

Managing the
MILLENNIAL
SALES
Professional



JODY HOLLAND & BRYAN CAISON

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Jody N Holland

&

Bryan Caison

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CONTENTS

1	Who Are The Generations?	Pg 1
2	What Motivates Them?	Pg 16
3	Coaching The Generations	Pg 23
4	Goals & Game Plans	Pg 32
5	Wrap Up	Pg 37

CHAPTER 1

WHO ARE THE GENERATIONS?

By: Jody Holland

My buddy Jim asked me an interesting question the other day. He asked, "What in the world are we going to do in order to keep selling to people that don't know how to buy?" I say it's an interesting question, because it's one that I've heard asked in various different formats over the last decade or so. Each generation has their own perspective on what reality is, and on what motivates them to make a purchase. When you begin thinking about generational selling, and encompasses more than just selling a product or service. It also falls into the same category as fundraising for multiple generations. Regardless of what tactic of getting to the other person's money that you're thinking about, the reality exists that the path is not the same as it used to be. I asked Jim to clarify what he meant by his own question. This is what he came up with...

What I mean by that, is that this younger generation doesn't process information the same way that previous generations did. If I was going to sell a 22-year-old a car, for example, I would do better to show it to him on the dang computer than to let him test drive the thing. It just seems to me that these young bucks don't know how to communicate the way previous generations did. That means, I either have to learn to communicate the way that they do or figure out how to sell stuff to older and older people. I figure at some point, people are going to be too old about what I'm selling. So, what I meant by my question is... How do I sell to someone who doesn't buy like anyone else that I've ever sold to? In reality, to take it one step further, I don't even know how to manage these younger sales

people that work for me now. They don't seem to be motivated are driven by the same things in previous generations work. Now that I say that out loud, that actually scares me more than knowing how to get somebody to buy.

What Jim is experiencing is very similar to what dozens of other sales managers, entrepreneurs, and business owners are experiencing as well. It's often difficult for people to truly desire to change who they are, when what they were doing used to work real well. I think human nature is that we want things to continue working well, once we figured out the path that works. The frustration that many people experience is that what didn't work five years ago, and doesn't seem to work that well today. This is a very short book to open up your thoughts on managing millennial salespeople and selling ideas, sponsorships, and products to

those same millennials. In order to do that, we need you to understand what the four generations are all about that are in the workplace right now. We also need you to have a grasp on what the youngest generation, the ones that are still at home, is going to be like when they start making purchases. The oldest of generation Z have begun to shop on their own. So, let's dive in!

Five generations that you will deal with when it comes to selling and purchasing. Each of these generations brings with them a different perspective on the way the world works, and the way the world should work. One of the most challenging things that the sales manager will never do is to figure out how to motivate people from multiple different generations. This short book is designed to be a precursor to what you need to know to be effective at managing multiple generations in the sales setting.

The oldest generation that we would be managing would be the traditionalist generation. This generation was born between 1922 and 1945. They experienced World War II, the Great Depression, and a host of hardships that force them to come together and believe in what the government had to offer as a solution. The values that they tend to hold dear, are things like hard work, dedication, sacrifice, delayed gratification, loyalty, and respect. When you think about how this affects the way that you manage, it is easy to realize this generation works because they believe work is a part of their life. They are not type people to quit a job, without another job waiting. They are the type of people who go out of their way to ensure that the job is done. The turnover for this generation was minimal. You could expect the average worker to have between one and three jobs in their entire life. This is, of course, after they completed whatever level of education they have desired. This

generation would simply stick with it, regardless of how tough the job became. They were motivated by sense of working with the team and helping the organization to find success.

