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**CHASING RELEVANCE:
6 Steps to Understand, Engage, and Maximize Next-Generation
Leaders in the Workplace
by Dan Negroni**

“*Chasing Relevance* is not only about Millennials. It’s about all of us working to connect with each other and to bridge the gaps between the generations for the greater good. With bold language and a powerful model, Dan Negroni urges readers to genuinely care, communicate, and build relationships from the inside out. Because to serve others, we must first understand ourselves. Read *Chasing Relevance* and start connecting!”

— **Ken Blanchard**, coauthor of *The New One Minute Manager* and *Collaboration Begins with You*

“Every C-Suite executive should read this book. If you can’t speak ‘millennial’ you might as well start shutting down your business now!”

— **Jeffrey Hayzlett**, primetime television and radio host, chairman C-Suite Network

“*Chasing Relevance* by Dan Negroni is a great resource, not just on how best to coach and manage Millennials to bring about greater productivity, it’s a thoughtful examination of why we need to understand each other, cross-generationally, to strengthen not only our teams but ourselves. It’s this understanding that will make you a better manager and coach.”

— **Keith Ferrazzi**, bestselling author of *Who’s Got Your Back* and *Never Eat Alone*

Millennials are here to stay. With their presence in the workplace expected to grow to 75 percent by 2025, this next generation of leaders is already surging into offices across the globe in massive numbers. But, having grown up differently, the largest living generation brings with them a unique set of millennial expectations, needs, desires, and values that has already had an undeniable effect on the business landscape—a huge and damaging generational gap.

Today, managers struggle to simultaneously inspire initiative and support the infamous flexibility millennials demand, older employees are known to halt collaboration and innovation by operating within the all too popular “millennials are the enemy” mindset, and millennials’ desire to work and make a difference is stifled by miscommunication and misunderstanding. Unfortunately, these problems and more are increasing and costing businesses in terms of engagement (Gallup estimates the total cost of disengagement is \$450 billion) and strategies for

attracting, training, and retaining this next generation of leaders (the cost to replace each millennial is \$15,000-\$25,000).

How, then, can organizations bridge the generational gap in order to drive sustained results and guarantee the growth and success of their businesses? In his new book, **CHASING RELEVANCE: 6 Steps to Understand, Engage, and Maximize Next-Generation Leaders in the Workplace** (launchbox; hardcover; August 22, 2016), CEO, consultant, and coach **Dan Negroni** argues business leaders and millennials alike should lean into the divide and embrace it as an opportunity. By creating powerful, authentic relationships, fostering accountability, and teaching real, practical skills, organizations can both adapt their existing leaders to the changing landscape of work and empower millennial employees to deliver authentic and impactful value.

Taking a critical and carefully researched and experiential-based look at the current (and future) cross-generational obstacles organizations face, Negroni offers a winning, actionable framework to find the healthy middle ground between generations. Called BRIDGE, this overlapping and integrated six-step plan compels individuals to understand their own strengths, perceptions, and actions from the inside out in order to address disconnects and become completely relevant as guides, mentors, and leaders with and to millennials:

- **Bust Myths:** Identify and breakthrough underlying myths and assumptions about employees that create barriers. Negroni shares what is and isn't true about millennials and how to shift to a mindset that assumes positive intent and spurns judgment, quick opinions, and criticism.
- **Real Deal:** Create real-deal, authentic, caring relationships with your team. Open yourself up to others to form the relationships you need. Connect authentically, share yourself, and show gratitude.
- **I Own It:** Own personal responsibility and accountability to drive results. Negroni shows how great leaders must be personally responsible and accountable to drive the outcomes they want and need from others and themselves.
- **Deliver Value:** Serve and provide value to others every day. Make it about them 24/7 and deliver value through those relationships. Use your strengths, values, skills, passions, and stories to make it about others. Be a mentor.
- **Goals in Mind:** Create alignment around shared goals and priorities to increase engagement and trust. You must make others' goals a central part of your world, particularly through how you engage and align individual goals with the team's and company's goals to show that you care.
- **Empower Success:** Empower your culture and employees to drive results. Focus on individual members' growth, make future advancement opportunities transparent, give feedback, and recognize and celebrate your culture.

