

Do Millennials want a different organizational structure?

Some people attribute millennials as the drivers of change from traditional hierarchical structure to a flattened structure. A flat organization is characterized by few or no levels of middle management. Holacracy is an example of a flattened structure taken to the extreme where power is distributed among self-organizing groups, called circles. Each circle has accountability and is self-directed, self-organized and self-governed. A recent Forbes article titled, “Millennials Want Holacracy In The Workplace”, suggest that as Millennials comprise more of the workforce, they will influence the structure of how work gets done and move more toward holacracy. In the article, Laura Landrum suggests that one way to make Millennials happier at work is to develop a work environment that is, “more social, more upwardly mobile and a more democratic place to spend our time.” Millennials want to feel empowered, have ownership of projects and like the flexibility of flattened organizational structure. Regardless of the structure, training and communication still need to be a big focus. According to Ultimate Software and the Center for Generational Kinetics, “42% of Millennials want feedback every week. This is over twice the percentage of every other generation.” Keep in mind that flattening the structure distributes the formal power but does not necessarily make the workplace more equitable because it does not take away the human interaction and thus the potential for conflict.

Millennials unique circumstances and backgrounds will offer a different perspective on organizational structure. I think there is value in understanding how and why organizational structure is evolving and how it affects human relationships at work. Millennials desire a workplace that shifts the place and time of work to suit them. While Millennials are characterized as being less

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company loyal and more likely to switch jobs more frequently, the Great Place to Work survey found “that when Millennials' expectations of an excellent company culture are met, they are more than willing to stay. Millennials who feel they're at a great workplace are an incredible 25 times more likely to plan a long-term future at their workplace.” I think focusing on your culture and getting people to come together is just as important as the type of workplace structure you choose. As a leader, you need to look at structure as it relates to people. To minimize disruption and gain buy-in, your structure should evolve by evaluating and tweaking your structure for your current and future needs instead of making radical structural changes. There is no “right structure” for a company and structure should and will vary by company. Here are some things to ask yourself about your company’s structure and how it relates to your culture.

10 Workplace Structure and Culture Questions

1. Do the unwritten rules and behaviors in the workplace align with the company’s stated decision processes?
2. Do people feel a sense of pride in their jobs and company?
3. Are people committed to the company’s key performance indicators and motivated to produce positive results?
4. Are reporting relationships clear and effective across teams, departments and business units?
5. Does the organizational structure facilitate leadership and career development?
6. Are people connected beyond hierarchy and reporting relationships?

7. Are there more areas you can use temporary teams to work cross-functionally in a nonlinear fashion?
8. Are decisions being made at the most appropriate levels?
9. Are the leaders of the company leading by example or relying on authority?
10. Do you revisit your current organizational structure regularly with agility and adaptability in mind?

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Today's workplace is a constantly changing environment that requires flexible teams made up of skilled individuals. Teams must rethink, restructure, reinvent and redeploy business resources and processes. To be successful, it's important to recognize and leverage the diverse talents of team members. Harmony offers

customized and 'off the shelf' team effectiveness programs to help your teams operate at peak performance.

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Schedule of Public Courses

The following courses are being offered to the public by Harmony Coaching & Consulting. Click on the associated link for more information on the program or to register.

Course Title	Date(s)	Time	For More Information/Registration
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