

**The netgen accounting student is in your class.
Do you need to change the way you teach?**

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Abstract

The learning styles of the current generation of students, referred to as “digital millennial” or “NetGen” learners, are genuinely unique (Matulich, Papp, & Haytko 2008). NetGen learners expect continuous connectivity, interactive real-time experiences, instant response times, and bleeding-edge technology (Oblinger 2003, Papp, 2010). They prefer game-like learning environments that are self-paced, collaborative, experiential, and penalty-free (Arhin & Johnson-Mallard 2003, Oblinger 2003, Matulich, Papp, & Haytko 2008, Papp and Matulich 2011). It should come as no great surprise that traditional accounting instruction which relies heavily on textbook reading, non-interactive lectures, and textbook homework, is largely ineffective with NetGen learners (Eisner 2004, Bryant & Hunton 2000, Lippincott, Matulich, & Squires 2007, Matulich, Papp, & Haytko 2008). Accounting educators must recognize and creatively adapt to the evolving student learning styles of contemporary students to effectively engage them in the learning process (Matulich, Papp, & Haytko 2008). However, this is often quite difficult for accounting educators because the learning environment they found effective is quite different from the learning environment NetGen learners demand. This paper addresses this “pedagogical generation gap” by reflecting on the learning requirements of NetGen learners and proposing some creative ways to address these requirements for the NetGen accounting students in your class.

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