

5

AGING WORKFORCE STUDY - FINAL REPORT

The Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends:

1. **Receipt of the presentation by Sharon Vegh, Program Manager, Economic Intelligence and Innovation; and**
2. **Adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report dated February 28, 2011 from the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services.**

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Staff of the Planning and Development Services Department be directed to report back to Council on the progress of Aging Workforce outcomes in Q2-2012.
2. Planning and Development Services Department circulate the Council report and the Guide to the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, the local municipal Economic Development Offices, Small Business Centers and Human Resource Departments, Chambers of Commerce and Board of Trade, the Advisory Committee and interested stakeholders and businesses that were involved in the study.

2. PURPOSE

The Aging Workforce Study was completed on February 28, 2011. This report summarizes the study and includes the final guide *Beyond the Boomers: A York Region Employer's Guide to the Labour Force Shortage* and a copy of the *Aging Workforce Study Stakeholder Conference Program* held on February 22, 2011.

3. BACKGROUND

The Aging Workforce Study creates awareness and provides an understanding of the retiring baby boomer's impact on the economy

Over the next 10 years, an estimated 100,000 to 150,000 baby boomers in the York Region workforce will retire. York Region's forecasted proportion of population over the age of 55 has increased steadily from 14 per cent in 1991, 23 per cent in 2011, 30 per cent in 2021 and 33 per cent in 2031. The aging workforce will challenge recruitment

plans of medium to large York Region employers and succession planning at small entrepreneurial firms that comprise over 70 per cent of firms in the Region.

The 2005 Economic Strategy identified the complex interplay of demographic changes, economic trends and changing business conditions causing difficulty to forecast supply and demand for workers. The Aging Workforce Study provided a better understanding of York Region's aging workforce demographic impact on the economy and initiated actions to improve efforts to maintain effective and adequate skilled labour supply to meet the needs of the future workforce.

The 22 month Aging Workforce Study was funded by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities

The Aging Workforce Study, approved by Regional Council in October 2008, was a 22 month employer focused project funded by Employment Ontario, through the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. The project was managed by the Economic Strategy Branch supplemented by a 13 member Advisory Committee of stakeholders from academic, private business and public sectors. The Aging Workforce Study concluded on February 28, 2011.

The Aging Workforce Study delivered custom research that assessed the unique economic impact of the aging workforce effects on York Region stakeholders. Three surveys engaging 1,000 youth, 1,000 older residents and 200 employers provided information to forecast workforce gaps, trends in retirement, second career plans of older workers, and employer workforce planning practices.

Based on the results of jurisdictional and custom research, a series of employer workshops and a stakeholder conference were delivered in November 2010 co-hosted by the Chambers of Commerce and Board of Trade in the municipalities of Aurora, Richmond Hill, Newmarket and Vaughan. The guide *Beyond the Boomers: A York Region Employer's Guide to the Labour Force Shortage*, which includes employer tools and resources was distributed at the workshops and the conference, see *Attachment 1*.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

The Aging Workforce Study consisted of five phases beginning April 2009 and ending February 28, 2011

Work activities occurred concurrently in multiple phases with different completion target dates:

- Phase 1, jurisdictional research and analysis concluded May 2010
- Phase 2, custom research and reports were completed July 2010
- Phase 3, employer workshops were held in November 2010

- Phase 4, employer tools development and pilot program testing concluded in November 2010
- Phase 5, included the guide presented to Regional Council in January 2011.
- A final conference with 320 registered attendees was held on February 22, 2011

A progress summary the above phases were presented to Council in September 2010 indicating that:

- Custom research indicates employers lack awareness of labour shortages and workforce planning practices
- Employers are not encouraging older worker retention
- Employers may benefit from tools to address age discrimination workplace practices
- Boomers prefer flexible work schedules
- Employers recognize possible future skilled labour shortages
- Employer workshops will increase employers' understanding of the economic impacts of the aging workforce
- Employer pilot program validated employer tools
- Final report and employer guide provided employers with information and tools for workforce planning actions

This report focuses on the final stakeholder conference.

The Aging Workforce Stakeholder Conference attracted 275 attendees and engaged extensive media coverage

The Conference Program Provided as *Attachment 2* included a keynote speech by Dr. Rick Miner on *People Without Jobs, Jobs Without People*, breakout sessions with industry experts, and Expert Café using York Region experts to allow participants to discuss key topics in small groups.

