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# Leading and Working with Millennials in Universities: A Case of Delicate Dancing or "You're Not the Boss of Me!"

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#### INTRODUCING DELICATE DUETS

Universities are wonderful places, or so it would seem: From the public's perspective, they are places where academic and professional civility abounds and where actions are grounded in practices reflecting social betterment and personal value. While beautiful buildings and green spaces have an undeniably positive impact on visitors to university campuses, those who have worked in them may have some different stories.

Those who have worked in the academy are familiar with tales of professors being obstructed from tenure and promotion because of infighting and academic jealousy; environments such as medical schools which rely heavily on the administrative skills of women who, in turn, may not be adequately recognized or compensated; and TAs and sessional instructors who are expected to teach large classes for inadequate pay and no

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job security. Those with lived experience in the university also know about elitism and entitlement—the respect for research output over passion and excellence in teaching, and the politics around leadership appointments.

Recently, another challenge has found its way into our universities. While a positive work environment for faculty, administrators, and staff is a goal in all universities, achievement of this goal has, in some contexts, become complicated by the different values and ideas about work held by senior university leaders and by staff who belong to the millennial generation. The outcomes can be situations of frustration for both millennial employees and their supervisors. There can also be a disconnect between what the baby boomer leader perceives as microaggression by the millennial and the perceptions of their actions by the millennials themselves. In many cases, middle to senior leaders who belong to early Generation X and the baby boomer generation find themselves dancing delicate duets with millennial employees and having their toes stepped on. While there are two partners in most dances, the overriding perspective offered in this chapter is that of the partner with more life and work experience. This noted, evidence-informed insights into the millennial employee are also provided since they are critical to this discussion.

The crux of this situation of delicate dancing lies in how millennials "espouse work values and have career expectations that are markedly different from those of Gen Xers and baby boomers" (Ng & McGinnis Johnson, 2015, p. 129). While many baby boomers "say they have a strong sense of pride in their work, only a quarter of millennial(s)... agree, highlighting a striking disconnect in attitudes about work...across generations" (Prudential, 2017, para. 1). Maier, Tavanti, Bombard, Gentile, and Bradford (2015) have found millennials "likely to challenge workplace norms such as... the standard workday and employee/supervisor relations" (p. 388). Because younger staff members often understand leadership differently from those who hold leadership positions at universities, the outcome has been, in some instances, situations of microaggression and dissonance such as disrespectful comments and disruptive behaviors. The leader may experience a lack of support from those early in their careers and be routinely challenged for his or her decisions. Given the ideal of freedom of ideas and speech, university leaders can likewise find themselves in situations of professional strife involving millennial staff.

Through a thoughtful examination of the literature and examples of various "delicate dances," this chapter provides a description of millennials in the work setting; ideas held about leadership by millennials juxtaposed with ideas held about leadership by those to whom millennials report; and the subtle and sometimes not so subtle tensions between millennial staff and their supervisors in universities. Examples of microaggressions and dissonance are provided based on the experiences of university administrators who have worked with millennials. Attention is also paid to the role of unions and human resources experts in navigating the different perspectives of millennials and baby boomers. Recommendations for working through differences, effectively leading millennials, and establishing productive and respectful teams in universities close the chapter.

#### WHO ARE THE MILLENNIALS?

Fry (2016) remarks that "generations are analytical constructs, and developing a popular and expert consensus on what marks the boundaries between one generation and the next takes time" (para. 3). Hence, there are variations in the ages and date ranges attributed to various generations, although, in 2017, millennials are generally regarded to be around 20–36 years old. They are variously considered to have been born between 1980 and 1990 (Howe & Strauss, 2000); between 1982 and 2004 (Ellin, 2014); and between 1981 and 1997 (Fry, 2016). By comparison, persons belonging to Generation X are reported to have been born between 1965 and 1980, thus making them approximately 37–52. The baby boomers born between 1946 and 1964 are, at present, between 53 and 69 years of age (Fry, 2016).

