

Law Firm Talent Retention: Culture Matters

By [Silvia L. Coulter](#) on September 21, 2016

Millennials, Gen-Xers, Baby Boomers, Silent Generation, etc. Much has been written and I dare say speculated about why things are not working well between the generations. This includes such generic statements such as, “Millennials are unhappy and leaving firms” or “Why senior associate/Gen-Xers are not happy?”

Here’s my view. Culture matters regardless of the generation someone belongs to; culture is important to everyone in the global workforce (not just attorneys, of course) and defines an individual’s experience at their firm.

With many firms having senior partners calling the shots, they’ve left out one or more generations in the decision-making process, which creates a significant disconnect between leadership (members of a more senior generation) and lower level attorneys (members of younger generations). Often times lower level attorneys are left reeling at decisions made that they had no part in or control over. This situation, (and many others) proves culture matters. Improving the overall culture of a firm takes material time and effort, but the rewards are significant. Higher profits, better client service, and talent retention are all rewards reaped from the seeds of strong culture. Improving your firm’s culture is well worth the focus. Working on the culture of a firm can solve a whole host of problems. In my opinion, complaining about ‘this’ or ‘that’ generation does nothing except exacerbate issues or cause a non-issue to become a big issue.

Leaders who care about their firms will do well by inviting all levels of the firm to participate in feedback. We ask clients what they think and, well, it’s time to ask the members of the firm what they think, which includes **all** lawyers, **all** generations, **all** business professionals and **all** support staff. You can then see where the gaps exist between an ideal culture for collaboration and the existing culture. And, of course, we can help with some simple diagnostic tools that provide quantitative data to help you uncover opportunities for culture growth.

A strong culture leads to happy people, increased service levels and in turn, higher profits. Focus on the culture and all generations will follow.

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