

Career Headlines



Ten Key Steps for Millennials Going into the Workforce

How can you land a financially rewarding job and successful career that you'll love?

Bentley University, a Forbes' Best 2014 Regional College, conducted a Millennial Preparedness for the Workforce Study in 2014. Among other important findings, the study identified ten essential ways Millennials can better prepare for today's working world and for professional success.

- 1. Mind the gap.** The study shows that 37 percent of recent college graduates give themselves a "C" or lower on their level of preparedness.
What you can do now: Through networking, meeting with career advisors, or taking courses that challenge you, make sure you are doing all you can to grow as a professional.
- 2. Find out how potential employers define preparedness.** Millennials and employers don't agree on what it means to be prepared.
What you can do now: Talk to several professionals in your field to learn what they look for in new hires.
- 3. Build a diverse set of skills.** Two-thirds of business leaders said that hard skills (technical) and soft skills (communicating effectively, teamwork, ethics, and others) are equally important.
What you can do now: Take courses that teach both sets of skills so you are set up for success in your first job and later in your career.
- 4. Show your loyalty.** Half of business leaders and more than half (58%) of Millennials think that businesses believe Millennials won't stay in a job for long, so they may not invest in your career development.
What you can do now: Prove employers wrong by dedicating time to showing you want to help achieve the company's goals.
- 5. Adapt to other generations in the office.** Most non-Millennials have positive attitudes towards Millennials, but many find them hard to manage (67%) and feel that they lack respect (51%). Both Millennials and non-Millennials agreed that Millennials will have to conform to the workplace.
What you can do now: Learn what's important for success from older generations with real-life work experience.
- 6. Commit to becoming a life-long learner.** Almost everyone responding to the survey (94%) agrees that students must commit to life-long learning, even though it might sound like a lot of work.
What you can do now: Upgrade your skills on a continuous basis so you will keep your career and life interesting and rewarding.
- 7. Sign up for internships.** A majority (94%) agree that schools need to combine academics with hands-on learning. Experiencing what it's like inside an organization will help set expectations, provide direct experience, and give you a reality check to prepare you for your first job.
What you can do now: Start looking for internships.
- 8. Make the most of career services departments.** Most respondents (85%) feel that students should start working with career counselors early.
What you can do now: Don't wait to find out what career counselors have to offer—visit as a freshman.
- 9. To make an impact, get a background in business.** There seems to be a misunderstanding among



Millennials about what working for a business means. Most Millennials say companies like Google and Facebook are desirable places to work, yet they say they don't prefer to work for businesses.

What you can do now: Businesses are doing innovative work and making a strong social impact on the world, so if you're interested in making a difference in today's world, look at careers that require business skills.

10. **Know that high school is the place to begin planning.** Time in college and other types of training fly by. So set clear goals before starting additional training.

What you can do now: Plan your career area and internships early, work closely with career services, and talk to alumni who can help you close the preparedness gap.

Adapted from *Forbes* online.

Action: From the ten recommendations for **What you can do now**, list in priority order the steps you will start taking today and practical ways you will implement your plans into your life.

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