Described as determined and narcissistic (Allen, Allen, Karl, & White, 2015), millennials are reported to be tech savvy and to see technology as a necessity rather than a convenience in their lives. Vincent (2012) notes that "technology is a way of life, not just a handy tool...Millennials...are highly tech savvy and prefer communicating quickly via text or instant message" (p. 144). They are often dependent on their parents who are often more involved in their lives than parents from earlier times were in the lives of their adult children (Coomes & DeBard, 2004). Millennials are further reported to dislike tasks requiring a sustained effort and to need immediate feedback (Pinzaru et al., 2016). While some generational researchers claim that millennials are more tolerant of diversity and socially minded in their visions of life and society (Oblinger & Oblinger, 2013) than earlier generations, others disagree, indicating that there is no credible evidence to support this claim (Twenge, 2012).

Many researchers have contributed to the literature on how different generations learn and work (Coomes & DeBard, 2004; Dede, 2005). The position that generational exposures, trends, and common life events are the primary influences on how a generation interacts with the world and performs in the workplace is common in this literature. At work, "the events in members' [members of a generation] lives and how they are perceived mold unique work attitudes" (McNamara, 2005, p. 1149).

So how do millennials perform in the workplace? And what are the events in their lives that have shaped their values and behaviors at work?

The short answer to the first question is that, in the workplace, the values of millennials often collide with those of their older colleagues and, almost certainly, with the values of their supervisors from Generation X and the baby boom generation. Additionally, those in leadership roles from Generation X may be resentful of millennials since, as Street (2016), a member of Generation X, points out "we [members of Generation X] are forgotten, caught between our parents' generation angrily shaking their fists at the natural passage of time, and the digital natives in our offices who know how Snapchat works" (para. 11). By comparison, in today's popular press, millennials have received a great deal of attention. Millennials' relationships with their baby boomer colleagues who adhere to long-established rules of behavior and have radically different ways of conducting business are, at best, challenging; at worst, adversarial (Howe & Strauss, 2000). Reeves and Oh (2008) in their early work on millennials and baby boomers characterize baby boomers as being responsible and having a strong work ethic while their experiences of their younger colleagues can be markedly different.

Of the shaping influences on millennials' approaches to life and work, three stand out: changing economies and uncertain employment opportunities, technology, and globalization. Each of these realities has dramatically affected the lives of millennials and the knowledge, skills, and attitudes they bring to the work environment (Goldman Sachs, 2016; Hutt, 2016; Jenkins, 2017).

Millennials live in times when their economic futures are unknown and, by extension, their ability to purchase homes, start families, and pursue some of the goals that defined their parents' lives are next to impossible. Routinely, they find themselves either underemployed or unemployed. How often do we hear about university graduates working at Starbucks, going overseas because there are no jobs here, and jumping from one short-term contract to the next? Both the academic literature and the public press are rife with examples of these circumstances, as well as evidence that many millennials are basement dwellers in their parents' homes for extended periods of time, a fact that baffles the baby boomers who moved directly from school to work and a first apartment (Bleemer, Brown, Lee, & Van der Klaauw, 2014).

The millennial generation is the first generation to have grown up with technology from toddlerhood and, perhaps, even earlier. Given this level of exposure to technology, millennials have adopted the many strengths and weaknesses that come with living in a wired world. Their experience of the world has been described by some as e-living (Brocade, 2011). They know how to bank, communicate, socialize, and find where and what they want to eat, all through an insatiable appetite for information acquired through their mobile phones. What they may not know how to do are to unplug, deal with ideas beyond information bites, write in standard English, and stay on task for more than a short period of time (Bebell, 2015; Nour, 2017; Sinek, 2017). Similarly, while they may be able to converse with Facebook friends around the world, they may be awkward in their interactions with peers closer to home unless there is a mobile phone involved. McWilliams (2016) remarks that "texting or chatting online, or even exchanging emails, enables users to avoid the edgy ambiguity of a face-to-face exchange.... Digital natives in particular have embraced online ersatz friendships as the genuine article" (p. 22).

Globalization, for the baby boomers, was no more than an idea. In Canada, the baby boomer from Ontario who headed to Alberta for a summer job was worldly and adventurous. By contrast, for millennials, globalization is a daily reality. They travel the world and remain connected to friends they have met and connect with those they aspire to meet through all forms of social media. Even without travel, millennials live and breathe the global village. In a single day, a millennial can connect with her brother and his family in China via WeChat with text messages, audio messages, and videos; send pictures to her parents through a text message, Snapchat, or e-mail; and interact with friends in Canada and Europe via Facebook. Millennials are aware of and even involved in political happenings around the world in ways that were hitherto not possible. Every day, the millennial is immersed in a world that is far bigger and more complex than that of their parents and grandparents. While there are advantages to this connectivity, there is also potential for an overload of information and negative emotions given the direness of today's world events and the graphic nature of much of the news.

