# Why Millennials are Rejecting Leadership Development

**Author: Daniel Edds .  November 2021**

In Harvard Business Publishing's 2018 "State of Leadership Development Report" titled "Millennials and Younger Leaders Are Most Critical of Leadership Development Programs," the authors note that millennial's find traditional leadership development "*consisting of poor content, insufficient thinking and expertise from outside sources, and a failure to prove return on investment as the biggest barriers to leadership program effectiveness.*"

In truth, millennial's are just stating the obvious; leadership development does not create better organizations. Why? There are several factors. Here are three:

1. Organizational needs, requirements, and systems are seldom integrated with the training;

2. Lecture-based training has a very short shelf life; and

3. There has never been a measurable link between training and organizational performance.

**Case**. Kaas Tailored is a small manufacturing organization at the opposite end of the runway from where Boeing assembles its 757, 767, 777, and 747s. Kaas designs and manufactures custom commercial furniture for major retail, healthcare, and aerospace firms. Based on the principles of servant leadership, they have become so good at eliminating waste and increasing customer value that in six years, 40,000 people have taken a tour to see how they do it. The demand for their expertise has forced them to spin off a consulting organization to meet the requests for their help. In my interview with them, I asked about how they do training. Tucker Kaas explained to me that training happens every day. They will train anyone to do any job in five-minute increments from 8:00 – 8:05 in the morning. This training includes positions of leadership as well as line positions. They believe that the best way to learn any subject is to teach the subject. By breaking learning down to five-minute increments, they can get a worker teaching the subject within a day or two. While they do pay for traditional lecture-based training, they have mainly found it to be a waste of time and money.

So, is this to say the all leadership training is a waste? Not at all, as my friends Drs. Rob McKenna and Daniel Hallack of WILD Leaders state, *"the integration and alignment of the individual leader within their organizational context, is the key. That is when the prospect of developing whole leaders gets really interesting…learning is directly related to the needs of the organization around them."*

In researching my book, *The Genetics of Leadership: Cracking the Code of Sustainable Excellence* I consistently found individual leaders and managers grow and flourish when they operate within a designed system. And their growth is not limited to just the bits their organizations pay for. Their growth is personal as well. Thus, their organization receives a double benefit, a worker that is highly engaged and growing in value.

The solution then is to design systems of leadership with a unique DNA and then train all leaders to its requirements.

For more, please visit DanielEdds.com

https://thehumancapitalhub.com/articles/why-millennials-are-rejecting-leadership-development