The next generation that is in the workplace is the baby boomer generation. This generation was born between 1946 and 1964. They experience the Vietnam conflict, the red scare, laugh-ins, love-ins, and sit-ins. They grew up during a time of civil and social unrest. They were the first generation to truly be divided in their value structure amongst themselves. You could refer to the two sides as hippies and squares. There were very few people that found themselves in the middle between the two. People tended to choose one side or another. What made them even more interesting, though, was the fact that they were the first-generation to compete with previous generations for jobs. The traditionalists continue to work and live longer than previous generations because they

had been through too much uncertainty and did not want to risk being without. The baby boomers are credited by some as inventing the 80 hour workweek. They worked extremely hard to prove themselves and work their way, rung by rung, up the corporate ladder. They are the largest of the four generations and are recognized by their contributions in business, their dogged determination, their innovation, and they're almost unquenchable drive. More so than the traditionalists, the baby boomers identify themselves by what they do for a living. The traditionalists worked very hard and were very loyal to their employer, but they still tended to define themselves only partly by their job. For the time that the first baby boomer was born until the time that the first Gen Xer was being born, women drastically increase their presence in the workforce. In the United States, we went from 10% of women in the paid labor force in 1945 to 25% of women in the paid labor force by 1968. This increased by 2 1/2 times had a

significant impact on how the generations thought of themselves, on women's rights, and on civil equality. The baby boomer generation is motivated by public recognition, accomplishment, and corporate growth. Because they identify so closely with their job, scene the organization succeed is tantamount to their own success. The United States was creating lots of jobs after World War II. This truly represented a boom in our economy. The other side of that is that we saw a boom in the number of births for this generation.

The third generation in the workplace's generation X. Gen Xers were born between 1965 in 1980. They have often been referred to as latchkey kids. From 1968 to 1972, the percentage of women in the paid labor force increased from 25% to 47%. Women's presence in the workplace almost double in that one five-year period. This meant that there were lots of children at home, afterschool, letting themselves

than in watching themselves for a few hours. A child would go home with a string around her neck and the key attached to that string to let themselves in. This is where the term “latchkey” kid came from. Gen Xers experienced a significant boom in technology. Personal computers began to revolutionize the way that we did business, became educated, and even connected with one another. Many baby boomers believe that Gen Xers did not have real heroes growing up. The reason for this is the Xers tend to focus on things like comic book heroes instead of actual people. Previous generations had looked up to political heroes and war heroes. Previous generations looked up to their parents and their grandparents. For Generation X, families became more dispersed and less connected. Because we advanced with cable TV and were able to access regional and national news, people became more aware of the corruption that existed in our world. The combination of these factors left many Gen Xers

disillusioned and trusting. The fact that they spent a large enough time by themselves often meant that they were self-sufficient, yet many struggle to work well in teams. Gen Xers are often more motivated by self-achievement than team achievement. They often enjoy working by themselves and find it difficult to trust or rely on other people. In sales, if they are given the opportunity to leave once they hit a target for the day, they are significantly more motivated to hit the target. They are the first generation to really define themselves by their extracurricular activities instead of what they did for a living. This means that employers often struggle by trying to motivate Gen Xers in the same way that baby boomers or traditionalists would have been motivated. It simply doesn't work. Xers want time off and to be left alone. They want to hang out with their friends and the technology, not their coworkers. Even though this is a generalization, it demonstrates what a lot of Xers feel about work. They enjoy work and

generally can accomplish great things, but they want to do it on their own terms. This generation begin focusing on how to dress down in the workplace and make it less formal. They are motivated by time off, fine, am being treated as equals with senior generations.

The fourth generation that is in the workplace is the millennial generation. This generation was born from 1981 to 2000. They are as large as the traditionalist generation, but slightly smaller than the baby boomer generation. Their parents are combination of baby boomers who got remarried, baby boomers who married Xers, and Xers married to Xers. This makes for an interesting dynamic in the value structures that they were being taught. As a general rule, they had much better relationships with their parents than the previous generations did. Many of them would consider their parents to be their friends and vice versa. They experienced things like school shootings, the Oklahoma City bombing,

and what is considered by many is a winless war. They were taught to be independent and they were taught not to automatically give someone respect just because of their title. Their parents protected them and prevented bad things from happening to them. This protection, and some would say over protection, has led to a lack of general responsibility and a big portion of this generation. Although very few millennial's see themselves as irresponsible, very few of them would work or sacrifice the way that previous generations did. One significant shift that happened was in marketing. As generation acts was coming of age, many marketers shifted to targeting young children instead of adults. They found it easier to persuade child who would then persuade their parents in order to buy the right product, go to the right school, or move in any desired direction. They are used to being marketed to and catered to. They are very comfortable with the Internet and will often share more than any older generation would find

appropriate. This generation truly does want to be successful and is without a doubt willing to tell you so. They expect to move up quickly and they expect to be taken seriously. They often struggle with believing that authority figures at work should treat them the same way that their mom or dad would treat them at home. Because they were given lots of leeway, they often don't understand when a supervisor or manager pushes them to perform.