### Working with and Leading Millennial Staff: Echoes from Academic Corridors

To illustrate some of the challenges that university leaders may experience working with and leading millennials, the experiences of two university leaders from the baby boomer generation who are responsible for millennial staff are provided below. Each leader provides several examples of interactions with millennials as evidence of the different and delicate aspects of working with millennials in a university context.

#### Meet Genevieve

As noted above, Genevieve is a baby boomer. She is also the director of a mid-sized educational development unit at a Canadian university. Accomplished in her field, she has served as an academic administrator at three universities and as the education manager of a large provincial health network. She is a well-published researcher and presenter and has served as president of two national educational associations with direct relevance to her field of practice.

*Workplace context.* In the workplace, Genevieve provides oversight to a staff of 35 including baby boomers, persons from Generation X, and millennials. Although Genevieve's reputation and experience as a leader is extensive and positive, these elements are not always acknowledged by the staff. The staff is distinguished by what Genevieve refers to as "millennial character" which can sometimes manifest in difficult attitudes and behaviors.

*Millennial moments.* For the most part, staff do not interact directly with Genevieve but with their direct supervisors. On the rare occasions when Genevieve has approached millennial staff for some item of work, she has heard responses such as "I can't do that," "I am too busy," or "I don't have the time." Similarly, while there is some flexibility in work hours in the unit, this same flexibility is not always extended to the leadership team when it needs a millennial staff member to stay longer to complete a task. Importantly, the instances when Genevieve or some other member of the leadership team might ask a millennial staff member to stay a little longer to finish a task are rare. Thus, the millennial's unwillingness to accommodate is confusing. Moreover, it contrasts sharply with how the baby boomers in the office might say, "Sure. I can spend another twenty minutes and get that task completed."

When the leadership team makes a decision about work assignments and informs the team, millennial staff members may push back with comments including "Well, I'm doing my Master's. I know about X and should be allowed to do that work." Additionally, work days can be punctuated with queries of "why?". Despite efforts by the leadership team to present decisions thoughtfully, the millennials often challenge new directions and actions even before they have been tried and assessed. Considered together, these responses seem to suggest a lack of respect for the leadership team and the experience and expertise it has acquired over time. While the leadership group is happy to be held to a high standard, it is difficult to conceptualize how the millennial staff have adequate knowledge and experience to make a negative judgement before a new strategy is tested.

There can be a sense of entitlement among some of the millennial staff. While opinion is valued in meetings, the ways in which opinions are expressed by the millennials are not always respectful. In face-to-face meetings, opinions are expressed strongly and sometimes couched in thinking that organization-wide practices should be tailored to accommodate individual interests and preferences.

Although social media usage is acceptable in this unit because of the nature of its work, it appears that staff are using social media for more than their work and that this is affecting productivity. A recent budget planning exercise revealed that the work productivity ratio for the staff is lower than it was five years ago. While there may be a multiplicity of reasons for this, time lost to personal use of social media may be one of them.

Perhaps the most interesting outcome of the above dispositions and behaviors by the millennials is their impact on those in the office from Generation X. Some literature suggests that persons from Generation X may resent millennials: Having come of age in a poor job market, members of Generation X have been reported to feel threatened by the entry of this generation of creative, tech-savvy youngsters—namely the millennial generation—into the workplace (Erickson, 2010). In this specific workplace, however, the millennials seem to influence their Generation X colleagues. Thus, this staff acts more like a millennial entity than the generationally diverse group it is.

For Genevieve and the broader leadership team, this millennial effect has led to situations of some tension and unbalance. Dealing with a staff where 50% are millennials is one thing; dealing with a staff where closer

to 75 or 80% are millennial-like in how they work and think about leadership is another. Leading those who don't want to be led, or who want to be their own bosses, or who see themselves as entrepreneurs within the same unit is, in Genevieve's words, the "hardest and most perplexing leadership task I have ever assumed." As a baby boomer who values hard work and believes in respect for all, Genevieve reports frustration with trying to get the "dance of it all right."

