleventh edition of the Edenred-Ipsos barometer, conducted in 15 countries among 14,400 employees, of whom 3,500 are under 30, shows that the behavior and expectations of younger employees have stayed fairly constant, contrary to popular belief. More motivated than their elders, for them, the ideal company is having attributes which are actually fairly similar to those cited by their more experienced colleagues. For the company, the issue is not so much about dealing with this generation independently of the others, but rather globally rethinking leadership challenges in an environment which is increasingly digitalized, horizontal and multi-task oriented, taking into account the countries' strong specificities.



INSIGHTS

- **Over 3,500 employees under 30** surveyed in 15 countries: Belgium, Brazil, Chile, China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Poland, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom and United States.
- • **26% of Millennials** say their motivation at work is increasing over time vs. 15% of over 30s, a gap already observed ten years ago², with contrasting results depending on the country (12% in France, 19% in Germany and the United Kingdom, 26% in the United States, 30% in Brazil, 32% in China and 58% in India).
- **57% of the under 30s** feel that the ideal company is one which puts reward for effort above all else.
- • **59% of Millennials** expect their management to respect its undertakings.

¹ In the Edenred-Ipsos barometer, the Millennials (also called "Digital natives" or "Generation Y") are considered to be employees under 30 years old or born after 1986. According to Marc Prensky (2001), these are individuals who "were born and raised in a digital and hyper-mediatized world".

² Results of the Ipsos RED© 2006 survey (target: scope taking in employees worldwide).

GENERATION Y NOT SO UNUSUAL

With 26% of *Millennials* stating that their **motivation at work** is increasing, vs. 15% of employees aged over 30, Generation Y shows a greater commitment to work than its elders. Employees of this generation also have more **confidence in their future careers** within their company (26% "very confident") than their elders (18%). However, contrary to popular belief, younger employees were also more motivated than their elders ten years ago (27% vs. 19% between the two generations²).

Are *Millennials* so different when it comes to their relationship with management? Employees surveyed as part of the Edenred-Ipsos Well-Being at Work barometer reveal that expectations are actually quite similar: honesty (same rate of 62% for the under and over 30s), fairness (61% for *Millennials* and 62% for other employees) and their capacity to respect undertakings (59% and 58%) are qualities they seek as a priority in their managers.

It should be noted that they also have a stronger feeling of being respected by management than the over 30s (35% vs. 28%).

But what do they expect from their employer? Like all employees, priorities are focused on the scale of the individual and their professional development. When asked about their **ideal company**, all primarily want it to acknowledge their commitment and allow them to develop. In fact, **rewarding effort** ranks first (57% of *Millennials* and 62% of employees over 30), followed by **development opportunities** (38% and 34% respectively). Working conditions are considered half as important as recognition of effort; the desire for a less hierarchical organization comes in last place.

For the under 30s, the main challenges facing companies are **talent management** (loyalty being cited by 32% of them, recruiting: 29%), **attention paid to the human side** (respect for a life balance: 28%, psychosocial risks: 27%) or **change management** (27%), these aspects being cited in similar proportions by their elders. However, **special treatment for Millennials** does not seem to be a priority for this generation: intergenerational management is cited in last place at 15%.

Another misconception brought into question: **the importance given to private lives** as a specificity of the youngest. The *Millennials* surveyed view the work-life balance as one of their main concerns (28%), in a similar proportion to their elders (29%), but place more emphasis on the challenges related to new technologies and "permanent connection".

MORE CULTURAL THAN GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES

So overall, *Millennials* stand out little from their elders; a few significant differences by country can be noted but only on certain criteria. This is particularly true for expectations concerning the company. In Brazil, good working conditions are a key factor in choosing a company (40% among the under 30s and 32% among the over 30s), in contrast with China where flexibility is paramount (31% vs. 19%), and France where the emphasis is more on diversity (10% vs. 7%).

Although the differences are not always generational, they are however sometimes cultural, whatever the age group concerned. **Disparities in trends in motivation at work** speak for themselves: among French employees, for example, only 12% of *Millennials* believe that it is increasing over time (one of the lowest levels of the panel), vs. 19% in Germany and the United Kingdom, 26% in the United States, 30% in Brazil, 32% in China and 58% in India.

THE REAL CHALLENGE: MANAGING IN A DIGITAL WORLD

The early digital experience of Millennials has probably shaped their behavior, but not to the extent that it radically differentiates them from their elders in terms of their relationship with work.

Development opportunities and the attention paid to employees remain the priority expectations of the under and over 30s. Similarly, **talent management, attention paid to employees and change management are the leading challenges facing companies identified by employees for the coming years (regardless of age)** - ahead of diversity, intergenerational relations and digitization which is no doubt already considered to be integrated in terms

² Results of the Ipsos RED© 2006 survey (target: scope taking in employees worldwide).

of tools.

More than a generational confrontation, the challenge primarily lies in the ability of companies to meet the expectations of their employees in an environment where digital technology plays an increasingly important part in daily life.

"As an expert in employee benefits, Edenred is a close observer of well-being in the workplace and provides a full range of tools and solutions to companies seeking to attract and retain talent. The Edenred-Ipsos barometer shows that beyond a generation gap, employees primarily expect to be supported in their development and be recognized for their commitment, and with intensities that vary significantly by country. In an increasingly digital environment, adapting management methods has now emerged as a major challenge at all levels of the company", says Jeanne Renard, Executive Vice President of Human Resources and Corporate Social Responsibility at Edenred.

"The key challenge is to develop managers' leadership abilities, in a changing world which is more virtual, horizontal and multi-task oriented in order to create the conditions conducive to full commitment by employees, whatever their generation", states Antoine Solom, Managing Director IPSOS LEAD.

EDENRED-IPSOS BAROMETER

A world leader on the employee benefits market, Edenred has been developing a wide range of tools to understand social trends for over 50 years. The eleventh Edenred-Ipsos barometer on employee well-being was conducted in January 2016 on a selection of 14,400 employees in Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Spain, Turkey and the UK, and, for the first time this year, Brazil, Chile, China, India, Japan, Mexico and the United States. As part of the barometer, more than 3,500 "Millennials" employees aged between 18 and 30 were surveyed.

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+ 100,000
employees have been surveyed
since the first barometer

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- Expense management (Ticket Car, Ticket Clean Way, Repom, etc.)
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The Group also supports public institutions in managing their social programs.

Listed on the Paris stock exchange, Edenred operates in 42 countries, with 6,300 employees, 660,000 companies and public sector clients, 1.4 million affiliated merchants and 41 million beneficiaries. In 2015, total issue volume amounted to €18.3 billion.

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