



THE MILLENNIAL IMPACT

CAUSE, INFLUENCE & THE NEXT GENERATION WORKFORCE

The 2015 Millennial Impact Report

Three-Month Research Update:
Geographical and Gender Trends

Sponsored by:  **THE CASE FOUNDATION**

Research by:  **ACHIEVE**

THE MILLENNIAL IMPACT

Cause, Influence & The Next Generation Workforce

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Three-Month Research Update:
Geographical and Gender Trends

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INTRODUCTION

EARLIER THIS YEAR, data from the U.S. Census Bureau confirmed that the Millennial generation (those born 1980-2000) surpassed Baby Boomers as the most populous generation in the country. This past spring, Millennials also surpassed Generation Xers in the workplace, now making up the largest portion of the labor force. With this generation rapidly overtaking and changing the landscape of the workforce as well as the country at large, it is imperative for employers to understand how to best engage and retain Millennial employees.

We know – and our Millennial Impact Project studies have consistently confirmed – Millennials have an affinity for “doing good.” In our 2014 study, we found companies can successfully recruit and retain Millennial employees by creating a culture that offers them the chance to use their talents and passions to “do good” at work. Qualitative findings, however, quickly made it clear that it’s also important to Millennials that their supervisors are supportive of their cause participation – and not just that a company offers such opportunities.

We wondered specifically, if management shows no interest in a company’s cause work, do Millennial employees feel less compelled to participate? Can managers potentially hinder Millennial involvement in social good in the workplace?

These questions led us to focus the 2015 Millennial Impact Report on company cause work, the factors that influence engagement in the workplace and the relationship between Millennial employees and their managers. The purpose of the study was to help companies and organizations understand the relationships that drive participation in the workplace; build corporate cultures that fully leverage cause work and corporate responsibility; recruit talented, passionate employees; and drive employee happiness at work through cause involvement.

Achieve, in partnership with the Case Foundation, released the 2015 Millennial Impact Report in June of this year. It was the sixth in the Millennial Impact Project, which studied what influences Millennial employees and managers to participate and engage in company cause work initiatives.



We use the term **“cause work”** to describe any initiatives or programs that are charitable in nature.

The 2015 report developed greater insight into the preferences of Millennials and managers on volunteering, donating and participating in cause work through their company. The initial report shared findings and analysis from a survey distributed to more than 1,500 Millennial employees and more than 1,000 managers who supervise Millennial employees in the United States. These respondents were from a national representative sample of Millennials and managers as well as five businesses representing small-, medium- and large-scale companies in the U.S.

This Three-Month Research Update to the 2015 Millennial Impact Report builds upon the main report and provides an in-depth look at the impact of gender and geographical region on Millennial cause engagement in the workplace. It also explores Millennials’ perceptions of and attitudes toward their company’s culture around cause work and the impact of their workplace relationships. Additionally, this update reveals how those associations might influence their engagement in workplace-sponsored cause work.

This update shares additional quantitative findings from the data explored in the 2015 report (Phase I), as well as qualitative analysis (Phase II) that focused on providing a comparison of anecdotal comments and experiences with the data we detailed.

WHAT DID WE FIND?

IN SHORT, THAT CAUSE WORK MATTERS. What's more, the findings from this phase of our research suggest that where your employees are in the country also matters. Employers may not expect the same response from employees around the country to a general call.

In this Three-Month Research Update, we detail that some company cause work preferences and habits are influenced by geographical region as well as gender between both Millennial employees and managers. Through qualitative methods, we found that genuine and authentic connections promote participation in work-sponsored cause-related opportunities; cause work is personal; and cause work in the workplace is often interpreted as team-building exercises.

In all, these quantitative and qualitative findings support and expand on our earlier survey findings. The following pages offer data, analysis and recommendations for forward-thinking companies to better support and encourage participation by Millennial employees in cause work as well as every level of the organizational chart.

2014 Millennial Impact Report

The 2014 Millennial Impact Report marked a new phase of the Millennial Impact research. This report focused primarily on Millennials' preferences in the workplace – how they engage with their company and what they look for in corporate cause work.

2014 Millennial Impact Report Six-Month Update

This research update shares findings and analysis from the study's final two components: Video-based focus testing of employees evaluating sample employer communications, websites and promotions and a nine-month panel of employees offering feedback on their employer's cause work.

Millennial Impact Four-Year Summary

The Four-Year Summary, completed in 2014, takes a look back at previous Millennial research and analyzes the findings that have changed over time.

2013 Millennial Impact Report

The 2013 Millennial Impact Report explored how Millennials support causes. Millennials first support issues they are passionate about, so it's up to organizations to inspire them and demonstrate that their donation or action will make a tangible difference on a wider issue.

2012 Millennial Impact Report

The 2012 Millennial Impact Report studied Millennial engagement. Specifically, this study examined young professionals, how they are driven by movements and what inspires them to donate or volunteer. The 2012 report explored how Millennials connect with, get involved with and give to causes.

2011 Millennial Donors Report

The 2011 Millennial Donors Report was designed to supplement the 2010 Millennial Donor Study, while providing new insights and a deeper understanding of Millennial donor interests, engagement and motivations.

The Millennial Impact Benchmarks

The Millennial Impact Benchmarks represents a path any organization can follow to direct its culture toward Millennial engagement. The system is based on three levels – Millennial Inviting, Millennial Immersion and Millennial Impact – with ways to help Millennials connect, involve and give at each level.

[Visit themillennialimpact.com](http://themillennialimpact.com)

SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

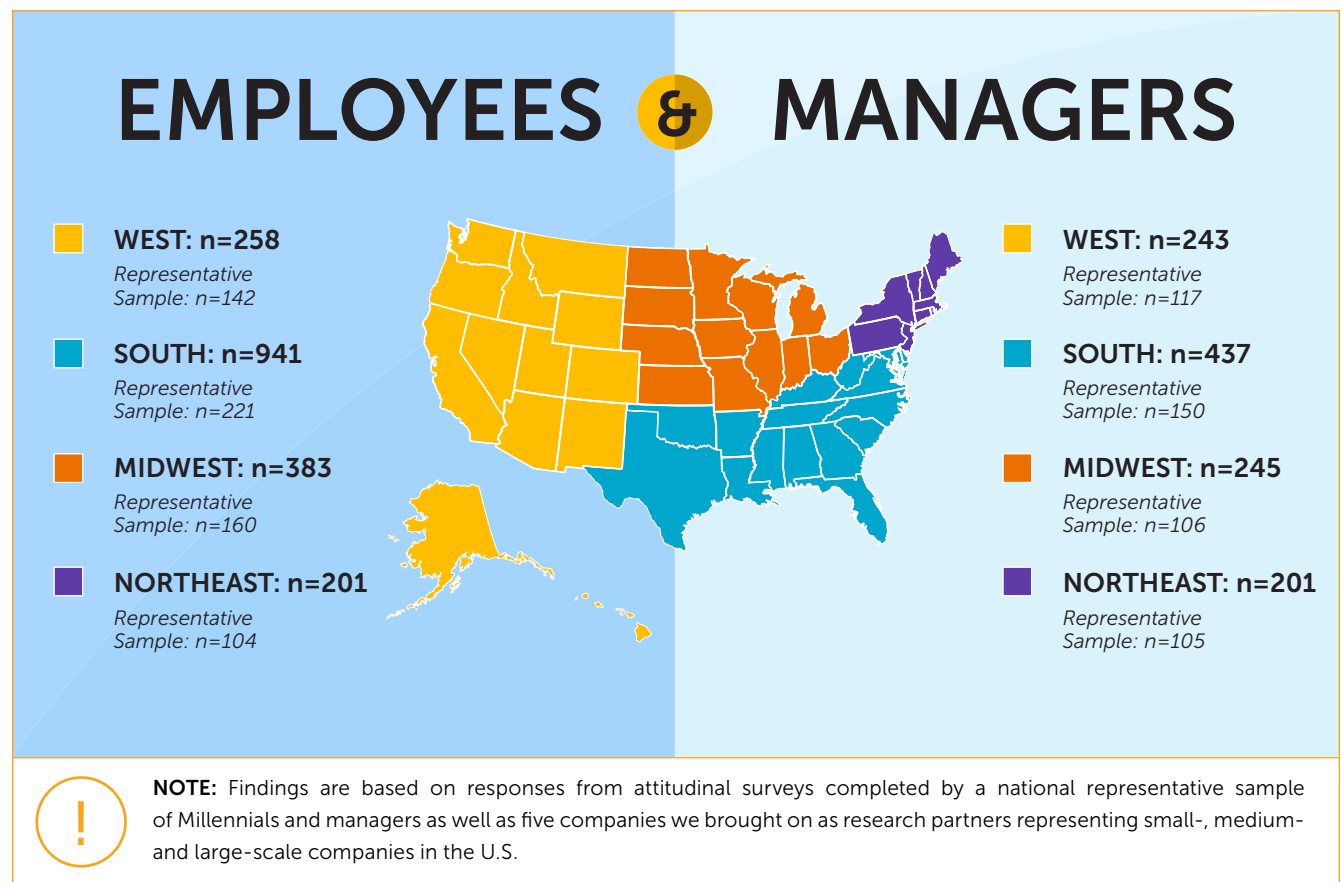
IN THE 2015 MILLENNIAL IMPACT REPORT, we defined Millennials as individuals born from 1980 to 2000. This study looked at the cause work preferences and habits of Millennial employees and their managers, as well as how employee-manager relationships influence participation in company-sponsored cause work initiatives. As such, respondents self-identified as either an employee or a manager of Millennial employees at the time they took the survey. This research update expands on the quantitative data released in the 2015 study, focusing on what – if any – trends emerged by region and gender.