#### MEET ELIZABETH

Elizabeth is the manager of an academic unit in a small university. She is a seasoned academic administrator, having worked in a larger university before coming to her present institution. She is respected by her peers, has won a number of awards, has served as president of her professional association, and, like Genevieve, is a baby boomer. The examples Elizabeth has provided about millennials are based either on her direct experiences with millennials or on the experiences of her university colleagues.

*Workplace context.* Because the university is small, the staff members know each other well. The team is composed of millennials, members of Generation X, and baby boomers. In addition to working with each other, they work closely with undergraduate students, faculty, and other university staff.

Millennial moments. A recurring problem related to millennial staff members involves the inappropriate use of social media and lack of adherence to standard work hours and protocols. An example of the former occurred when the manager assigned a specific task to a millennial to work on for the afternoon. An hour later, the manager discovered the staff member texting a friend while there was no evidence that the employee had even started the task. When questioned, the employee did not apologize but rather explained why she needed to text her friend. Similarly, employees in this place of work openly text and post to Instagram during discussions and team meetings. They neither apologize nor change their behaviors when they are asked to stop. A further lack of accountability occurs when millennial staff are scheduled to be at specific service points at specific times and are not. Instead, there have been times when staff members have left the area unattended and even gone home without asking or telling anyone, thus leaving patrons without persons to assist them.

On a different but related note, the staff have been asked at meetings, in one-on-one conversations, by e-mail, and even during performance reviews not to use their phones or laptops at the service desk. This practice has been shown to be off-putting for patrons who require assistance and are hesitant to interrupt the staff. Despite this rule, millennial staff continue to use their devices at the desk.

To further demonstrate the lack of adherence to rules by some millennial staff, staff in the department have always used a message board to post absences from the office for reasons such as meetings, lunch, and conferences. If a staff person is noted to be "in," the person is expected to be at his or her desk. In the case of one millennial employee, she marks herself as "in" all day on most days, even when she is gone for hours at a stretch. Sometimes when she returns to the office, she has been away for a massage or a yoga class; often, colleagues have been looking for her.

The millennials in the unit do not always display respect for their baby boomer colleagues. On the first day that a baby boomer manager and a millennial staff person worked together, the millennial told the manager that her idea was "twenty years out of date." Likewise, when a baby boomer manager asked to speak to a millennial staff member for a few minutes, the staff person agreed but kept typing on her laptop. When the manager asked the employee to stop typing for a few minutes, the employee refused and continued to send materials to the office printer making it obvious and audible what she was doing. When the manager became frustrated, the staff person indicated that she did not understand why: In her opinion, she was capable of multitasking and listening even when, to the baby boomer, it did not appear that the employee was paying any attention. The outcome was that the manager did not feel listened to or respected.

Another example of disrespect occurred when a millennial staff person interrupted a baby boomer professor who was in the middle of teaching a class to tell her that she was not using technology properly. The staff person then proceeded to walk into the classroom, uninvited and unauthorized, to make adjustments to the computer settings in front of the students. While the professor was embarrassed and angered by this intrusion, the staff person felt that he was simply being helpful.

As the above examples offered by Genevieve and Elizabeth suggest, at times, the baby boomer leader may require the help of others to ensure a positive and effective work environment when there are millennials on staff. Sometimes this may mean soliciting guidance from the human resources unit. In the unionized environment, it always requires working within the directives of the collective agreement under which the millennial may work. This next section offers insights into the intersection of collective agreements, human resources, and leadership when the university leader is responsible for millennial staff.

#### DANCING WITH OTHER PLAYERS

Ideally, labor unions ensure fairness and protect the rights and benefits of members. Further, they provide clarity for managers and employees regarding appropriate workplace practices. Black and Silver (2011) comment that a collective agreement "places limits on the potentially arbitrary exercise of power by employers, and empowers union members to defend themselves against abuses in the workplace" (para. 3). Certainly, university leaders aspire to the comprehensive goals of a well-conceptualized collective agreement. In the case of some of the millennial behaviors described earlier in this chapter, however, university leaders—even with an exceptionally well-crafted collective agreement—can find themselves in situations of uncertainty. Areas of uncertainty may include the use of social media at work and conformity to workplace standards.