In straight-forward and no-holds-barred language, **CHASING RELEVANCE** empowers readers of all ages to view this generational gap as an opportunity to be embraced rather than a problem to be solved. The key? Good old-fashioned and yet disruptively innovative genuine caring, relationship-building, and connection from both sides.

ABOUT DAN NEGRONI

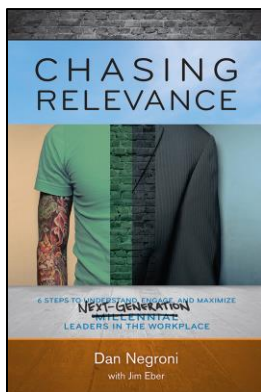


Dan Negroni is a business management and talent development consultant and coach addressing today's critical cross-generational issues. Dan leverages his authentic, no-nonsense approach and experience as a CEO, attorney, and senior sales and marketing executive, to help companies bridge the gap between managers and their millennial workforce in order to increase employee engagement, productivity and profits.

Through his training workshops, consulting and coaching services, he empowers millennials and management alike, providing the content and tools needed to communicate more effectively, build powerful relationships, maximize personal effectiveness, create high performing teams and deliver value to each other and their organizations.

As an expert and author on managing and creating next-generation leaders, Dan is also a frequent keynote presenter at all types of management and millennial-related events, including corporate gatherings, association conferences, industry events and sales meetings.

Clients include DLA Piper, Booz Allen Hamilton, Mintz Levin, American Bar Association, Rubio's, KPMG, ADP, Qualcomm, Paylease, and many more.



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6 Steps to Understand, Engage, and Maximize Next-Generation
Leaders in the Workplace**

by Dan Negroni

with Jim Eber

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PRAISE FOR “CHASING RELEVANCE”

“Chasing Relevance is an excellent resource (and great read) for anyone who leads an organization with employees and volunteers from different generations. I lead a bar association of lawyers spanning multiple decades. The book offers practical ideas to motivate and develop the next generation of leaders. I am inspired to be a better mentor and would recommend this book to anyone who wants to improve their communications with the next generation.”

Eleanor Magers Vuono, JD, The Military Spouse Network

“I can't quit thinking about your wonderful book and what a difference it is going to make in so many lives and so many companies! I feel like I read it so quickly the first time because I just couldn't turn the pages fast enough - each chapter so beneficial - but now I want to sit down and read it again and take copious notes this time and highlight many provocative sections. It is a GREAT book and if it doesn't get rave reviews then the reviewers are idiots.”

Mary Johnson, HR Executive and Coach

“I am absolutely loving the book so far. I have read through Step 4 and I wanted to send you a quick note because I know you geek out on stuff like this, just like I do. I defined my brandwords as: Positive, Improvement-oriented, Determined. I defined my Teams and we are connecting, bonding and creating learning and growing opportunities.”

Kristin Runyan, SVP Operations, Paylease, Author, Coach

“I've read Dan's book and it is powerfully directive in changing my own life and the way I see personal and professional relationships. I've seen Dan and his team in action as executive coaches, using their Bridge philosophy and Strength and Story insight and they are dynamite--Dan connects immediately, goes straight to the heart of what each person has to offer, and helps each one refine and target his/her personal message to a potential employer/investor. Great energy, enthusiasm--someone you want in your corner.”

Matt Schwartz, JD, Partner, DLA Piper

“Read Dan's book on Millennials in the workplace and how to find relevance. The members of my CEO groups have and have sustained great benefits from his perspective and shifted their business results by abiding by those principles. In fact over the past few years we have invited and heard from speakers on the topic of the multi-generational workplace. The CEOs and Key Executives who 'endured' these presentations found little value. And then we met Dan Negroni. Dan does not wallow in the four generation workforce but laser focuses his work on understanding, attracting, managing, coaching and retaining the Millennials. This generation is the largest segment of the U.S. population and they represent not only the new workforce but also customers. Dan delivers a highly interactive and challenging workshop. You leave with immediate actionable techniques that will improve your company and your culture. Or you can just ignore 83 million Millennials. The choice is yours.”