The following are additional highlights from the initial survey.

GEOGRAPHICAL REGION TRENDS

Within the Millennial generation, the spirit of philanthropy is strong across the country. But is its importance equally distributed across the country? Do the same factors that influence Millennial employees in California also influence those in Vermont? Businesses do not exist in a vacuum, and with today's technology, we're increasingly connected to those even a few thousand miles away.

In other words, it's no longer enough for companies to only understand employees at their specific location. To truly engage employees, employers – those with offices in multiple locations, or even those that simply work and/or communicate with others outside their immediate area – now need to understand how behavior and preferences toward giving differ by region.





SERVE

TO UNDERSTAND MILLENNIAL VOLUNTEERING IN THE WORKPLACE, we asked respondents in Phase I of our 2015 study about past involvement in company cause work (ex. Have you ever volunteered your time for a company-sponsored cause initiative? How many hours in the past year have you volunteered through a company-sponsored project?). We also sought to discover what would influence employees and managers to participate in company-sponsored initiatives in the future (ex. Are you more likely to volunteer if your coworkers participate? Are you more likely to volunteer if there is a competition involved?).

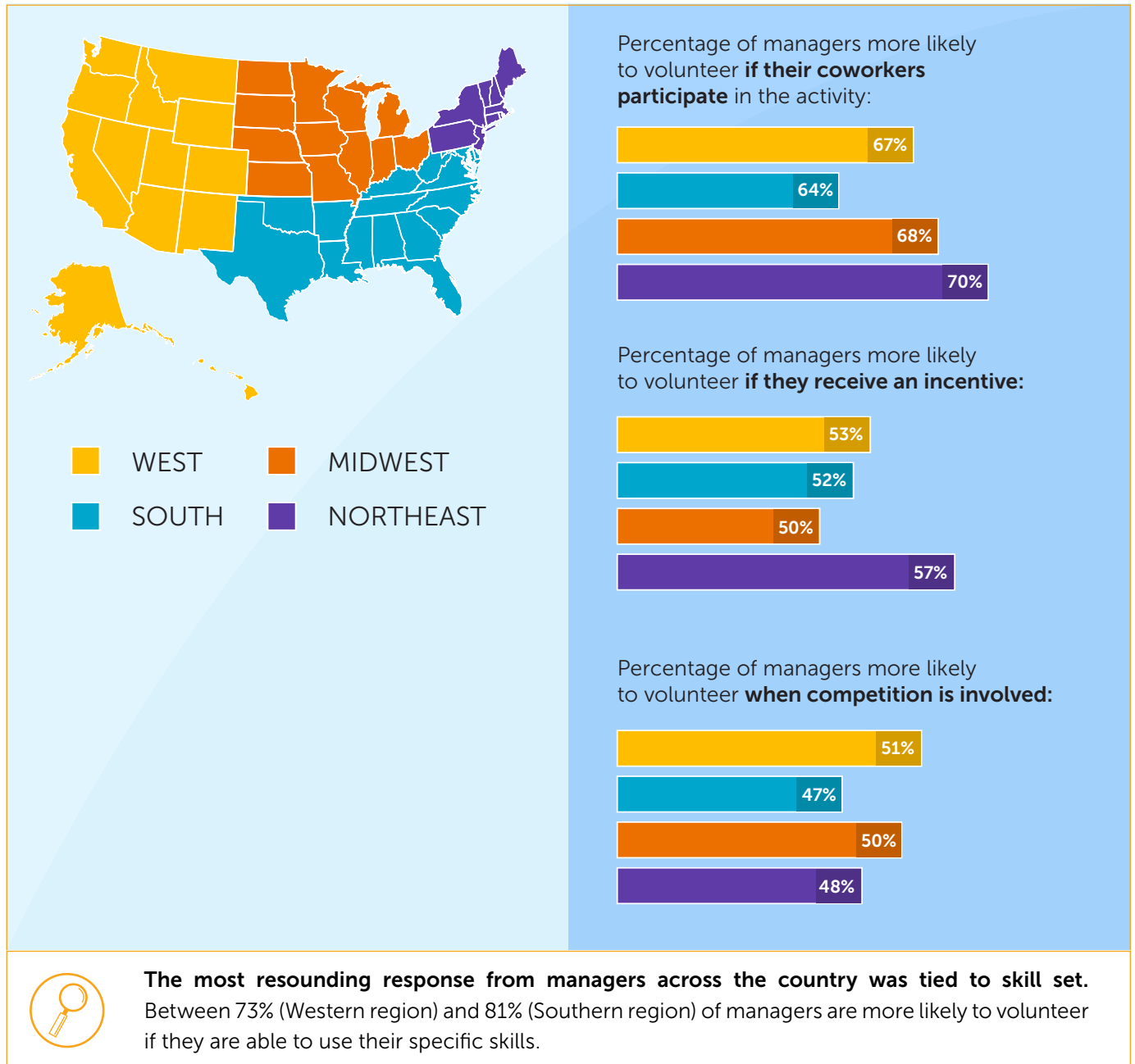
After looking at findings as a whole in our 2015 study, we categorized responses by geographic region to discern similarities and differences among employees and managers in different areas of the country. Those who self-identified as employees received slightly different surveys from those who identified as managers. Both groups responded to questions on past habits and influences to engage in company cause work. In addition, employees answered questions detailing the current or possible impact of their manager's habits on their involvement in causes (ex. How do your immediate supervisors encourage you to participate in your company's cause work? Are you more likely to volunteer if your supervisor also participates?). Managers were asked how they thought their own involvement (or lack thereof) had an impact on the involvement of those they manage (ex. Do you think the employees you supervise are more likely to volunteer if you participate?).

The following describes the geographical trends that emerged in serving.

Trend 1

REGIONS DON'T GREATLY INFLUENCE THE OPINIONS OF MANAGERS ON VOLUNTEERING.

Responses from Millennial managers across the U.S. were fairly similar, meaning the region in which they live and work does not seem to have an impact on their cause work preferences and habits.