Regarding practices such as social media use, it is helpful when agreements clarify employer requirements and employee rights, since philosophies and tolerances pertaining to social media, privacy, and freedom of speech often vary between different employee levels and between generations. Lam (2016) suggests that "unions can...be proactive in providing constructive suggestions to employers in shaping the social media policy" (p. 434) and in constructing and enforcing standards and employment practices that are fair and appropriate for everyone. When such guidance is not provided in the agreement, the leader can experience precariousness. In the case of social media, which is a key element in the lives of almost all millennials, the leader needs the clarity of an agreement to navigate fairly.

The right to academic freedom, one of the most important values in the academy, is enshrined in all collective agreements and thus affects all university employees: "A good higher education union contract protects the freedom of choice and expression we value in members of a university community.... A well-written union contract helps... members become the individuals they want to be" (Nelson, 2011, para. 12). Unfortunately, in some cases, these freedoms can be abused, and collective agreements may actually provide protection for staff when their performance and workplace behaviors do not meet expectations. Simply put, some of the challenges that leaders face working with millennials may be exacerbated by the safeguards afforded in their collective agreements. As an example, an administrator at a Canadian university recently reported that a millennial staff person justified a department-funded purchase of obscure and costly materials as an exercise of her academic freedom: She insisted that the purchase had value to her and that she was exercising her individual rights. The union agreed and threatened a grievance if the employer took disciplinary action.

Similarly, comments that may be interpreted as microaggressions, including ageist comments made by millennials to and about their baby boomer managers, may be justified as staff expressing their individuality and exercising the freedoms enshrined in their contracts. Given this kind of thinking, it becomes very difficult to prove any kind of harassment against a manager by a millennial staff member. The strong protection afforded by unions and the forthrightness of many millennial employees can generate a potent situation for the leader.

When situations such as those described above arise, a relationship with human resources is important. Human resources staff members work on behalf of all employees and, ideally, have the expertise to guide all parties to situations of mutual understanding and effective work strategies. Because the values and behaviors of millennials are new in many workplaces, leaders need to be able to call upon those with enhanced expertise in human interactions in the work setting in order to dance successfully.

#### Recommendations for Better Dancing in the Academy

While this chapter has focused on how some university leaders are experiencing their millennial staff members, it would be shortsighted to suggest that the attitudes and behaviors described are not found in other generational cohorts. Similarly, within a single sample of millennials, there will be much diversity in how they view and experience life and work. Not all millennials hold the same values or perceptions of work. Many ascribe to values and beliefs similar to those who belong to Generation X and, at times, even the baby boomer generation. As well, there is much that is authentically positive about the millennial employee: alternate ways of thinking about and accomplishing work, capability with technology, an understanding of globalization that their generational predecessors could not have, and the courage to challenge previously held values and viewpoints are powerful elements in the workplace. Because a workplace has generally functioned one way for many years should not mean that it will continue to operate the same way for years to come. Based on the increasing use of technology in almost all aspects of work and millennials' significant competence with technology, they have much to offer to the evolution of work and places of work. Not to tap into the tremendous expertise of millennials in this area would be incredibly shortsighted.

So, what does successful leadership of millennials involve? Returning to the dance metaphor that has informed this chapter, a first and critical step is to "know thy partner." While too much information from the peer-reviewed literature and popular press about any generational group may engender bias in the leader, the risks of not enough information are substantive. It has been well established that the millennial generation holds ideas about work and leadership that are substantively different from those before them. Thus, not learning about, acknowledging, and respecting these differences can lead to discord.

In addition to the wealth of information about millennials and how they perform in the workplace in the human resources domain, there is valuable information about how millennials think and work in the education and training sectors. Not insignificantly, university teachers have found themselves challenged to know how to engage millennials and enable learning in generationally diverse classrooms (Kasworm, 2009). Many of the insights that educators have regarding millennials are transferable to the workplace.

An important way to establish and maintain a positive working relationship with a millennial employee is to make all expectations clear in job postings and interviews. Millennials need to know exactly what is expected of them through detailed information. When they are fully informed about a position, they may even choose not to apply for the position or to decline it if they know it will not hold their interest. Once a person has been hired, expectations, job requirements, and even the steps toward promotion should continue to be clarified (Harvey & Clark, 2016). Connecting with the millennial on the personal level is highly encouraged. If a millennial staff member experiences willingness in the leader to understand the stressors of an uncertain economic future, some of the benefits of 24/7 connectivity, and the value that millennials place on work-life balance, the leader stands a much better chance of being accepted and respected than otherwise. Knowing what a leader can and cannot change is likewise critical. The views and values of the millennial generation may be very different from those of older colleagues and particularly those of baby boomers.

