

# TechHumans Blog

## Exploring the Human Side of Technical Work

by Keith R. Bennett

### Millennials -- Lazy and Too Siri-ous?

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There's a pretty hilarious video going around. You can find it by doing a web search for "millennial job interview". Nonmillennials delight in the video's mocking of the millennials for their laziness and dependence on technology.

I do admit I enjoyed it too (I am a baby boomer), but I'm saddened by the ease with which so many people degenerated into condemning the entire age group for the actions of a few.

Before coming to conclusions, we should always ask ourselves "what would the other person say/think/feel?", because chances are our mindset is biased and our knowledge incomplete.

A while back my parents' generation condemned my cohort for its love of Starbucks coffee and bottled water. Here are some simulated conversations about it:

They: Why would you go to an specialty coffee shop for coffee when there's so much other coffee available for less? You must be doing it out of snobbery. Me: I go to these places because the quality is reliably good, and they are places where I can relax and do my work at the same time.

They: Why would you pay \$1.50 for a bottle of water when you could get it from the tap for free? You don't appreciate the value of money, and you're foolish to waste it on something totally unnecessary, not to mention adding more plastic trash to the environment. Me: I only pay \$.20 for a bottle because I buy them in bulk, and I'm trying to get myself to drink more water for health purposes, and the tap water doesn't taste as good; and I recycle the bottles.

I'm not sure my reasonable answers would have changed their minds, but at least the dialog provides the opportunity for clarification. These days, most of us (on all sides) don't bother to check out our assumptions with others who might reasonably correct us.

Similarly, we older folks need to step back and think about what we think of the younger generation. Sure, there are slouches and dullards, but we have those too.

Today's millennials include soldiers, scientists, teachers, journalists, doctors, nurses, and so many others, many of whom worked their butts off to become great at what they do and serve the public — and all of us are the beneficiaries. And this isn't even counting single parents, who toil not for their careers but to nurture the adults of the future.

And what do the younger ones think of we older ones? We, who by focusing on our self interest, ushered America into a degraded tatters of a democracy, and the world into an era of multiple existential threats to humanity? We are hardly qualified to talk.

We should all get off our high horses, forgive and thank each other for our respective sins and contributions, and start working together for a better future — there's so much to be done.

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