Advanced marketing for the Conference included:

- Email advertising through the Chambers of Commerce and Board of Trade and the contacts from Scott's online directory, telephone and personal contacts with associations and stakeholders rounded out the marketing campaign
- Media coverage through CBC News's Metro Morning on the impact of the baby boomers. To hear the interview, visit www.investinyork.ca/news. Personal interviews were aired on Rogers TV Local Notes Program.
- The municipalities including the Towns of Aurora, Markham and Richmond Hill and the City of Vaughan announced the Conference on their websites and in their town pages. Other stakeholders promoted the conference including Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing (CASN) promoted the Conference and the Study on their websites.
- York Region Media Group (YRMG) interviewed Community Home Assistance to Seniors (CHATS) from the first of four employer workshops held in Aurora in

November 2010. The interview gained first page coverage in YRMG publications as did three interviews conducted at the Conference on February 22, 2011.

- Corporate Services issued media advisories prior to the workshops and the conference. The Conference was also posted on York Beat and on the Invest in York website.

Ted McMeekin, MPP and Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities opened the conference followed by Regional Councillor John Taylor, Chair of Planning and Economic Development Committee.

Numerous partnerships were developed to plan and deliver the event

The event was supported by partners in both the planning and delivery of the event including:

- Academia: York University was instrumental in planning the conference. We met with the Office of the Vice-President Research and Innovation who in turn called a meeting to discuss options for the conference and together developed a list of prospective speakers. Through this collaboration we developed two break-out sessions on ergonomics for the aging workforce and creating flexible workplaces. York University exhibited their Knowledge Mobilization group and Career Centre.
- Seneca College had extensive presence at the conference with two exhibits and worked on securing Vicki Scott to facilitate Employment and Labour Law Awareness.
- Municipalities and Chambers were engaged in the conference through advertising and exhibiting. The Markham Small Business Centre, Richmond Hill Small Business Enterprise Centre, York Small Business Enterprise Centre, and the Vaughan and Whitchurch-Stouffville Chambers of Commerce exhibited at the Conference. All nine municipalities, Chambers and Board of Trade were invited to exhibit.

The Regional Municipality of York's Expert Café

York Region's experts were showcased at an informal Expert Café. The Café was opened by John Waller discussing Vision 2051 and the link to workforce issues.

Participating were:

- Community and Health Services facilitated by Lihn Lee and Jessica Wong discussing employer focused worker health programs
- Sylvia Patterson of Long Term Care facilitated the health care sector and the impacts of the increased labour supply demand
- Legal Services facilitated by Stephen Maio discussing employment and labour law
- Planning Department facilitated by John Waller discussing envisioning the future: York Region's Vision for 2051

Project and Conference survey results are not yet finalized at the date of this report. The results will be presented on www.investinyork.ca prior to the Council on April 6, 2011

The outcome of the Study and the Conference was positive and dialogue on the aging workforce will continue

- Positive feedback from participants at the event was obtained and formal feedback from an online survey will follow. The results will be presented on www.investinyork.ca prior to the Council on April 6, 2011
- Significant awareness building and dialogue was generated around the Aging Workforce issues assisted by strong media coverage of the event including two local front page stories
- The keynote speaker identified York Region as a leader in dealing with the looming workforce shortage
- The Economic Strategy Branch will continue to engage York Region Departments in dialogue on the aging workforce and will host a meeting in Q1-2012 to learn the outcomes of the businesses and stakeholders utilizing the tools and best practices contained in the guide. The website, www.investinyork.ca will remain updated quarterly on issues and outcomes affecting the aging workforce.