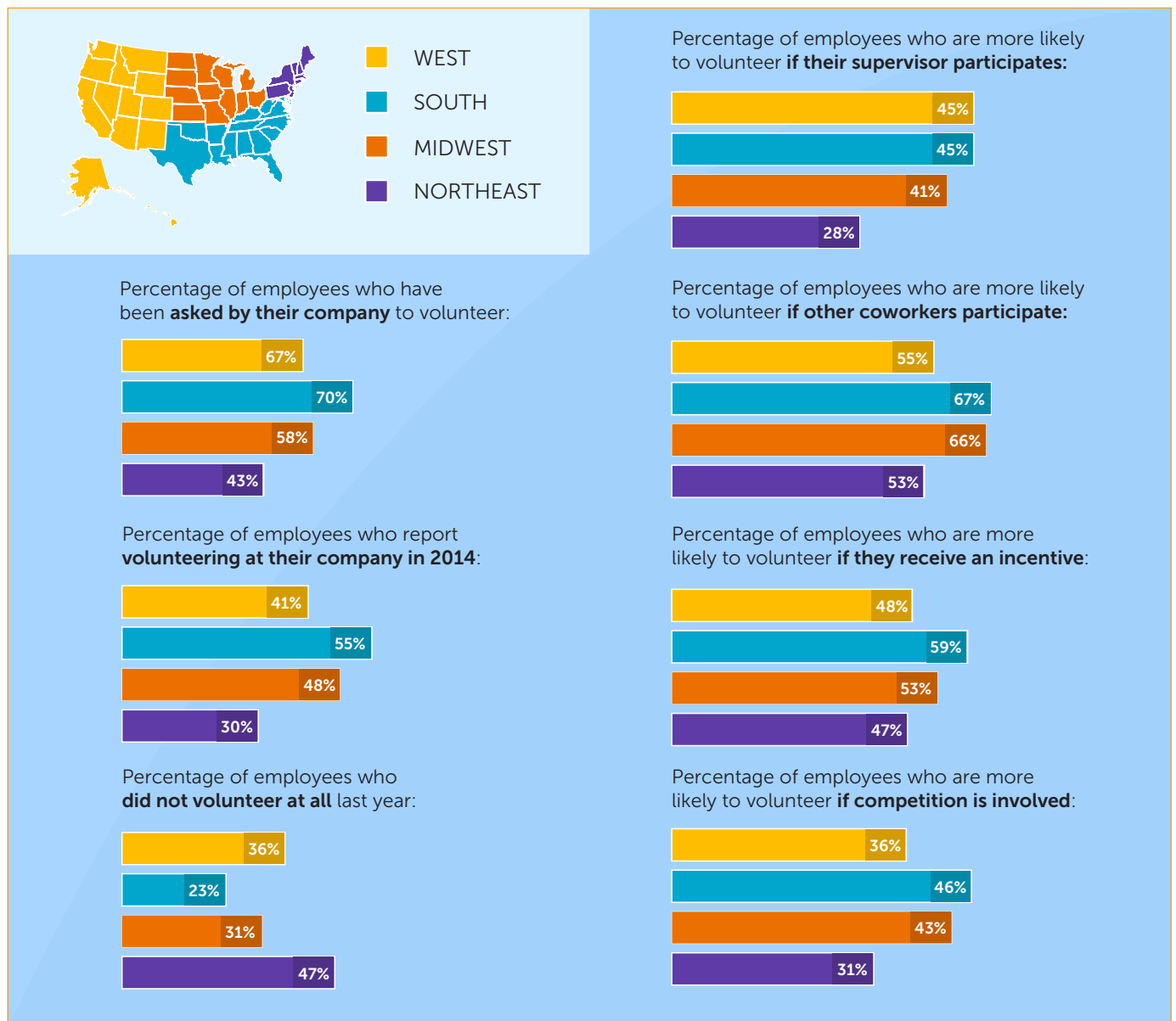


Trend 2:

NORTHEASTERN EMPLOYEES REPORT THE LEAST PARTICIPATION AND ARE LEAST LIKELY TO BE INFLUENCED BY OUTSIDE FACTORS; SOUTHERN EMPLOYEES SPENT THE MOST HOURS VOLUNTEERING IN 2014 AND ARE MOST INFLUENCED BY INCENTIVES AND COMPETITION.

Overall, employees in the Northeast are often the ones participating in company cause initiatives the least. However – and this is likely a substantial supporting reason for this trend – employees in this region are also the ones reporting they have been asked the least, which speaks more to the behavior of employers than it does employees.

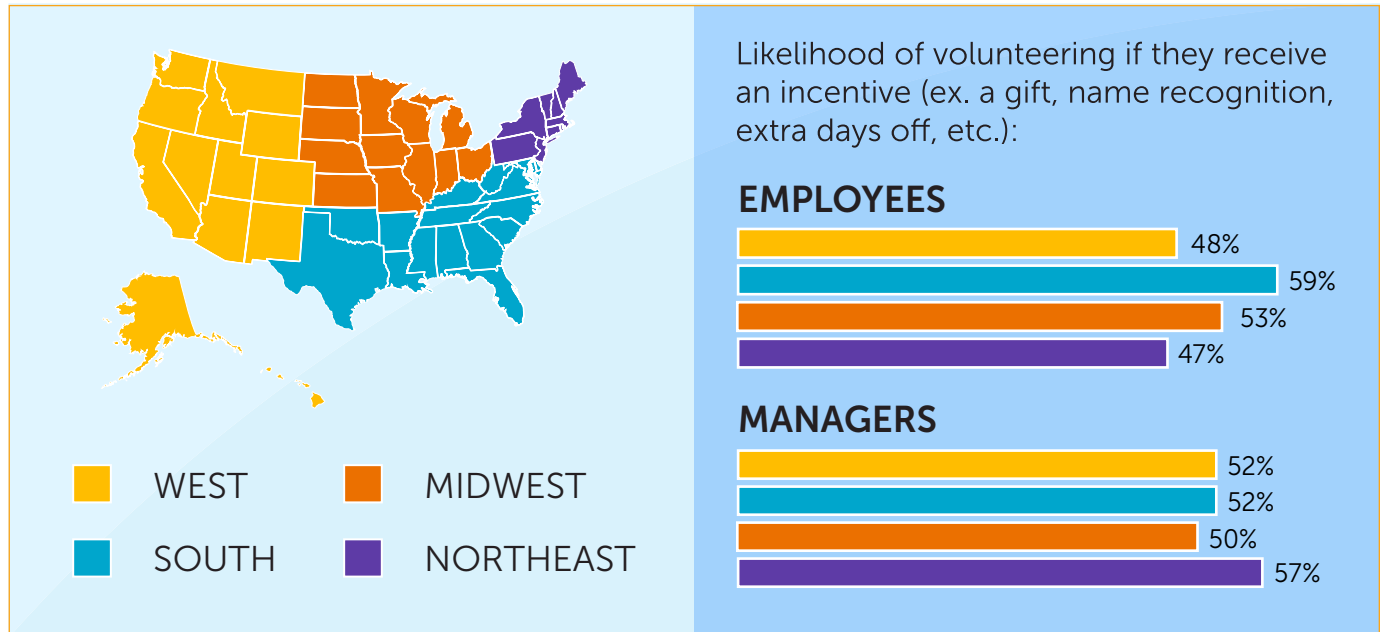
Respondents in the Northeast region also report not being very influenced by incentives, competition or supervisors, and they are much more likely to report they had not volunteered at all in the last year. And regardless of region, all employees are more likely to be influenced to volunteer by other coworkers than any other outside factor.



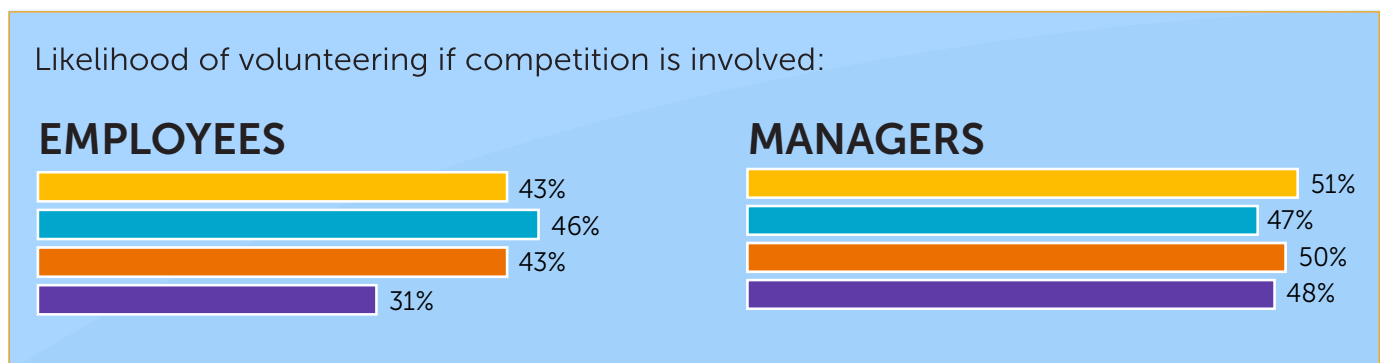
Trend 3:

OPPOSITE TO THAT OF THE REGION'S EMPLOYEES, NORTHEASTERN MANAGERS ARE MOST INFLUENCED BY INCENTIVES AND COMPETITIONS.

