

ENGAGING THE MATURE WORKFORCE

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MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT
OLDER WORKERS

ATTRACTING AND
RETAINING WORKERS AGE
50+

CREATE A WORKPLACE
THAT CELEBRATES ALL AGE
GROUPS

Connecting to workers age 50+

In a 2021 EMSI report, [*The Demographic Drought; How the approaching pandemic will transform the labor market for the rest of our lives*](#), we find some rather daunting statistics shaping our workforce today and into the future. According to the report, talent shortages across the globe are being driven by multiple factors. One key driver is an aging population in nearly all industrialized nations.

“As Japan has discovered, weathering a talent drought requires businesses to obsess about retaining especially their older employees. As people live longer and jobs in the developed world require less physical exertion, older adults could work well past the current retirement age. In many cases, they must. To keep their aging economy from collapse, the Labor Force Participation rate in Japan for people over age 65 has risen to 25%.

In the years ahead, the US will need to move toward similar integration of older workers. In less than 15 years, the number of adults aged 65+ is projected to surpass the number of children under 18 in the US. This presents challenges for HR and recruitment—especially at a time when health concerns have driven older workers into early retirement.”

Finding and keeping workers remains an issue for employers in all industry sectors. As our workforce ages and fewer children are born, meeting workplace needs poses challenges. How do talent and acquisition teams approach recruiting, hiring, onboarding, and retaining workers who are over the age of 50? The Chamber recently sat down with four experts on employing older adults during the Experience Series Engaging The Mature Workforce.

T.J. Johnson with Tra'Bian Enterprises, Jami Phillips with New Directions Career Center, Reina Sims with AARP Ohio, and Carol Ventresca with Looking Forward Our Way joined the conversation.

Attracting and Retaining Workers age 50+

Many of the benefits that appeal to younger workers also are attractive to more seasoned employees. However, some older workers are reducing time on the job and moving from full to part-time opportunities, while others may want to do project-based work for a company. Snowbird or passport programs allow employees to work from multiple locations and can be an excellent way to broaden your hiring pool.

From AARP: “Bon Secours Virginia, a nine-time Best Employer, employees working 32-plus hours per week can take part in the organization’s formal phased retirement program. The program allows the employee to retire from Bon Secours and then get rehired without losing any retirement funds. Those ages 65-69 maintain pension benefits provided they are not working more than 24 hours per week. Employees working past age 70½ receive their pension, with no limits on hours worked.

Moreover, at the Aerospace Corporation, a 2011 Best Employer for Workers Over 50, employees eligible for retirement can work part-time or take up to 90 days to try out retirement but not lose their job or employee benefits if they opt to return to work full-time. If they retire, these employees can also return to work on projects for up to 1,000 hours a year and still retain their retirement benefits.”

Training and professional development are benefits that appeal to all age workers...including those aged 50 and above.

All peer group applicants seek employment with organizations that commit to developing their teams.

Our society and workplaces rely on technology, and many older adults are tech-savvy and eager to learn more. The misconception that older people can’t “keep up” in a digital world is just that...a misconception. In truth, older workers are highly engaged with technology in and out of the workplace.



Carol Ventresca, Looking Forward Our Way

“There is a factory that makes high end men’s silk ties. Most of the employees are older women. When leadership became concerned that some workers may leave, they asked what did the employees value most? Flexibility of schedules! So, they gave each employee their own key and access to the shop at whatever hour they wanted to work, and production actually went up!”



T.J. Johnson, President
Tra’Bian Enterprises

“They say older people are not tech savvy. Stats tell a very different story. Those aged 50-64 are using technology 96% of the time. Ages 65+ are actively using tech 75% of the time. The predictions for 2024, are all age groups will be engaging technology 99% of their time.”

CONTACT KELLY FULLER

Kelly Fuller

VP, Talent & Workforce Development
Columbus Chamber of Commerce
Columbus Chamber Foundation
KellyFuller@Columbus.org



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