The fifth generation is one that is not in the workplace yet. Generation Z was born from 2001 through the present. Their parents or combination of millennial's and Xers. A growing percentage of this generation, however, is being raised by their grandparents. Many millennial's and Xers did not feel that they were prepared to have kids and have therefore gone in a different direction and left their parents to care for their children. This generation is being given significantly more latitude on growing up. More

than half of children who start kindergarten this year will not be able to tie their shoes on their own. This skill was once considered a rite of passage that must be mastered before education could begin. Many young people in kindergarten, particularly boys, are not fully potty trained when they start school. In the past, children were generally potty trained by two or three years old. Parents and grandparents seem to be giving these children so much room that there is a lack of push toward success. The American psychological Association indicated that this is the first generation or mental multitasking is actually happening. This means that their brains are functioning in multiple directions simultaneously. Previous generations would jump from one task to another very quickly, but would not actually be thinking in multiple directions. This means in keeping their attention is significantly more of a challenge that it was with previous generations. This is also listed to a sharp increase and ADD and ADHD medication.

Educators and parents often attempt to get their kids to focus, even though they live in a world that is out of focus. We don't fully understand this generation yet, but it is likely that they will present a more significant challenge to manage than previous generations did.

CHAPTER 2

WHAT MOTIVATES THEM

By: Jody Holland

The question of what motivates the younger generation is one that many leaders have pondered. We have wondered whether it is money, time off, status, or something that we haven't experienced before. The larger question that we should be asking, however, is what of motivates people. Motivation is not the simple science. Rather, it is a series of strategic moves that unlock motivation rather than implanting motivation. All motivation, when it comes to work, is intrinsic or internal. You actually cannot motivate another person. What you can do is create an environment where it is easy for them to become motivated. Conversely, you can create an environment where it is difficult for them to become motivated. Younger people are motivated by the things that they were conditioned to be motivated by. This is true of

any generation. The bigger picture on this is that the motivation really is tied to an emotional response and not to thing. For example, baby boomers are motivated by status and money. However, it is not the status or the money that is actually motivating them. What is motivating them, is the feeling that they get when they receive status and money. They feel valued and appreciated when they receive the things that they believe are the objects of appreciation and value. When you look at the younger generation, status and money are not the things that demonstrate value and appreciation. The things that demonstrate value and appreciation for them our relationships, fun, and a sense of belonging to an organization that is making a positive difference. Making money and making a positive difference are not the same thing in the minds of younger people. This is been a difficult transition for older generations. I think it's important to understand Herzberg's two factor theory of motivation. Herzberg broke down

motivation and to satisfiers and dissatisfiers. The elements that rest on the dissatisfaction side of motivation only affect motivation when they are removed. These are things like money that we traditionally use to try to motivate people. With the younger generation, dangling more money in front of them often has the opposite effect. Often times, they will actually work less when you dangle more money in front of them to try to entice them. According to Herzberg, money is only a factor when you take it away. When you take money away, or reduce the amount of pay that the person has, you will get less performance out of them. When you add more money in, you will not get increased performance. We have to pay our people well. If we pay them enough so that money is no longer a factor or thought, then we can eliminate money from the equation of motivating people. People have to make enough money to pay all their bills and live comfortably. Once they achieve that level, money is no longer a factor and motivation

unless you take it away. External factors, such as money, are all a part of the dissatisfaction side of the motivation equation. Internal factors, such as a job well done, a sense of being appreciated, and the feeling that you belong to an organization that is making a positive difference are what really drive younger people to perform. When we embrace the idea that motivation is internal and it is a choice that people make, based on how they feel, then we begin to look at motivation in a different light. Think about the way that you communicate with the person that you are managing. If you only talk to them when things are going wrong, they will never see that you value them or appreciate them. In order to show appreciation and create this internal drive towards motivation, you have to have three components in the messages that you sent.

