

Millennials & Learning: What do we know?

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| | Matures | Baby Boomers | Generation X | Millennials |
|--------------------|--|---|--|---|
| Birth Dates | 1900 - 1946 | 1946 - 1964 | 1965 - 1982 | 1982 - 1991 |
| Description | Greatest generation | Me generation | Latchkey generation | Millennials; NetGen; GenY |
| Attributes | Command & control Self-sacrifice | Optimistic Workaholic | Independent Sceptical | Hopeful Determined |
| Likes | Respect for authority Family Community involvement | Responsibility Work ethic Can-do attitude | Freedom Multitasking Work-life balance | Public activism Latest technology Parents |
| Dislikes | Waste Technology | Laziness Turning 50 | Red Tape Hype | Anything slow Negativity |



Preferences

| BabyBoomers | GenX | Millennials |
|---------------|-------------|--------------------|
| TV generation | Videogames | Web |
| Typewriters | PCS | Mobile phones |
| Telephone | CDs | IM |
| Memos | Email | MP3s |
| Family focus | Individuals | Online communities |



Characteristics

- Gravitate towards group activity
- Cool to be smart
- Focused on grades and achievement
- Engaged in extra curricular activities
- Accept authority and identify with the values of their parents
- Rule followers, like structure
- Spend more time doing homework than watching TV
- Fascinated by technology



Millennials

- Have grown up with technology; grew up digitally
- 20 % began using computers between the ages of 5 & 8.
- Almost all using computers by age 16 -18.
- 74% online teens use IM
- Extensive MP3 player ownership



Today's learners

- Digitally Literate
- Connected
- Immediate
- Experiential
- Social



Technology

- Is taken for granted; a natural part of the environment
- software blends into the background; it enables certain activities to occur
- not new, novel, or customisable - all part of their definition of technology
- used more outside of 'school'
- perception that the use of technology in educational institutions is inadequate



Information-age mindset

- Computers aren't technology
- Internet is better than TV
- Reality is no longer real
- Doing is more important than knowing
- Learning more closely resembles nintendo than logic
- Multitasking is a way of life
- Typing is preferred to handwriting
- Staying connected is essential
- Zero tolerance for delays
- Consumer and creator are blurring

(Frand, 2000)



Millennials

- Always connected; always on (eg online + myspace + multiple IM + SMS)
- Importance of mobile and instant communications
- Email is how you communicate with 'adults'; instant messaging & text for everyday conversations and socialising



Strengths

- Multitasking
- Goal orientation
- Positive attitude
- Collaborative style
- Global perspective- more tolerant of diversity



Millennials expect technology to be part of their environment

- 94% online teens use net for school research
- 85% 14 – 17year olds go online to do schoolwork
- 60%+ say Net is very or extremely important for schoolwork
- 12% 9 – 13 year olds go to the Net first to learn about health issues
- BUT...



BUT

- Only 21% final year school students say courses are very interesting
- 28% that school work is often or always meaningful
- Majority of graduates would have worked harder if their high school demanded more of them
- Less than 25% feel they are significantly challenged and face high expectations to graduate



Learning Preferences

- Peer to peer
- Engaging
- Experiential
- Visual
- Things that matter/questions that matter



Learning approach & spaces

- 51% visual preference
- 42% equal visual & verbal
- 8% verbal
- Preferred collaboration
- Adapting space and teaching led to
 - Increased grades
 - Increased student satisfaction
 - Decreased attrition

Acker & Miller 2005



Millennials' expectations

- Desire to be connected with people and to be social
- Are at university to work with staff and other students, not to interact with them online
- Older students (Matures and Baby Boomers) are much more likely to be satisfied with fully Web-based courses than are traditional-age students.



Design Considerations

- Personal does not always mean "in person"
- Simple with cool graphics
- Often poor users of websites
- High levels of visual literacy
- Prefer visuals to precede text
- Expect constant connections & immediate responsiveness