Jim Tenuto, CEO, Consultant and Executive Coach, renaissance Forums

“I am an leader and executive at over a hundred year old consulting firm with the frustration of Millennials entering the workplace. I read Dan's book and bam it was clear. I needed to shift my thinking on Millennials to meet the needs of my customers and employees if I wanted my business to continue to grow. There were great actionable tools, funny stories and a direct no-nonsense style that made his advice digestible, real, provocative and aspirational. Our business needs to get dialed in to Dan's message to meet the future needs of our clients and I hope our HR team takes the initiative. Sometimes we are not fast enough. If you have a business that sells to or employs Millennials, or if you have some at home, get it, read it and become better. It was like personal coaching in hardcover.”

Anonymous, Partner, Leading Global Consulting Company

**AN INTERVIEW WITH DAN NEGRONI,
AUTHOR OF “CHASING RELEVANCE”**

Q: What prompted you to write this book?

A: Two reasons both very personal. First, at home I had to launch my own millennials into the workplace so they could become self-sufficient contributors to their employers and society. And yet, once I started training my kids and their friends on how to get jobs, I realized how horrible they were at connecting, articulating their value, solving problems and communicating their story and purpose. I needed to help them develop these skills to make them great prospective employees. If not me, then who?

Second, after managing thousands of people in the workplace, more than half of whom were millennials, my realization was, “Wow, we really suck at connecting with them.” How can we communicate better, and if we can’t, how will we take care of our customers and grow our businesses? We need to embrace the next generation of leaders now.

Those two combined experiences got me thinking -- how can we solve this problem? Everyone is complaining about the “problem.” As a matter of fact I haven’t had any audiences or conversations about millennials that start on the positive side. Everyone has a take, and it ain’t pretty. BUT, no one is really embracing the challenge to create great workplaces that bring together youth and experience. Someone has to; it is our duty to create a legacy by connecting, teaching and guiding the next generation. Game on. Embrace. Write. Edit. Print. Share. Impact.

Q: Why is it critical for organizations to embrace millennials as “the next generation”?

A: Millennials represent 2.4 billion of the world’s population, 83 million strong in the US alone. They will be 75 percent of the workforce in the next ten years, and they control almost \$700 billion in spending today. They do not want the power; they *are* the power. They decide what businesses will live or die -- think Blockbuster/Netflix, taxis/Uber, hotels/Airbnb. They are our customers, our employees, our future!

Q: Millennials have a poor reputation for dependency versus accountability. As their parents have supported and cheered them on, what lines are being blurred when it comes to business leaders’ responsibility for coaching and mentoring the younger generation?

A: There is a line between being expected to do everything for millennials and supporting them as they learn how to do for themselves. Just like parenting, coaching in the workplace requires the ability to allow, encourage, discuss, learn from, and celebrate failure.

Due to their upbringing, millennials have a hard time with failure. Their parents have been in the cure business, saving their butts all the time, going to interviews with them, calling their bosses, advocating to their girlfriends and boyfriends why they are so special, etc. **STOP.** We need to teach them the way real parenting works. We need to provide them with direct, honest, candid feedback and encourage hard work while we authentically care and cheer them on but also allow them to taste failure. Like it or not, managers need to ensure that they can play the role of the hard ass, no BS parent. That is the role of the caring and demanding mentor. You need quality, trained managers who can execute and deliver on being the guide.

On the other side, there is an accountability issue. Millennials must learn how to fish and be their own guide. Period. Millennials must also take personal responsibility and accountability for their own career path and life and lean in. If they don't, they are not an entitled millennial, they are just a poorly trained and guided employee. The blurring of the line is the same as with parenting; who owns what part of the equation? It is an equation, and there are two sides. Get clear on that, and you are more than halfway toward having success with your millennial workforce.

