

# ExperienceWorks 2

## ASSISTING THE OLDER JOB SEEKER

### TIPS TO HELP EMPLOYMENT SERVICE PROVIDERS

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Older workers seeking employment can view their age as a factor working against them. One online survey, conducted by the Civic Participation & Employment group of the Age Friendly London Network, found that some older workers perceive that employers are not welcoming and they view age discrimination as a factor.

Employment service providers are taking a number of steps to welcome older workers. They know that companies can see the value of hiring older and more experienced workers. The companies that are able to recruit and put these skills to work will have value to add.

Studies show older workers can use assistance in building their confidence, showcasing their skills and dealing with prospective employers in unfamiliar situations. If older adults expect to encounter age discrimination, which can be a realistic attitude, it can leave them feeling defeated, setting off a vicious circle that results in long-term unemployment.



#### AGING POPULATION

Means an *increase* in older job seekers

#### DECLINING BIRTHRATE

Means a *decrease* in younger job seekers



#### HOW CAN YOU HELP:

- 1 Ensure older workers are represented in pictures and posters in the agency and on its website.
- 2 Eliminate language such as “entry-level” positions when these may be preferred or most suitable long term occupations.
- 3 Provide services that boost the confidence of older workers such as computer literacy and digital technology training.
- 4 Offer services that are sensitive to life experiences and backgrounds.
- 5 Assist the job-seeker in keeping their resume relevant. Include retraining, courses and volunteering that bring value to an employer. Streamline their resume and keep applicants up-to-date in their field. Staying relevant in a workforce that is constantly changing can be a challenge; demonstrating flexibility and the ability to combine experience with new approaches is key.
- 6 Practice their interviewing skills by simulating job interviews. Many older workers may not have been in this position before. The more comfortable they are with the questions that could be asked during an interview and the entire interview process, the better.

## COMPANIES THAT RECRUIT THE OLDER WORKER WILL FIND THEY HAVE A VALUABLE RESOURCE.

- 7 Help your clients prepare for job interviews by knowing about the prospective employer and what the company does. Emphasize that they should present themselves as energetic, attentive and ready to accept new challenges.
- 8 Prepare them for interview questions about age. It is illegal to discriminate based on age, and employers are not supposed to ask about age. However, an employer may ask, for example, how would you feel about working directly for a younger person?
- 9 In today's workplace, new approaches can often mean being comfortable with digital media and the ability to use digital media to reach new customers and clients. Ask clients to familiarize themselves with new technology.
- 10 Build on their advantages. An older job seeker often has more contacts and former colleagues and a much wider network.
- 11 Above all, ensure the job-seeker keeps a positive outlook! There are jobs out there. Make sure their skills are relevant and they are persistent.

**Studies show that within five years, fully ¼ of the workforce will be 55 years of age or older. Wise employers will work with a changing workforce and be stronger for it. Make sure they know it!**



PUBLISHED MAY, 2017