- Behavior: You will need to describe the specific behavior that you have witnessed. This means that you will be describing the

exact thing that they did and not an interpretation of what that thing meant.

An example would be...

Yesterday, when you stayed late to help the customer

- Emotion: You need to describe the emotional response that you had to the behavior that they exhibited. This can be tough for people, especially those who are trained to not show emotions at work. This is a positive emotion, however, and makes a huge difference in the way that people interact.
- Effect: You will need to describe the positive and measurable effect that their behavior had for your organization, for you, or for those around them. The key here is measurement. The effect must be measurable.

The formula for motivation is as follows...

$$M=(A+R)C$$

Motivation = (Appreciation +
Recognition)Culture

In order to generate the decision to be motivated inside of a young person, you have to both appreciate them and recognize them, as well as reinforce this through your culture. Your appreciation and recognition will not be believed if your overall culture is bad. This is why it is so critical to train your managers and leaders on the soft side of management and leadership. You will only create positive results in your younger salespeople, when they have the right emotional response did those three factors. Although motivating other people can seem like it is difficult, the reality is, we must discipline ourselves to behave in the right way in order to

get the right and predictable results from others that we desire. Our question to you is this...

Are you willing to discipline yourself to lead in the right manner, to develop your supervisors and leaders, and to consistently appreciate the positive behaviors that you get from your people?

If you're willing to do the things that yielded positive results, then you will get the right results. If you expect younger people to simply bend to the way that you lead, you will get a plate full of frustration. Follow the formula and get the end result you're looking for.

CHAPTER 3

COACHING

By: Bryan Caison

One of the biggest challenges for sales managers today, is their inability to relate to and ultimately influence the millennial sales professional in order to maximize their performance and productivity. As trainers and consultants, we are regularly approached by managers asking the same question - "How do we motivate these kids today?" To say that today's sales manager is highly frustrated with this generation would be an understatement. Why are they so frustrated? Well, their frustration is a direct result of the unmet expectations they have. Management teams all over this country are confused as to why this generation does not understand that there are winners and losers in the sales world, and how to provide constructive criticism without devastating their psyche. The millennial

generation does not respond to the same management strategies as their prior generations. As we discuss in the last chapter, they are not driven by the same motivators as your other team members. Therefore, we must take a different approach to getting the most out of this highly capable, new breed of sales professional.

The biggest issue for managers today, is they are trying to “manage” this generation like they have managed the previous generations. If sales managers are going to be effective leading their teams containing millennial team members, they must change their leadership approach from one of “managing” to a more relationship biased model of “coaching”. Managing by definition is the ability to maintain direction through processes and procedures. On the other hand, coaching is the ability to produce results through the empowerment of his/her team members.

Let's begin by taking a look at the core characteristics of a coaching culture:

- 1) **Meaningful Relationships** – An effective coach will begin by developing a personal relationship with his/her team members. Great coaches understand that you can never ask for a commitment greater than the relationship. Now, if you have been in management for any length of time, we can hear you now..."I am not here to be their best friend!" We are not advocating that you develop that type of relationship; we are talking about a professional working relationship that focuses on the value that each individual team member possesses. The old saying...people don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care...has never been truer than it is with the millennial employee. It has been said that millennials are not loyal; it may be true

that they are not loyal to a company, but they are extremely loyal to their relationships.

- 2) **Positive Environment** – Those responsible for raising the millennial generation have gone to great lengths to create a positive environment for them to live in. When they enter the work force and begin to experience a culture of accountability and structure, they feel threatened and extremely uncomfortable. To get the most out of them, create an environment that is positive and encouraging while maintaining accountability and structure. The days of yelling and screaming to get your point across are long gone and will not get you the response your desire. If you are required to correct the behavior of a millennial, do it privately. If you condemn them in public you will lose trust and the ability to lead them.