Changes in the physical setup of the workplace may enhance the interactions between younger and older learners. While baby boomers and Generation X staff tend to value personal space, private offices, and defined schedules, millennial staff tend to be "as portable as their mobile devices and as informal as [university] students" (O'Neill, 2013, p. 11). One of the authors of this chapter recently visited a high-tech, ultra-modern workplace in Toronto, Ontario, which has embraced the workplace trend that Letchford (2017) calls "agile working." At this office, each staff person, including each manager, has a locker but no permanent workspace. Such flexibility offers choices to all generations of staff. Each workday, employees can decide to work at any available spot in the office. Some staff, mostly millennials, tend to choose a different spot each day, while baby boomers select their familiar spots most of the time. While some private offices are available in this workplace, many remain unoccupied as the millennial staff tend to work at long tables adjacent to their colleagues. Accommodating the space needs of all staff can help produce a more harmonious and productive working environment for everyone.

The ideas of acceptance and respect in the workplace require special consideration. In days past, these realities came automatically with the position of leader. There was no question about it: Staff members in academic units respected the dean or other academic leader while their colleagues in administrative units afforded their managers the courtesies of acceptance and respect. By contrast, in the case of some millennials, acceptance and respect may not be given until the leader has earned them, and possibly not even then. While good leaders know that they need to be able to sustain the respect of staff members, it also follows that the leader should be able to assume a level of acceptance and respect given his or her years of experience, overall expertise, and other relevant variables. Although some leaders may not be effective in their roles,

most do good work and should be granted the cooperation and respect of their staff. If a university leader is not experiencing acceptance by millennial staff, he or she may wish to consider reaching out to human resources for guidance.

Hodge (2016) notes that organizations must work to understand their "mixed" workforces. He remarks:

With millennials gaining employment alongside generation X and baby boomers, understanding the very different expectations of each group is crucial for keeping dissatisfaction at bay...What works for a millennial might not work for a baby boomer nearing retirement. Recognizing these differences will ensure your whole team is satisfied in their roles. Be flexible and trust your team members to work in a way that suits them. (para. 16)

Intergenerational workplace relationships can, of course, result in improvements to the workplace for all generations and levels of staff, and symbiotic relationships between generations can provide many advantages. Bennett, Pitt, and Price (2012) note that newer (and often younger) employees want clear directions and guidance, and react positively when these are provided by experienced and capable managers. At the same time, McKay, Arnold, Fratze, and Thomas (2008) acknowledge that providing regular feedback may be challenging given the "limited amount of time the baby boomer has to provide the unique one-to-one attention the millennial seeks" (p. 95). Nonetheless, aspiring to provide such feedback so that working relationships are enhanced and staff productivity is increased is an excellent goal.

Just as millennials desire feedback from their supervisors and leaders, baby boomers may need assistance from their millennial colleagues. Having faced unprecedented technological change "from typewriter to the iPhone, PCs, Internet, email, mobiles and Blackberries, in little more than twenty years...," baby boomers can learn much from the support and mentoring of their millennial employees (Bennett et al., 2012, p. 282). Support and mentoring can bring great advantages to all staff and to the workplace more generally. The university leader may also benefit from a small group of peers who can offer support and insight to the leader during periods of delicate dances. A group of respected colleagues will help the leader determine when it is appropriate to choose the path of lesser resistance and when it is best to stand firm.

#### FINAL THOUGHTS

While it would be inaccurate to suggest that all members of a generational group share the same values and characteristics, there is little question that employees from different generational groups often hold diverse values and workplace attitudes and behaviors. In the case of baby boomer leaders and millennial staff, these disparities can create unique challenges for both groups.

In addition to providing relevant literature from the academic literature and the popular press, this chapter has provided numerous examples of generational differences and the challenges that can arise from them in the academic workplace. The experiential authenticity of the chapter derives from the willingness of two baby boomer leaders from two universities to share their experiences of leading and working with millennials. Suggestions for how boomers can exist more harmoniously with millennial staff have also been provided. When all participants in the intergenerational workplace can work together toward common goals and with understanding of each other, the dance can move from delicate to life affirming and productive.

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