Relationship to Vision 2026

According to the keynote speaker, York Region is ahead of just about everyone else in bracing for an inevitable labour shortage. The Region is among the first organization to study seriously how aging baby boomers will impact the local economy, and to take steps to avoid a severe labour shortage. The study focused on creating awareness on demographic challenges that will see employers unable to find skilled employees and unskilled people unable to find jobs if we don't confront the expected mass retirement of the baby boom generation. This impacts Vision 2026 in several areas including a vibrant economy by increasing business awareness of the Region's services and identifying workforce and educational needs together with key business and education partners and indicating the employment to population growth indicator. The study may also form part of the framework to address the housing choices of our residents.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications for York Region. Employment Ontario approved \$518,000 funding for the Aging Workforce Study. Direct costs covered included two dedicated project staff, research, employer guide and tools development, pilot program coordination, delivery of workshops and stakeholder conference, and production and distribution of a final report.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Addressing the aging workforce trend will have an economic impact on all nine municipalities by uncovering strategies that can be acted on to support workforce development to the year 2026 based on Vision 2026 and develop needs for Vision 2051. Municipal economic development offices were provided with detailed presentations of the research results, employer resources and the final report.

7. CONCLUSION

Employers will benefit from using workforce planning resources and tools

The Aging Workforce Study process has raised awareness around this serious labour force issue and has resulted in the development of employer tools to help them address these issues. Despite identifying current and future labour shortages, employers previously indicated that the aging workforce and boomers' retirements will not impact their business and that workforce planning tools are not needed.

The Aging Workforce Study's custom and jurisdictional research has generated meaningful insights and the project includes opportunities for ongoing Regional stakeholder input such as collaborating with the Community and Health Services Department's services on employer wellness programs and local immigration partnership strategic development. With the Long Range and Strategic Planning Branch, we can incorporate employment growth into the Vision 2051 strategic plans. We will continue dialogue on the project and report back to Council in Q2-2012.

For more information on this report, please contact Sharon Vegh, Manager Economic Intelligence and Innovation at (905) 830-4444, Ext. 1509 or Doug Lindeblom, Director, Economic Strategy and Tourism Branch at Ext. 1503.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The two attachments referred to in this clause are attached to this report.)



Aging Workforce Study Results

Presentation to:
Planning and Economic Development Committee
Aging Workforce Study Final Report

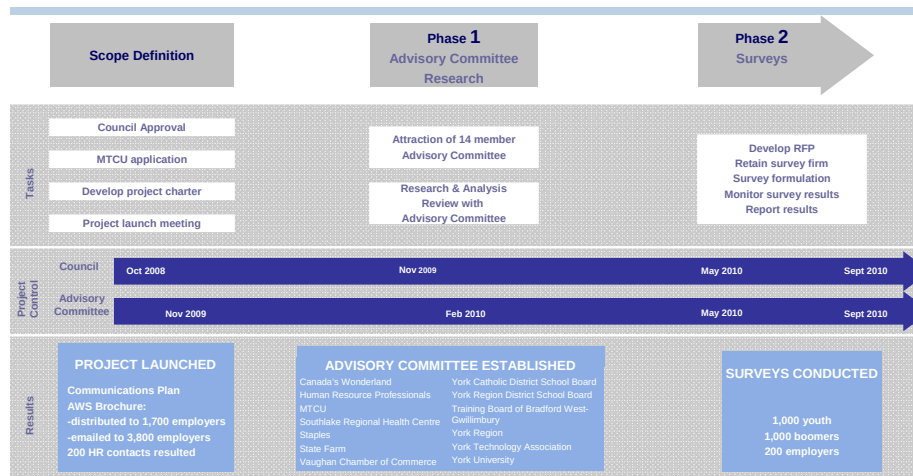
Sharon Vegh
April 6, 2011

Study framework

- ❑ No direct financial implications
 - ❑ \$518,000 contract
 - ❑ Funded by Employment Ontario (Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities)
 - ❑ Expended \$445,300 as of February 28, 2011
- ❑ Start date April 2009
- ❑ End date February 28, 2011
- ❑ Deliverables:
 - ❑ Jurisdictional research and analysis
 - ❑ Custom research and reporting
 - ❑ Employer workshops
 - ❑ Employer tools and pilot program
 - ❑ Final report and stakeholder conference