In the Northeast, managers are the most likely to volunteer if they receive an incentive (ex. a gift, name recognition, extra days off, etc.), while Northeastern employees are the least likely to volunteer if incentivized.



Similarly, managers in the Northeast are highly likely to volunteer if competition is involved, compared to Northeastern employees who are the least likely.



A black and white photograph of a young man with short hair, wearing a striped sweater, looking down at an open book he is holding. He is in a library or bookstore, with bookshelves filled with books visible in the background. The lighting is soft, and the overall mood is quiet and studious.

SERVE

KEY TAKEAWAYS

When it comes to volunteering, region doesn't appear to have an impact on Millennial managers. Managers across the country are more likely to volunteer if their coworkers participate, and they are most influenced to volunteer when they can use their specific skills. Region does seem to be a dividing factor when it comes to employees, however. Employees in the Northeast are solicited to volunteer the least; they are also least likely to be influenced by another person at the company or a factor such as competition or incentives. Southern employees, however, report many volunteer hours and are very likely to be influenced to volunteer if they'll be given an incentive or if competition is involved.

WHY IS THIS INFORMATION IMPORTANT?

The resounding theme we came to understand through this research is that simply offering cause work initiatives in the workplace is no longer enough. Today's companies cannot offer cause work opportunities without taking into consideration the preferences and habits of its employees – at least, not one that expects to have a successful philanthropic program.

Again, businesses do not exist in a vacuum – we're very easily connected to people around the globe. Companies with offices in multiple locations, or even those that simply work and/or communicate with others outside their immediate area need to understand how behavior and preferences toward giving and serving differ by region.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Companies nationwide can employ similar tactics to promote serving with employees and managers in some areas, such as allowing for team-based service projects or events that allow employees to work with their peers. However, it is clear from these responses that Northeastern employers should start by asking employees to participate in cause work as a way to boost engagement in activities – but recognize that incentives or competitions won't necessarily entice them. Employers in the South should incentivize volunteer opportunities or create competition around them to incite action. With these findings, companies can better tailor how they structure and communicate cause work initiatives to Millennial employees in order to increase involvement.



GIVE

PHASE I OF OUR 2015 STUDY also sought to understand what influences Millennials to donate to company-sponsored cause initiatives. We first asked respondents about past donations to company causes (ex. How much money did you donate through a workplace giving campaign in 2014? Why did you donate?). We then asked what would influence employees and managers to donate to company-sponsored initiatives in the future (ex. Are you more likely to donate if your company promises to match your donation? Are you more likely to donate to a cause if you receive an incentive for donating?).

Questions asked of employees and managers on donating also slightly differed from each other. Both groups responded to questions on past habits and influences to donate to causes selected by the company. In addition, employees answered questions on the influence of their managers on their donation habits (ex. Are you more likely to donate to a cause if your supervisor also participates?). Managers were asked how they thought their own involvement (or lack thereof) in company giving campaigns had an impact on the involvement of those they manage (ex. Do you think the employees you supervise are more likely to donate to a cause if you participate?).

The following describes the regional trends that emerged in giving.

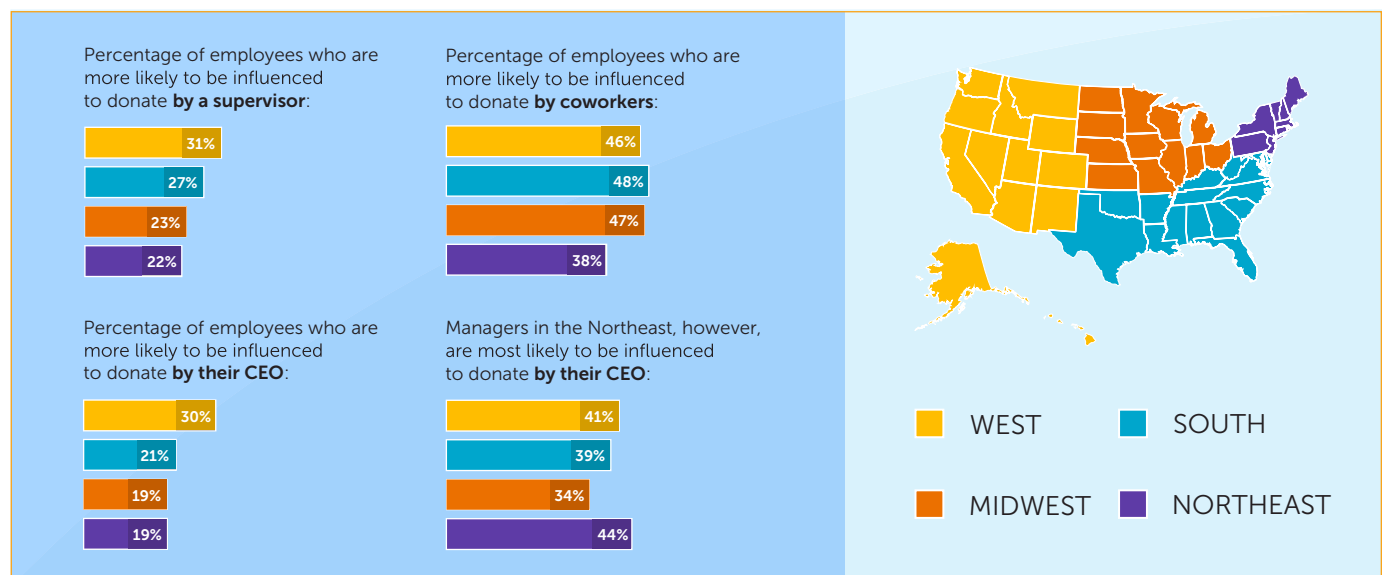
Trend 1:

NORTHEASTERN EMPLOYEES ARE LEAST LIKELY TO BE INFLUENCED BY OTHERS TO DONATE, BUT NORTHEASTERN MANAGERS ARE MOST LIKELY TO BE INFLUENCED TO DONATE BY SENIOR STAFF.

Region did not appear to have an impact on the choice to donate in 2014 for employees or managers.



Regional trends did appear when looking at donation influence, however.



Trend 2:

EMPLOYEES IN THE NORTHEAST ARE SOLICITED LEAST AND DONATE LEAST TO COMPANY CAUSE WORK.