Q: In the book, you argue *caring* leads to results in health, thoughtfulness and balance, connection and collaboration, and happiness. Why do you approach the generational gap in this way?

A: We know the biggest indication of success in life is your ability to build and sustain relationships with others. It is also the most important skill one can have or learn to be a successful, contributory leader and impact player. Caring is the ultimate foundation of building relationships. One of my favorite saying is, "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care." It is the consummate "why" that makes people successful and makes them great friends, colleagues, bosses, co-workers and leaders. It is obvious why we need to apply it to the next generation. It is almost as fundamental as our reason for parenting, to improve and sustain human nature and to impact society for the better. Caring makes us great teachers, leaders, influencers and connectors. Millennials, like all humans, simply want to be cared about. Earn their trust by doing so and you have the keys to the kingdom.

Q: What is the biggest obstacle leaders face in managing millennials?

A: The biggest obstacle leaders face is a true desire to want to help, teach, mentor and create next generation leaders.

Q: In your experience, what are the top three skills millennials lack in the workplace? What are their greatest strengths?

A: Their top 3 strengths are (i) flexibility (little judgment), (ii) innovation (questioning) and (iii) the desire for capabilities and learning coupled with a collaborative disposition (team/others).

Millennials lack a true and defined understanding of themselves and their value, the ability to articulate and communicate to connect with others, and an understanding of success as it relates to delivering value to others. Part of this is youth, but the 411 is that they lack these because we have not taught them these skills in schools, homes, or the workplace. And yet, we blame them when they don't know this stuff. We need to teach them the skills they lack. Experience teaches youth, and that is how we create magic in the workplace.

Q: What is the broad goal of your book and whom do you want to reach?

A: In the most technologically connected world ever, we are the most disconnected we've ever been. We know that the place where youth and experience meets is magic, and it has been since the beginning of time. The combination of innovative, fresh, provoking youth with time served, experience and knowledge has the power to create, build and grow. Nothing is truer in life or in the workplace.

If that is the case, why are we so bad at creating great businesses that proactively tackle this huge shift in the age of leadership? We need to lean in and change the way we work together. My personal goal is to make a big impact on that connection by pushing each side to be their best selves and create value for each other. In turn, we will have better and stronger businesses with more profit, more impact and a whole lot more fun.

Q: What's next?

A: Most importantly, what we have learned is that millennials want experiential learning coupled with technology. They want to go fast, and yet they yearn to go slow. But most of all, millennials and their employers want success for themselves in the workplace and in life.

launchbox is developing a software system for simple, clear and concise coaching, goal attainment and analytics to help sustain employee-driven continuous learning. As part of our development process, we have focused on helping organizations with developing a leadership pipeline, coaching and mentoring on demand, talent mobility and analytics that measure engagement and success. You will also see more workshops, workbooks, online tools, millennial peer-to-peer networking and other amazing resources to bridge the gap in the workplace. We have only just begun to shape our relevance.

IT GOES BOTH WAYS: TOP DISCONNECTS BETWEEN MANAGERS AND MILLENNIALS

Managers' Top Frustrations with Millennials

- Lack of initiative/problem-solving
- Sense of entitlement
- Overly self-focused
- Too emotional
- Unrealistic advancement goals
- Impatient
- Inability to remain engaged and loyal
- Poor work ethic
- Not taking responsibility

Millennials' Top Frustrations with Managers

- Unavailability/too busy
- Lack of timely response
- Lack of positive feedback
- Lack of training/development
- Lack of consistent check-ins
- Lack of communication/transparency/consistency
- Ineffective business planning
- Lack of trust

The Solution

- Stop pointing out problems and saying others are the problem.
- Start asking yourself, "What about me is not connecting and getting results? What am I doing to widen and maintain this gap?"
- Care more. Treat next-generation leaders like customers and mean it. Build on tried and true business skills and develop your own accountability. Care enough to create real, authentic connections.
- Become a mentor, coach, and guide. Deliver value every day, align around shared goals and purpose, and empower your millennial employees to drive BOLD results for themselves and your business.