- 3) **Individual Goals** – Since the dawn of commerce, sales leaders have been imposing quotas, goals, targets, etc. on their teams. This has proven to be an effective method with previous generations, as they were used to being told what was expected of them. Unfortunately, the millennial generation has not had the same experience. Remember that this is the “Trophy Generation” that has been rewarded for simply participating. By allowing them to identify their own goals, you will get more buy in and they are more likely to execute the activity required to achieve them. Contrary to popular belief about this generation, they ARE goal oriented; it just needs to be their idea and not yours.
- 4) **Concise Game Plans** – In any sporting endeavor, coaches play a critical role in the development of the game plan required to achieve success. The sales

industry is no different. If sales managers desire to take their teams to greater heights, they must help the individual team member create a game plan that will insure their individual success. An effective game plan will be specific. Remember, the more specific the game plan the more predictable the outcome. Help your millennial sales person by helping them create a game plan that answers the questions, Who? When? Where? And how? By doing so, you will empower them to take the required action to achieve their individual goals as well as the team goals.

- 5) **Production Evaluation** – A sales manager's ability to evaluate productivity and identify opportunities for improvement are essential in his/ her success. If a sales person is not producing the results they desire, the question is why? What is holding them back? As

with previous generations, the millennials struggle with limiting beliefs about themselves and their ability to succeed. It is this level of personal involvement that makes most sales managers uncomfortable. Leadership is messy business. If you are to be successful, you must be willing to help the millennial overcome their limiting beliefs and replace them with empowering beliefs. When someone has a limiting belief it acts as a constraint, keeping them from doing their will. For example, if a sales person has a limiting belief that to be successful in sales you must be pushy. This limiting belief will keep them from asking for the business. Most of our beliefs are derived from experiences we have had in the past. In order to change a limiting belief, we must create a new experience. As sales managers it is our responsibility and duty to help our team members create new

empowering beliefs by helping them create positive experiences. You may need to go on a call with them and show them how to close without being pushy. This type of experience can help them change their limiting beliefs into empowering beliefs.

- 6) **Elevation Attitude** – The misconception about the millennial generation is that you can't push them to do more, be more and accomplish more. Nothing could be further from the truth; this generation will rise to the challenge when they feel empowered. There are three key questions to ask when trying to challenge a sales professional to take their game to the next level.

- 1) What could you do more of?
- 2) What do you need to do better?
- 3) What do you need to do different?

This process of self-evaluation will allow them to come up with their own answers, resulting in buy in and increased probability of future execution. So, challenge them and you might just be surprised at what they are capable of.

In summary, if you desire to build a highly competent, productive sales team made up of millennial sales people, be willing to change your approach from one of management to a more productive one of coaching. We know this may be a challenging request, but it is one that will be worth it...you can do it!

CHAPTER 4

GOALS & GAME PLANS

By: Bryan Caison

Setting goals is not changed tremendously over the last 40 years. The problem that most people actually have is that they don't set real goals. They tend to set hopes instead of goals. "I really hope we make our sales numbers this month." We're here to tell you, hope is not a strategy. In order to set goals and actually achieve them, there are five components that must be present in each and every goal.

- Specific – There is a specific difference between a fuzzy goal and a specific goal. A fuzzy goal indicates that you would like to accomplish something or it would be great if you accomplish something. These would be statements like, "I would really like it if you would sell more this month than you did last

month." A specific goal would be more like, "I expect you to sell 10% more, or two extra contracts, this month over last month." When your millennial sales professional is setting their own goals, they have to get very specific about how many units, contracts, cars, or whatever it is that you sell they are going to sell in that specific month. If the goal is to sell 15 of your products, then say that the goal is to sell 15 of your products. Don't say "work harder and sell more." "Work hard" is defined different by each different generation. It has to be about behaviors and results in order to be specific.

- Measurable – Units of measurement are critical and setting the right goal. Give it your best or do better than last time or anything along the lines of, you can interpret this how you want to, will yield the wrong end result. "I will

increase my sales this month from 11 units to 15 units." That is a specific and measurable goal. Remember this mantra... ***If you cannot measure it, you cannot expect it.***

- Action Oriented – This is the part where the rubber meets the road. "I will increase my sales this month from 11 units to 15 units by making for extra phone calls per day and three extra presentations per week, resulting in one extra sale per week, for a net of four extra units sold this month." When you begin talking about action, you're really talking about daily behaviors. It is mapping out the specific behaviors that a person will do on a daily basis the results in the right actions being taken in the right results being achieved.
- Realistic – This can be difficult for some sales managers to swallow, but the

goal has to actually be possible. If a person generally sells four units per month, it is unrealistic you expect them to go to 30 units per month. Gradual and incremental increases and positive results will work people in the top performance. Map out where you would like them to be in two years and then help them get a little closer each month.