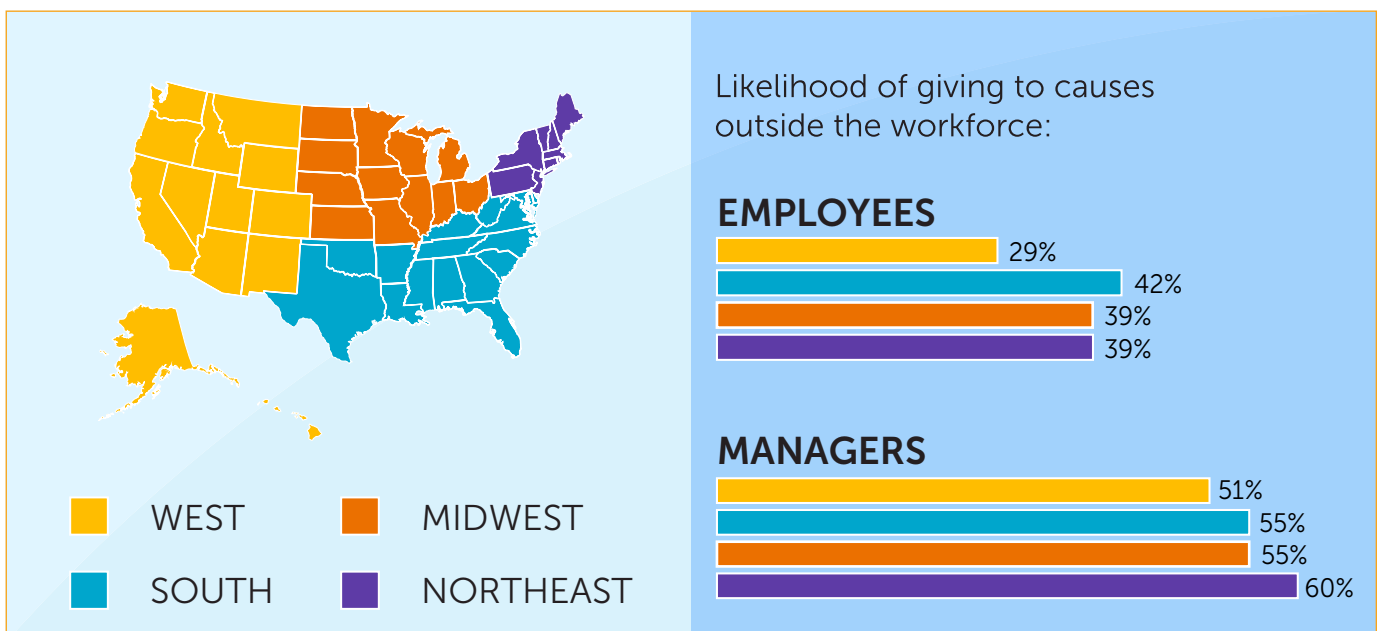
Northeastern employees report being asked the least (42%) by a company representative to participate in a giving campaign or make donation to company cause work. By contrast, 53% of Western employees, 54% of Midwestern employees and 66% of Southern employees report being asked to donate. Like volunteering, this data likely explains the low participation rate in company giving in the Northeast, where only 33% of employees donate to company causes. In the West, 45% of employees give to company cause initiatives, compared to 40% of employees in the Midwest and 52% of employees in the South. Again, this data appears to be more of a reflection of how often Northeastern employees are asked to donate than on whether employees alone choose to engage in giving.

Trend 3:

MANAGERS ARE MORE LIKELY THAN EMPLOYEES TO DONATE TO A CAUSE THEIR COMPANY ISN'T ASSOCIATED WITH.

Many businesses have partnerships with certain philanthropic initiatives that align with their service offerings, but those initiatives may not be the ones that excite their employees or incite them to take action. While partnerships at the company level are important, they shouldn't be the only giving and serving opportunities offered to employees. It is equally important that employees and managers have options to participate in cause work that's important to them.

In this category, managers responded as being more likely than employees overall to give to causes outside the workforce, regardless of region. Employees and managers in the West, however, are least likely to give to causes outside the company when compared to other regions.



Trend 4:

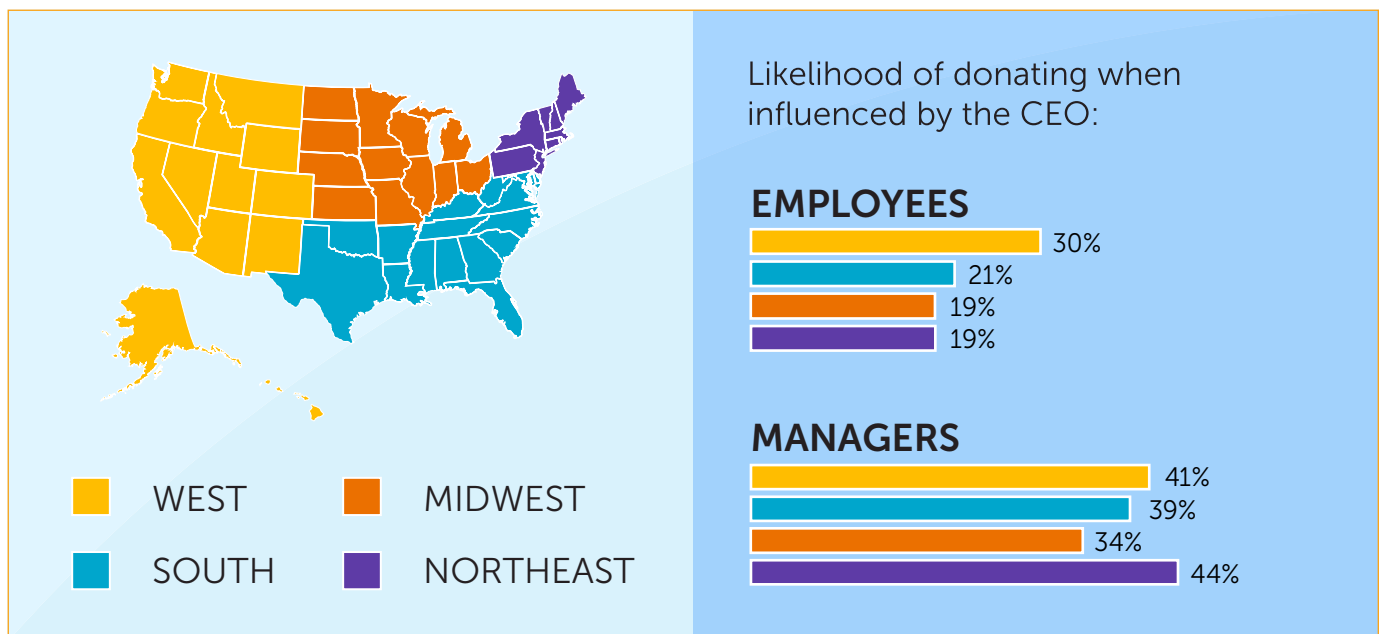
SOUTHERN EMPLOYEES DONATED THE MOST TO COMPANY CAUSE WORK (AND WERE ASKED THE MOST).

In the South, 31% of employees donated money when solicited by their company (most), compared to only 23% of Northeastern employees (least).

Trend 5:

WESTERN EMPLOYEES AND MANAGERS ARE MORE LIKELY (IN MOST SITUATIONS) TO BE INFLUENCED TO DONATE BY SUPERVISORS AND CEOs.

Nearly one-third (31%) of employees in the West are more likely to donate to company cause work when influenced by a supervisor, compared to about one-fifth (22%) of employees in the Northeast. Employees and managers in the West are both more likely to donate when influenced by the CEO.





GIVE

KEY TAKEAWAYS

The choice to donate did not differ much by region, but the influencing factors did. Like the responses to questions on volunteering, Northeastern employees reported being asked to donate to company causes the least – and as such, they donate least of all regions. They also are not likely to be influenced by others to donate. Interestingly, Northeastern managers are very likely to donate when asked by senior staff.

Again, we see that Southern employees report both being asked most to donate and actually donating, which indicates an obvious trend to employers. Western employees and managers are both very likely to be influenced to donate by a supervisor or CEO.

WHY IS THIS INFORMATION IMPORTANT?

Like with behavior related to serving, some regional trends do appear when it comes to donating to company cause work initiatives. This data reinforces our overarching theme that employers truly need to craft cause work activities that are tailored to the preferences of employees in its region. This information can help employers across the country better understand how Millennial employees and managers in different geographic locations think and what influences them to give.

