

# How Enabling Older Workers & Age Diversity Benefits Employers

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# Current situation of older workers and age diversity

- Older working age ( 50 – state retirement age) increasing in numbers & in length of working
- More 50+ men & women as % of workforce (10% +)
- Yet more over 50s out of work – but 10% registered unemployed –EU 30% of 60+ in employment
- Once unemployed v. difficult to get new job ( UK 8%)
- > Poverty for 50+, their families, esp. women & carers > poverty after pension.
- Pensions decreasing, employer pensions down, private pensions in crisis >Increased income inequality.
- Healthy + longevity connected to employment + income

# Myths re older workers

- Too expensive
- More likely to be sick
- Not worth training
- Difficult to manage
- Less productive
- Coasting to retirement
- Opposed to change/ inflexible
- IT illiterate
- Confused with 65+ ( active pensioners) & older seniors ( 80+)

# Reality

- Cheaper than middle aged ( 25-49) more value
- Less time off sick.
- Majority of carers are women 50- 65
- Better results when given training
- Loyalty and work commitment / culture
- Organisational memory
- Breadth of experience in work + life
- Been part of IT & change revolution in business throughout their lives
- Can help train / support younger + offer managers support

# Why bother with older workers

- Employers who retain, recruit and retrain older working staff ( 50+) benefit from
- Increased productivity
- Increased profitability
- Improved staff moral
- Retention of workers
- Higher employment benefits society & economy

# Who says so

- McDonalds – In UK 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of their restaurants hired older workers – this led to increased profits, productivity, & less staff turn over – better than those that did not > more older workers hired
- B+ Q supermarket – deliberate policy to hire more older workers – increased turnover & profits + profile

# more

- In Germany – VW and BMW retrained and retained staff > increased productivity and better performance by younger staff
- In German petro chemical industry deliberate policy of retraining production workers to mentor younger workers > increased productivity and retention of younger staff

# Even more

- EU Directorate on Economic & Social affairs states research shows that post crash countries & companies where older workers retained > increased numbers of young workers
- Where older workers made redundant young workers were not hired in their place > less younger workers. E.g. UK Local Authorities

# AARP Award winners

Adecco Employment Services Limited (CA);  
Agewell-Sandwell Primary Care Trust (UK);  
Alexandra Hospital (SG); BMW Group (DE);  
BT Group (UK); Bundesagentur für Arbeit  
(DE); Centrica plc (UK); Daikin Industries  
(JP); DB Services (DE); Deutsche Lufthansa AG  
(DE); Domestic & General Services Ltd. (UK);  
Dortmunder Stadtwerke (DE); Elkerliek Hospital  
(NL); Galeria Kaufhof GmbH (DE); Guernsey  
Post (Guernsey); Hansgrohe (DE); Henkel AG &  
Co KGaA (DE); Housing & Development Board  
(SG); Jena-Optronik (DE); Lam Soon Edible Oils  
(MY); Loewe AG (DE); Marks and Spencer (UK);  
Municipality of Horsens (DK); National Australia  
Bank (AU); National Environment Agency  
(SG); National Healthcare Group (SG); National  
University Hospital (SG); Public Utility Board (SG);  
Royal Plaza on Scotts (SG); Raffles Institution  
(SG); Salzburg AG (AT); SICK AG (DE); Singapore  
Health Services Ltd. (SG); Sozial-Holding der Stadt  
Mönchengladbach (DE); The Co-operative Group  
(UK); University of Central Lancashire (UK)

# Why

- Age diversity leads to a better trained, motivated and happier workforce.
- Older people can train younger ones in job & work culture & offer experience & wisdom
- Younger workers bring new thinking, challenges and use of new tech / social media
- 2 way dialogue
- More older people employed > benefits to all family. More income > + health

# Best 50+ employee practice by companies

- Have pre retirement agreements with staff approaching pension age
- Agree flexible working /different types of work
- Have ergonomic and health strategy + invest
- Train / retrain older workers- mentoring youth
- 50+ group training works- Czech Nat Bank
- Keep records of different employee ages> plan. If not can lead to crisis

# Role of Trade Unions

- Many T.U.s not aware of ageism in practice
- When regarding older workers focus on those in employment / able to work – not just pensioners
- Older workers will have more problems finding work again- redundancy inadequate
- Do not target older workers for redundancy – like UK public services & T.U.s

# Silver economy

- 50 + major driver of growth
- Rise in numbers of 50+ - >65, 65-80; 80+
- Rise in numbers of 50+ in work & time in work
- Rise in wealth & disposable income of majority
- Change in types of activities + consumption
- Younger 50+ actively support older seniors
- Requires forward planning by companies / countries

# Impact of silver economy

- Need to plan + provide for rising & changing 50+ demand or you will pay for it
- Expanded services- tourism – type of activity, time of holiday. E.g. Spain
- Leisure – music, entertainment, creative, arts
- Education & learning including U3A + degrees
- IT & new tech – more 50+ consumers
- Health & social care

# Service & product modifications

- Ergonomics
- Car design changes
- New tech modifications
- Advertising & marketing involving 50+
- Travel & tourist services – current barriers
- Investment, banking, insurance – barriers
- 50+ as investors/consumers/ protectors of all family

# How to profit from silver economy

- Product and service adaptation – involve 50+
- Aim for age diversity
- Match workforce to consumers
- Develop new silver business involve 50+ workers
- Market to older consumers
- Provide services to older people

# Government needs to wake up to 50+

- Support age diversity + retain/ employ 50+
- Publish age stats
- Engage with workplace ergonomics + health
- Require employers to engage with 50+ pre retirement ( eg France)
- Eliminate link pension + retirement age ( eg UK)
- Open training to all ages
- Be age aware + friendly
- Plan silver economy strategy for growth + inclusion
- Encourage new technologies, new industries / new jobs

# Conclusion

- 50+ are 3 generations
- Recognise the benefits of older workers / consumers – not just problem / crisis
- Change employer / govt / media attitudes to age
- Change Trade Union attitudes to older workers
- Plan strategy to profit from growth of silver economy-company & country
- Improve anti ageist legislation
- Increased employment + income > healthier longer life
- Become an age friendly society & economy