

# Skills for Lawyers of the Future

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The business world is changing, and not just because of technology. Young people are taking up the reins. The term “millennial” is almost derogatory at times; shorthand for a generation that baby boomers consider to be lacking in commitment, with their faces forever looking down at their phones. But to ignore the millennial impact on business is like ignoring your competitors coming up on the inside.

If you work with millennials, you’ll already be aware of the culture change. They tend to see different opportunities and challenges. They have different expectations of work. Gone are the days of ‘a job for life’; few millennials settle for the same job long-term, if they are fortunate enough to even find one. Instead, agile working is coming of age, and young people want their job to give them something other than a salary.

## Legal Firms of the Future

Let’s be honest. Lawyers are not known for embracing rapid change, or breaking the boundaries of innovation. We’ve seen the same company structures, and the same ways of working, for nigh-on 100 years.

Clients of legal firms tend to expect that they will be seen in person, billed by the hour, and have little or no access to their own digital records. But with millennials fast moving into management, something is going to give.

And it’s not just millennial lawyers that will drive the change in the legal profession. Millennial clients will too.

Consider the fact that millennials have been raised on a diet of ‘on-demand’ access to everything. Some may see this as impatience. But it simply reflects change, and — in some ways — increased efficiency. What’s not to like? Why wait for a CD to be delivered if it can be obtained immediately online? Why wait for

paper contracts to be posted when the same documents can be delivered securely in an instant?

Note: millennials are *not* born techno-gurus. But they *are* used to using technology as an everyday facility to get things done. Millennial staff are already eyeing up repetitive processes and inefficient systems, itching to automate and improve them.

## Changing Attitudes

Millennials expect more benefits and flexibility from their work. And legal firms will eventually have to adapt. Just as many marketing roles have evolved to include working with mountains of data, so legal firms are very likely to need multi-skilled people to deal with new ways of recording information and storing it.

That means that naturally, people working in law will shift and change course over their career, rather than sticking to one thing. And they'll mix and match things they've learned from other industries. Price comparison sites for legal services may not be far away. And online account access could be standard issue.

For today's lawyers, and the tail-end of the baby boom generation, this may all sound rather alarming. Yet we can already see change in the *client base* that legal firms are dealing with. Customers who deal with their local council, bank, and utility provider online are likely to expect the same kind of service from a legal firm. And why not?

Just because the boomer generation has always done things a certain way, that doesn't mean that the firms they run will not change. Perhaps it's time to see millennials as a source of positive change and efficiency, rather than a disruptive or less committed generation.

Sources - <http://auxiliumgroup.co.uk/skills-lawyers-future/>

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