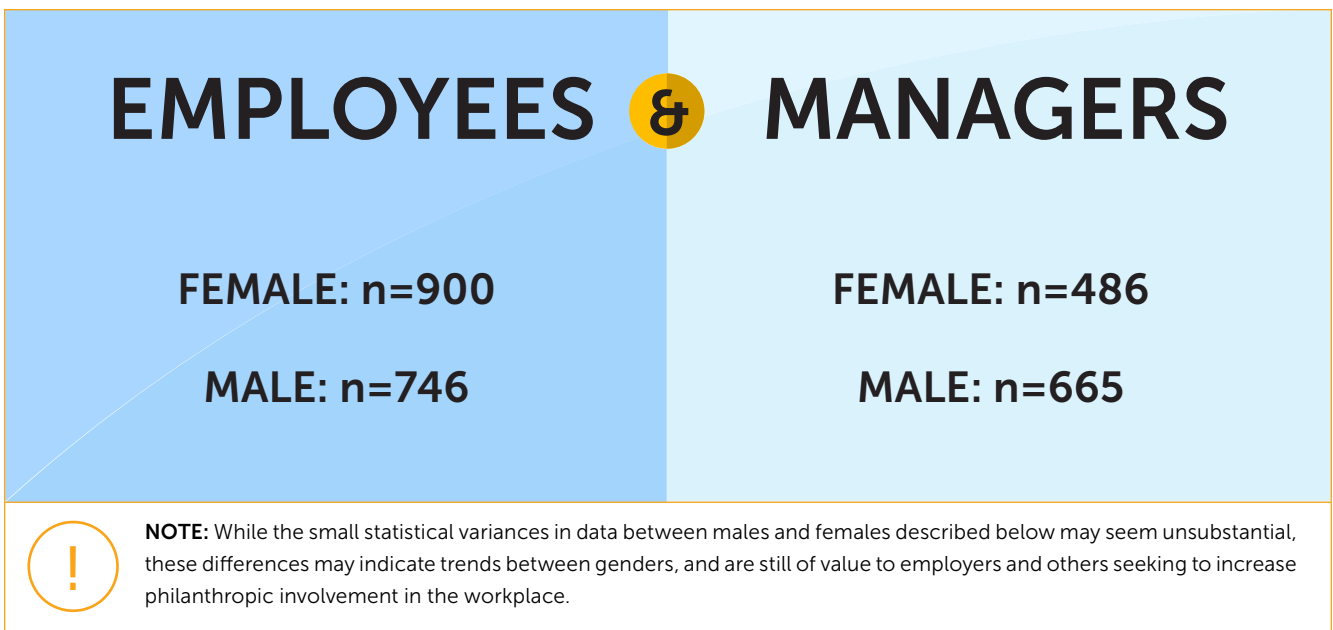
RECOMMENDATIONS

When it comes to donating, companies aren't able to take as much of a "one size fits all" approach. Northeastern employers again need to start asking employees to donate to causes. For managers, this ask should come from supervisors or the CEO. Western employers should also have senior or C-suite staff solicit donations from both employees and managers; Southern employers should continue asking for donations as they are. These findings can allow companies to mold donation requests to Millennial employees and managers to increase giving campaign involvement.

GENDER TRENDS

Women Give, the ongoing research study from the Women's Philanthropy Institute at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis reports females are more likely to donate and volunteer – and volunteer more hours – than men. Their 2010 study specifically found that households headed by single females give 57% more than those headed by single males.

It's clear region can have an effect on Millennial employees and managers' likelihood to give or serve. Similarly, it is important that companies look at gender differences from the Millennial perspective to understand philanthropic trends among males and females. As teams, departments and companies are comprised of employees and managers from both genders, employers must understand the influences, preferences and habits of each side in order to increase involvement.



Trend 1:

FEMALE EMPLOYEES AND MANAGERS ARE MORE LIKELY THAN MALES TO BE INFLUENCED BY THEIR PEERS.

Male employees report being asked to volunteer by their company 3% more than females (66% versus 63%), but females report actually volunteering 4% more than males. Males are 2% more likely than females to volunteer if their supervisor participates, while females are 3% more likely than males to donate if other coworkers participate. Female employees are also 5% more likely than males to volunteer if a competition is involved in the cause work initiative.

Similarly, female managers are 3% more likely than males to volunteer if other coworkers participate. Male managers are 3% more likely to donate when asked by their CEO, while females are 7% more likely than males to donate when asked by a coworker.

Trend 2:

FEMALE EMPLOYEES AND MANAGERS VIEW COMPANY VOLUNTEERING AND DONATING MORE ALTRUISTICALLY THAN MALES.

Female employees report giving to company-sponsored cause campaigns 3% more than their male counterparts. They are 6% more likely than males to donate when the company matches their gift. And when they give, females are 3% more likely to put cash in a collection bucket, while males donated more than females through paycheck deduction.

When asked why they donate and volunteer, female employees are 4% more likely than males to donate and 6% more likely to volunteer because they are passionate about the cause. Male employees report volunteering 3% more than females because it was made mandatory by the company.

When it comes to Millennial managers, males are 2% more likely than females to cite incentives as their primary reason for donating, while females are 3% more likely than males to donate because they are passionate about the cause.

Trend 3:

BOTH FEMALE AND MALE MANAGERS ARE INFLUENCED BY INCENTIVES.

Female managers are 3% more likely than males to volunteer if their skill set is being utilized. They are also 2% more likely than males to volunteer when incentivized. However, males are 6% more likely than females to donate when incentivized.

The following chart compares some responses from males and females on what motivates employees and managers to give to and serve in company-sponsored cause work initiatives.

More likely to donate to a company-sponsored cause campaign because...	EMPLOYEES		MANAGERS	
	MALES	FEMALES	MALES	FEMALES
I'm passionate about the cause		●		●
My supervisor asked me		●	●	
My company's CEO asked me to	●		●	
A competition was involved		●	●	
My company promised to match my donation		●	●	
I received an incentive		●	●	

More likely to participate in a company-sponsored cause campaign because...	EMPLOYEES		MANAGERS	
	MALES	FEMALES	MALES	FEMALES
I'm passionate about the cause		●	—	—
It was mandatory	●		—	—
My supervisor participated	●		—	—
Other coworkers also participated		●		●
The initiative involved a competition		●		●
I received an incentive	●			●
I could utilize my specific skills or expertise	●		●	●



GENDER TRENDS

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Small but significant differences exist between the preferences and influences of men and women when it comes to both donating and volunteering in company-sponsored cause initiatives. Females (both employees and managers) are more likely than males to donate and volunteer when coworkers are also participating; males are more influenced by their supervisor or CEO to donate or volunteer. Females also responded as participating in company initiatives because of passion for the cause, rather than males who participated because it was mandatory or an incentive was offered. Both genders of managers, however, are influenced by incentives.

WHY IS THIS INFORMATION IMPORTANT?

Just as philanthropic activity differs by geographic region, it also differs by gender. The workplace is comprised of both males and females, and employees and managers of both genders play a vital role in the success of company cause work initiatives. Again, employers must understand the influences, preferences and habits of each side in order to increase involvement in cause work activities if they want them to be successful.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From this data, we know that employers would do well to promote cause work as an opportunity to work with peers –to influence their female employees and managers – as well as offer cross-level opportunities that would engage the males. Communication about initiatives should speak to the cause itself to solicit a passionate response from females. And employers should structure an incentive program to entice managers to participate and/or give.

While males and females are similarly influenced to give and serve in the workplace, companies can use these findings to modify cause work opportunities to engage all employees and managers equally.



QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

For Phase II of the 2015 study, we interviewed nine Millennial employees and nine managers to validate the data we received from the quantitative findings we detailed in Phase I of the 2015 study. The employees and managers interviewed in the qualitative method are a sample of respondents from the quantitative survey, meaning all 18 of the individuals we interviewed completed the Phase I survey. Each of the companies we spoke to in Phase I are also represented in Phase II.

In our qualitative research, we asked interviewees about the cause-work activities that take place within their workplace, and what influences them to take part in such activities. These questions were designed to elicit feedback about the culture of the company, the relationships they have with other employees and the ways they engage in cause work. The following questions reflect the inquiries that were posed in actual interviews. This qualitative data collection method allowed us to delve deeper into how employee behaviors were influenced by the opinions and perceptions they expressed in the initial survey.

Describe your company's attitude on philanthropic activities.

Why have you participated in work-sponsored cause-related opportunities?

What role do coworkers, managers and company leadership each play in your decision to participate in cause-related activities?

Describe the culture of your company.

Describe your relationship with your supervisor/manager.

Talk about the causes you support.

The feedback detailed below serves to authenticate and further explain the quantitative data we collected in Phase I.

FEEDBACK FROM EMPLOYEES AND MANAGERS

THEME 1

GENUINE AND AUTHENTIC CONNECTIONS PROMOTE PARTICIPATION IN WORK-SPONSORED CAUSE-RELATED OPPORTUNITIES.

