**Millennials in the Marketplace**

🌞 In 2013, 378 government employees retired each day; 43 percent of those remaining are eligible to retire within the next five years

🌞 Cost constraints industry-wide encourage an influx of young professional hires, but professional development opportunities are uneven

🌞 Industry associations and programs, like ACT-IAC’s Associates Program, fill the mentoring and skills development gaps

 Millennials have some difficult stereotypes to overcome, and the first step is to adapt to existing workplace norms in order to be heard

 Open-minded companies should look to how the next generation of employees interacts with technology to maximize productivity

 Millennials will comprise nearly half of the federal workforce by 2020 – embracing them is a matter of necessity more so than cost cutting

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**Going Green**

As the federal sector struggles to find more ways to lower costs, greening staff – bringing in newer, younger, and, more importantly, cheaper talent – is trending upward. Having harvested most of the low-hanging fruit of cost reduction, industry is now addressing less-inelastic costs in the direct labor base by using younger talent to rebalance rates. With more employees retiring every day, the Federal Government is in the midst of its own human capital crunch, increasingly backfilling with under-30 talent. Regardless of the underlying cause, the same challenge presents itself: greening staff generates a mid-tier leadership void ripe for young professionals to fill, but management and millennials alike lack many of the critical elements for successful transition. “Going green” succeeds when young professionals who invest time to master essential industry skills are paired with management teams who understand and embrace millennial culture and ideas.

**New Dogs, Old Tricks**

Millennials are faced with the twofold task of changing perceptions – distancing themselves from the “entitled and coddled” stereotype – while simultaneously advancing their own careers. To do so, these new dogs need to master some of the old tricks, including matters of dress, decorum, and deadlines. Employees looking to get ahead must dress for the job that they want, sanitize their social media presence (or segregate personal accounts from professional networking outlets), and consistently meet deadlines as though they were chiseled in stone. While these tricks of the trade might seem basic, they are essential to building and maintaining a personal brand in the workplace. Ultimate success will be determined by more critical and higher-caliber standards – attitude, work ethic, and performance – but new dogs cannot expect the opportunity to show what they are capable of if they cannot master basics like submitting their timecards on-time.

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**Millennial Challenge**

The term “millennials,” defined as people born after 1980, often comes with negative connotations. Whispers of entitlement, disloyalty, and lack of drive run rampant. These generational stereotypes are not unfounded, but they can often be harnessed as strengths. Job hopping can be indicative of a lack of fulfillment in current roles. Millennials need to feel that they are being groomed for a career, not stuck with a job. Their ubiquitous integration with technology can lead to better, faster, cheaper ways to collaborate and deliver services – they have a “there’s an app for that” mentality. Harnessing these traits can provide a symbiotic relationship, but not without deliberate effort and open minds from management and millennials alike.

**Old Dogs, New Tricks**

Just as millennials must adapt to the workplace, so too must the workplace adapt to millennials. Rigid, hierarchical organizations rooted in command and control may have worked for the Greatest Generation, but they are anathema to the current crop of incoming employees. Millennials seek meaningful tasks, crave constant learning and advancement. New Dogs, Old Tricks presents itself as though they were chiseled in stone.

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