

News



For Immediate Release

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Millennials See Face-to-Face Networking & Socializing with Colleagues as More Important to Building their Reputations at Work than Older Generations

– New Weber Shandwick and IPR Research Reveals Millennials Are Nearly Twice as Likely as Boomers to Focus on Their Reputations at Work –

– One in Five Millennials Believe Work and Social Media Reputations are Equally Important –

NEW YORK, December 10, 2015 – Research released today from leading global communications and engagement firm Weber Shandwick and the Institute for Public Relations (IPR) found distinct differences in what Millennials think makes or breaks their reputations at work compared to older generations, especially when it comes to networking and socializing on the job. The survey reveals Millennials' hyper-focus on their reputations at work – 47 percent of Millennials report that they think about it all or most of the time compared to 37 percent of Gen Xers and 26 percent of Baby Boomers. Surprisingly, although Millennials have grown up in this digital revolution, they place even greater value on their in-person interactions at work and after hours than their older, less digitally-bred colleagues.

What Builds a Positive Reputation at Work?

While job performance and punctuality top the list of reputation builders at work for all the generations surveyed, networking and socializing during off hours are more important to Millennials than any other generation. Thirty-four percent of Millennials see meeting with colleagues outside the office as a positive driver of their work reputation, compared to 14 percent of Gen Xers and 15 percent of Boomers.

“Hanging out with colleagues after work might have been a nice way to kick back for a Gen Xer, but for Millennials it's a critical component of building their ‘rep’ or ‘brand’ at work and they take it seriously,” said Leslie Gaines-Ross, Chief Reputation Strategist at Weber Shandwick. “Our research shows that more than any other generation, Millennials believe that in addition to doing a good job, it’s important to connect with colleagues to build their careers and create lasting impressions.”

Millennials also place a higher value on building and maintaining a positive digital presence as a reputation booster at work compared to the other generations. Seven in 10 U.S. adult workers who report to be social media users say that their work reputation is more important than their social media reputation. However, one in five Millennials (21 percent) – more than any other generation – believe both their work and social media reputations are equally important.

“In today’s digital world, it’s nearly impossible to keep your work and personal lives completely separate. Millennials give greater weight than other generations to their digital and in-person reputations, which shows the influence of having grown up digital,” Gaines-Ross said.

What Can Hurt Your Reputation at Work?

When it comes to behavior that can harm one’s reputation at work, Millennials are less aware than their older cohorts how hearsay and feeding the grapevine can damage their reputations. Millennials are less likely to see the danger in saying negative things about coworkers than GenXers and Boomers (64 percent vs. 74% vs. 79%, respectively) and engaging in gossip about colleagues (64 percent vs. 72 percent vs. 74 percent, respectively). Millennials are also more likely to believe that not socializing with colleagues outside of work can hurt their reputations (20 percent compared to 7 percent for Boomers).

“Millennials place a greater value on the importance of in-person interactions and relationship building than GenXers and Boomers,” said Sarab Kochhar, Ph.D., Director of Research at Institute for Public Relations. “Overall, our research demonstrates how level-headed Millennials are about building their reputations at work based on good job performance, being on time and being polite and courteous.”

More than one in three employed Americans today is a Millennial, an astounding 53.5 million people. During the first quarter of 2015, this generation surpassed Generation X as the largest share of the American workforce, according to a [Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data](#). Weber Shandwick and IPR partnered with [KRC Research](#) to conduct [*Millennials@Work: Perspectives on Reputation*](#) to find out what the three generations currently in the workforce – Millennials (ages 18 to 34), Gen Xers (35-50) and Boomers and beyond (51+) – think about their reputations at work. Six hundred employed U.S. adults were interviewed through an online survey for the study.

Click [here](#) to find out more about *Millennials@Work: Perspectives on Reputation*.

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About Weber Shandwick

Weber Shandwick is a leading global communications and engagement firm in 76 cities across 34 countries and operations extending to 124 cities in 81 countries. The firm's diverse team of strategists, analysts, producers, designers, developers and campaign activators has won the most prestigious awards in the world for innovative, creative approaches and impactful work, including being honored as an *Ad Age* A-List Agency in 2014 and 2015, *The Holmes Report's* Global Agency of the Year in 2014 and 2015 and *PRWeek's* 2015 Global Agency of the Year. Weber Shandwick and its Prime unit have won a combined 25 Cannes Lions since 2009. Weber Shandwick was also named a Best Place to Work by *Ad Age* in 2014 and 2015 and *PRWeek* in 2013 and 2014. The firm deploys deep expertise across sectors and specialty areas, including consumer marketing, corporate reputation, healthcare, technology, public affairs, financial services, corporate social responsibility, financial communications and crisis management, using proprietary social, digital and analytics methodologies. Weber Shandwick is part of the Interpublic Group (NYSE: IPG). For more information, visit <http://www.webershandwick.com>.

About the Institute for Public Relations

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About KRC Research

KRC Research is a full-service market research firm that specializes in the kind of research needed for effective communications—communications that reach, engage and persuade. A unit of the Interpublic Group of Companies (NYSE: IPG), KRC Research offers the quality and custom service of a small firm along with the reach of a global organization. For over 30 years, KRC Research has worked on behalf of corporations, governments, not-for-profits and the communications firms that represent them. Staffed with market research professionals from the worlds of political campaigns, consumer marketing, journalism and academia, we are flexible, practical, creative, knowledgeable and fast, combining sophisticated research tools with real-world communications experience. For more information, visit www.krcresearch.com.