Millennial employees and managers alike enjoy participating in company-sponsored cause initiatives with people at work with whom they have relationships. This typically means a coworker; though, if an employee has a relationship with their direct manager, he/she will participate with the manager as well. However, many respondents said the CEO seems too far removed and unknown, and therefore would not play a factor in whether or not that employee decided to participate.

Some respondents also view company-sponsored cause work activities as time outside the office to spend with peers; many said they discuss with other coworkers to decide whether to participate in company initiatives.

- **"I am most influenced by people on my team – coworkers at a similar level. I'm not as influenced by management as I am people I can associate most with or would likely attend [a cause work] event with. I've gotten involved with committees in the past because someone equal to me suggested it, not a manager or someone above me. It's a lot easier for me to want to sign up for something if I'm coming in as an equal – it feels like a team that comes together to solve a problem."** – Male Millennial Employee
- **"I participate to be with my coworkers; it's also a good opportunity to just spend some time outside of work with them. It's the fact that it's with coworkers that makes it fun – the driving force is that we all agree to do things together. My managers are also people I enjoy spending time with, but it wouldn't be really compelling to me to participate in a cause because a manager said I should."** – Male Millennial Employee
- **"I got involved in an organization on behalf of my company because a friend in another department needed me to take her place – and I loved it. I signed up to help monthly after that! I probably wouldn't have gotten involved on my own, but I was doing a friend a favor and just kept on going."** – Female Millennial Manager

This trend shows individuals, both employees and managers, are interested in participating in company cause work with or at the suggestion of their work peers. The exception to this theme is managers who are looking to climb the corporate ladder, those who participate in company-sponsored giving and volunteering activities for the recognition from senior staff.

- **"I'm personally motivated by recognition and personal development. If I can get something personally out of giving back (like personal growth and acknowledgement), I'd be interested. I love knowing my director or boss is noticing things I'm doing, and I'm getting that recognition as a well-rounded person to move in my career. I like the attention."** – Female Manager

RECOMMENDATION

ENGAGE EMPLOYEES IN THE DECISION OF CAUSE WORK INVOLVEMENT.

- **Make an effort to engage all levels of employees in the decisions that are made around what cause work your company wants to engage, and then how to structure, communicate and implement your company's initiatives. Employees will be more engaged if their opinions are taken into account during cause work selection as well as deciding what participation in such initiatives entails.**
- **Consider soliciting the opinions and assistance of employee representatives across levels and teams. Respondents are interested in engaging in meaningful cause work with their coworkers, and often people who share similar interests appreciate the same causes. Allowing input from multiple employee levels can help develop these opportunities to engage the entire company.**
- **Foster peer-to-peer engagement. Remember, employees are most influenced by each other, so encourage activities that allow for group participation.**

THEME 2

CAUSE WORK IN THE WORKPLACE IS OFTEN INTERPRETED AS TEAM-BUILDING EXERCISES.

Millennial employees and managers primarily see cause work or volunteerism at their place of employment first as team-building activities – and then as an opportunity to “give back.” This view is sometimes sharpened due to how senior managers organize or promote such activities.

This view may also stem from the department from which cause engagement initiatives are organized – which is often human resources. Although such initiatives do bring teams together, team-building should be viewed as an added benefit to team cause work initiatives, not the sole reason for them. It is important that companies recognize cause work as individually self-fulfilling in addition to a boost for the team.

- **“Group participation is great. My team is virtual, so I think it would go a long way if there was something we could do as a team remotely or even some type of team-building activity when we are together. I would love to do a volunteer activity as a team – it would be a nice way to do something together that isn't just work.”** – Female Millennial Employee
- **“Cause work at my company has turned into more of a team-building activity among management. It wasn't organized or probably intended that way, but that's how the management group views it.”** – Female Millennial Manager

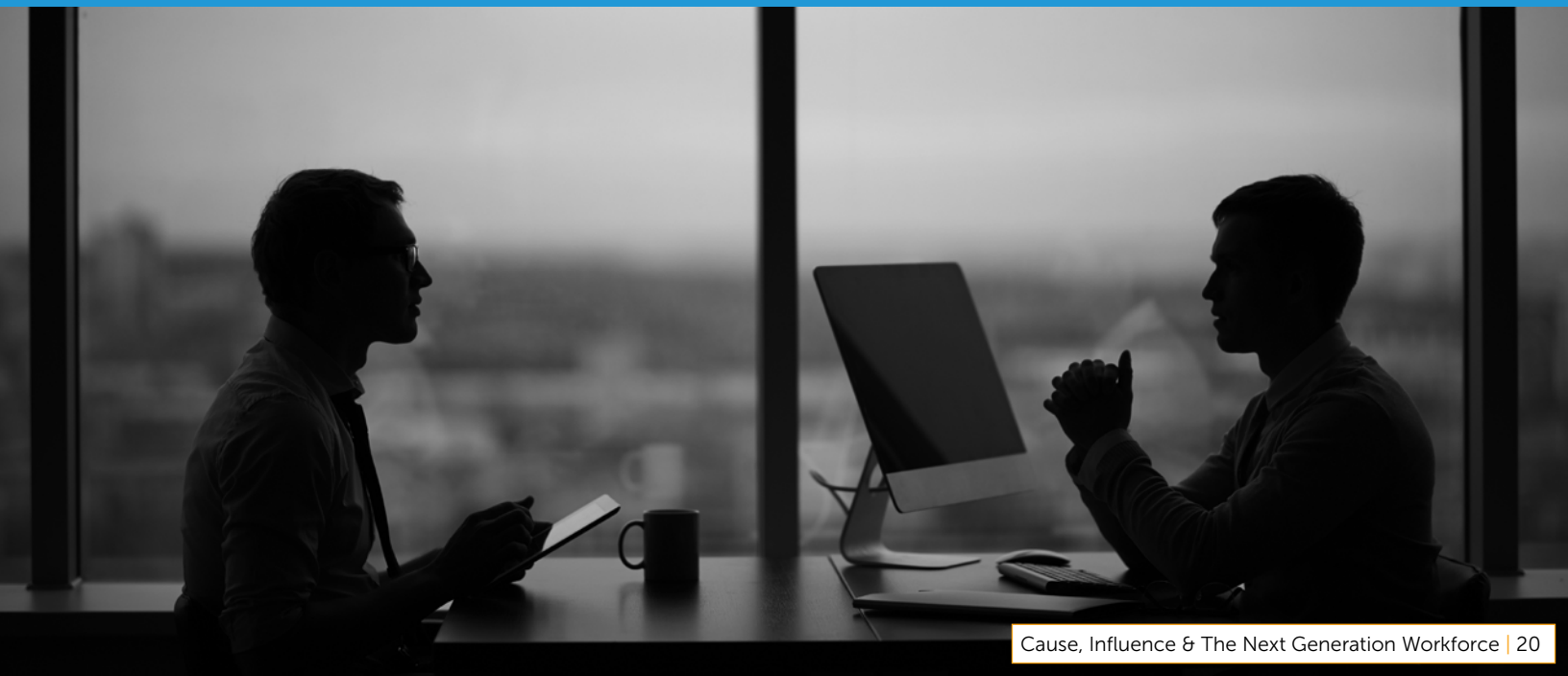
RECOMMENDATIONS

ALIGN CAUSE WORK WITH EMPLOYEE INTEREST.

- Select some company cause work initiatives with social issues your employees are personally interested in to boost engagement and participation.
- Understand that the causes employees engage in outside of work are very personal and very well-defined. Solicit opinions from cause advocates on your team before selecting cause initiatives, then clearly communicate the initiatives within the company.

KEEP THE FOCUS ON THE CAUSE RATHER THAN THE TEAM.

- Provide opportunities for cross-team cause work participation. While team-building is important, our findings reveal cause work initiatives would be more impactful if the focus is on cause and not on the team or unit participating.
- Differentiate when the focus should be on the team, and when the focus should be on the cause. Team-building and cause work are equally significant, and each needs emphasis in its own right. In other words, don't do only organize cause work because you need to bring the team together.
- Offer different types of philanthropic opportunities. From our 2014 study, we found Millennials in the workplace respond best to a three-pronged approach to company cause work activities: company-wide days of volunteering, department/team service projects and opportunities to use individual skills or interests to benefit a cause.