- Time-Defined – The definition of the time involved is much like the measurement section. You need to defined the specific unit of time that will be allowed for achieving the goal. Whether it is one month, one quarter, or one year, the sales professional needs to know the specific amount of time that is allotted for their success. As a general rule larger goals must have incremental goals with short measurement periods built-in. The

millennial professional does not generally think in one and three year terms. It is much better to break it down into daily and weekly objectives for them to meet. This moves you from long-term strategic planning into short-term strategic thinking. It is a shift for management thoughts but it yields a much more positive result when managing a millennial sales professional.

Your objective is to be smart about the goals that you set for your millennial sales professionals. Whether you've ever done it this way or not is irrelevant. The key to success is doing what works, not doing what you've always done. What did work five years ago often doesn't work today. Set smart goals and get great results!

CHAPTER 5

WRAP UP

By: Bryan Caison

I can remember some 20 years ago when I entered the sales profession, my immediate goal was to become a sales manager. At the ripe age of 24 years old, I was given my shot at leadership. It was on that day that my life would forever be changed. I sat across the desk from my General Manager, a hard-nosed, very intimidating business man who demanded respect. With my hands sweating and my heart racing, I sat there as he gave me the most influential advice any mentor could give a pupil. He began by telling me his story of how dedication, hard work and sacrifice had contributed to his success. Fully engaged in the lecture, I began to realize that I was in way over my head. I could hear the words of my father ringing in my head, “Be careful what you wish for my son.” Syncing the weight of the moment, this man began to ask me

the question that would forever change the course of my life. He said, “Young man, are you committed to being successful in your career as a sales manager?” Although I might have been naive, I never lacked for confidence. I responded with a resounding “YES SIR!” He then said the words that still ring in my ears some 20 years later, “If so, then you must become a student of your profession.” What? A student, was he kidding? I just wanted to be the boss, and now he is telling me I must become a student again. I had just graduated college a few years earlier; I surely did not want to be a student again. He then began to explain that information becomes knowledge and that if I was to be a great leader someday, that I would need to become an avid reader of great leaders. Now mind you, I had graduated college with a finance degree and could not remember ever reading a book. But my eagerness won out, and I agreed that I would become a student of my profession and I would read.

He then turned his chair around to face his massive bookcase filled with business books and reached out and took one off of the shelf. He turned back around and handed me a worn out book and said, “Start with this one, it is a classic.” It sure enough looked like a classic, the cover was torn and the pages were practically falling out of the book. Little did I know that the words printed on those torn up pages would forever change the way I thought. The book was, “How to win friends and influence people” by Dale Carnegie.

There is no way that I could have known that day, that the advice he had given me was so profound. I have taken his advice and have since read countless books on leadership and personal growth. Now, please don't misunderstand my intentions here, I am not any smarter than anyone else. Just because someone had read more books, does not make them a more effective leader. Information without application does not lead to transformation. It is my desire that the

information shared in this short book has opened your eyes to the importance of understanding the generational differences in order to lead more effectively.

So, I encourage you to become a student of your profession. Become an avid reader, find a mentor and believe in your ability to influence the lives of others. Being a sales manager is a highly rewarding career and one that demands the best out of you. I will leave you with the words of Dr. Dennis Waitley, *“The greatest investment one can make is **an** investment in one’s self.”*

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Bryan Caison is an author, professional speaker, corporate trainer and business coach. As a Certified Coach, Trainer and Speaker with The John Maxwell Team, Bryan conducts workshops and seminars empowering organizational leaders to greater leadership effectiveness.

For more than 15 years, Jody Holland, author, entrepreneur, trainer and speaker, has helped organizations throughout the United States and abroad challenge their management and leadership paradigms and unlock their true potential.