THEME 3

CAUSE WORK IS PERSONAL.

Volunteerism is very personal to Millennials in and outside of work. A Millennial's cause interests and preferences usually do not match what their employers are offering or even sometimes what other coworkers suggest. When respondents already had plans to donate and/or volunteer outside the work atmosphere, they weren't typically influenced by the company to change the causes they want to help. It is because of this finding that companies, as mentioned, must recognize the need to offer individually fulfilling cause opportunities in addition to team activities and company partnerships.

These findings also confirm most Millennials participate in personal cause work activities for altruistic purposes above all else.

- **"My interaction with nonprofits is very personal, and I don't change my allegiances because a coworker asks me to participate or donate. I have my own plan for how much I want to donate to which organizations throughout the year, and I try to make the most impact I possibly can to each one. I'm not influenced by anyone at work unless that person is also a friend outside the office, and we have similar interests in cause work."** – Female Millennial Manager
- **"I have volunteered throughout my life. There's always some kind of impact you can make; there's always some tangible understanding of what you're doing and how you're helping. That alone is enough to keep me coming back."**
– Female Millennial Employee

Incentives (such as a gift or more time off) and competitions (which employee can raise the most money, for example) are not really an enticement for Millennials to participate in cause work. Most respondents appeared to know about their existence at their company, but either weren't really interested in them or didn't use them.

- **"My company matches volunteer hours with paid time off with. Before last year, I didn't submit [hours volunteered] – the paperwork was a pain; you had to keep track of all your time throughout the year. Honestly, that incentive doesn't matter to me."** – Female Millennial Employee
- **"I don't think [an incentive] would entice me to participate more in cause work. It may grab other people – but for me, if I'm giving back for that kind of reason, I'm doing it for the wrong reason. Getting an incentive is not why I [participate in cause work]."** – Male Millennial Manager

However, some companies seem to have incentive programs that magnify giving – which is viewed as a positive. A few manager respondents (both at the same company) praised their company's incentive program because it allowed them to support organizations important to them in two different, albeit important, ways. In this company, each volunteer who logs hours receives \$10 for every hour volunteered that can be donated to whatever cause the employee sees fit. Essentially, employees can cash out up to \$400 a year for time volunteered in the community; the money is then eligible to be donated to any 501(c)(3) of the employee's choosing.

- **"It's a magnification of your giving. You're giving your time in hours to a cause that you enjoy, and then you can turn around and give the \$400 you earned volunteering either to that same cause or to another one."** – Male Millennial Employee

RECOMMENDATIONS

INCENTIVIZE CAUSES OR BENEFICIARIES INSTEAD OF EMPLOYEES.

- Consider moving away from incentivizing employees to incentivizing causes or beneficiaries. Respondents participate in causes because it's important to them personally; incentives should be more authentic and address the very personal ways in which employees and managers want to make a difference.
- Provide more opportunities to further employees' own cause-related work. The most powerful incentive could be to match donations based on hours volunteered in the work day.
- Offer more choices and autonomy when it comes to the types of incentives employees can earn. Whatever method you choose, make it meaningful and easy to access.

UNDERSTAND WHO THE CAUSE WORK AMBASSADORS ARE AND EMPOWER THEM.

- Identify the most cause-centric employees and managers within your organization and make them ambassadors or champions for your company's cause-related initiatives. Remember, leaders aren't always managers, and managers aren't always leaders.
- Make advocates of employees who are passionate and engaged for cause work initiatives, not merely those who help disseminate information or educate others on available opportunities.
- Find employees willing to promote initiatives and encourage participation in and feedback about the experience in genuine ways.

Millennial managers expressed through qualitative research they also deem it more important to educate or disseminate information to employees about company-sponsored cause-related activities and opportunities, rather than promote them.

- **"I'm an active person, so I always make sure to share initiatives about maintaining a healthy lifestyle with my team. That's something from my personal life I can share with people at work. And when I come across tools that aren't being used, I want my team to know about them."**
– Male Millennial Manager
- **"I'm not terribly involved in donating or volunteering, but I do pass [opportunities] along."**
– Male Millennial Manager
- **"I always make sure [my team] knows what cause work activities I'm involved in. I also try to bring opportunities I'm not involved with to their attention in case they want to participate on their time."**
– Female Millennial Manager





KEY TAKEAWAYS AND FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

FROM OUR EXTENDED QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS AND NEW QUALITATIVE RESPONSES, we can extract three key takeaways for companies to better understand what influences – and does not influence – Millennial employees and managers to participate in company-sponsored cause work initiatives. The following recommendations should be put into practice to nurture and boost engagement in cause work in the workplace.

Culture and relationships matter when it comes to workplace-sponsored cause work.

Millennial employees and managers are looking for genuine and personally meaningful opportunities to “do good” and create change in their communities/neighborhoods through workplace cause-related initiatives. And while they are more likely to be influenced to give or serve by other coworkers, it is equally important that supervisors, managers and C-suite executives participate as well as a way to communicate a company’s commitment to causes to employees at all levels.

Incentives and opportunities to participate in cause work are not necessarily interpreted as altruistic acts, even if that’s what employers might have intended. However, both are noticed, appreciated and valued as important (even if employees don’t take advantage of them).

Employers should really get to know their Millennial employees.

To truly engage their Millennial employees and encourage participation in cause work initiatives, employers must take the time to learn about what causes employees value and how they want to make an impact (donating, volunteering or both). And as we’ve learned that employees are most influenced by their peers, employers should identify leaders at each employee level who can serve as champions or ambassadors for cause work initiatives.

Employers should be more open to a participatory model of creating and implementing cause work initiatives and experiences.

When it comes to cause work, employees don’t just want to be told what to do – they want to have a say on what they’re participating in. Allow employees at all levels to engage in the decision-making and planning processes when choosing cause work initiatives to boost engagement and participation. Additionally, employers should take care to separate cause work initiatives from team-building activities so the cause is the true focus, not the team participating.



CONCLUSION

MILLENNIALS ARE PASSIONATE ABOUT GIVING BACK, and they view the workplace as another conduit for them to be able to do so. As we've learned in our 2015 study and the qualitative research that supports it in this update, relationships between Millennial employees and managers play an important role in fostering engagement and participation in company cause initiatives.

While we found in our 2014 study that a company's cause work is important to Millennial employees, it quickly became clear that employers simply being supportive of Millennials' passions for causes isn't enough. Our 2015 study sought to explore how Millennials are influenced to give and serve to company-sponsored cause initiatives, and how employee-manager relationships effect a Millennial's decision to get involved.

Through the findings detailed in this research update, it's now clear that just offering cause work initiatives in the workplace is no longer enough, either.

As detailed in this update, cause work is personal to Millennials, and participation in work-sponsored cause-related opportunities is best promoted through genuine and authentic connections. It's up to companies and organizations now to modify their cause work initiatives to what Millennial employees and managers respond to, if the goal is to better engage employees in cause work and therefore foster greater retention and recruitment of talent.

By fostering peer-to-peer engagement, engaging employees across all levels of the organizational chart, soliciting input during cause selection and initiative planning, and clearly separating cause work initiatives from team-building activities, employers will be able to fully develop and engage their Millennial employees instead of just simply retaining them.



Stay updated on the latest Millennial research and review past studies from The Millennial Impact Project at themillennialimpact.com.



RESEARCH BY:

Achieve is a research and creative agency for causes and the leaders of The Millennial Impact Project. We help organizations understand the behaviors of today's donors, activists and employees who are redefining cause engagement. We work with organizations committed to making the world a better place. Our services are ideal for organizations and companies who want to understand and reach new donors, audiences, volunteers, activists or employees. **Learn more at achieveguidance.com.**



The Millennial Impact is the most comprehensive and trusted study on the Millennial generation (born 1980-2000) and their involvement with causes. Since its start in 2009, Achieve continues to lead the national research team in partnership with the Case Foundation. With more than 25,000 participants in our studies, The Millennial Impact Project has helped organizations, corporations and individuals everywhere understand the best approaches to cultivate interest and involvement with this generation. **Learn more at themillennialimpact.com.**



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Don't miss the next research update of the 2015 Millennial Impact Report, coming in **January 2016**.
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