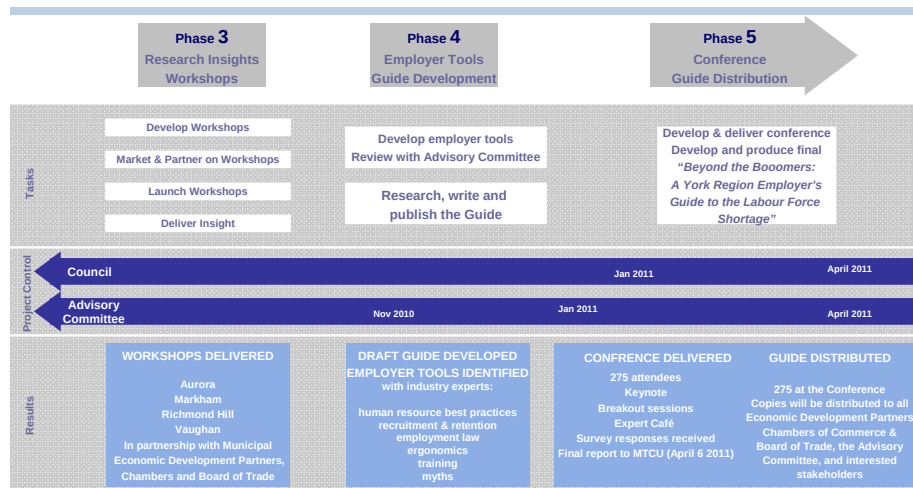
Project task and result chart: scope definition and phases 1 and 2



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Slide 3

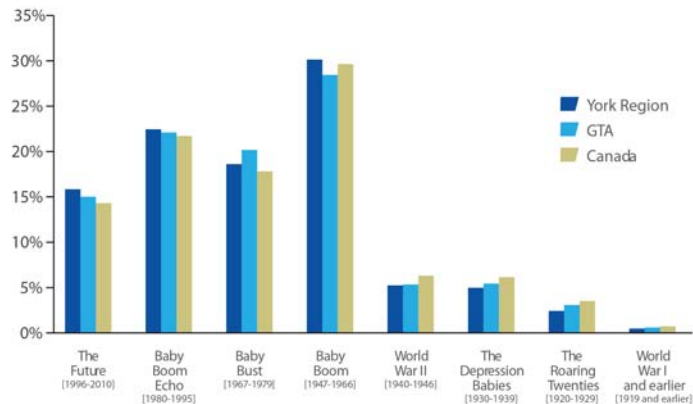
Project tasks and results chart: phases 3 to 5



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Slide 4

Status of the aging population

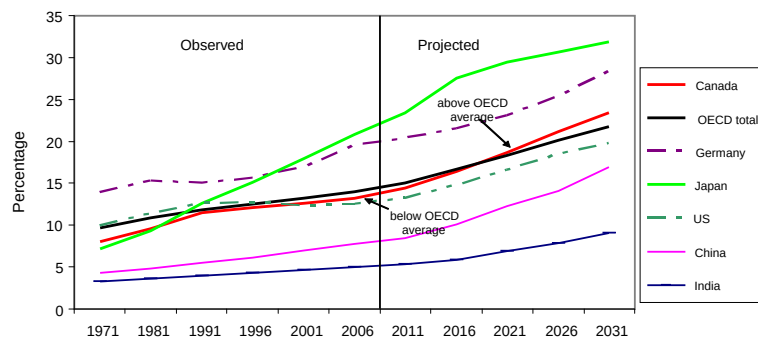


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Slide 5

A global aging population phenomena

The proportion of Canada's seniors' population (65+) of the total population is expected to exceed the OECD average in 12 years



Source: OECD Factbook 2009: Economic, Environmental and Social Statistics © OECD 2009



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Slide 6

Dramatic demographic shift looming

Dramatic demographic shift will have broad social and economic implications on York Region

- ❑ The aging population trends will accelerate over the next decade as baby boomers begin turning 65 years old in 2011
- ❑ In York Region, seniors will account for 22% of the population by 2036, up from 10% of the population in 2006
- ❑ The median age of retirement in Canada has fallen from 65 in the mid 1970s to a low of 60.6 in 1997. In 2005, the median age of retirement was 61.0 years
- ❑ York Region has 159,635 residents aged 50-64 (2006 census). Assuming the average York Region employment participation rate of 70%, 112,000 residents aged 50-64 will be retiring from the workforce over the next 8-12 years



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Slide 7

Impact of the Aging Workforce Study on York Region businesses

- ❑ York Region is the first to seriously study how aging baby boomers will impact the local economy
- ❑ Study focused on awareness creation
- ❑ Impact to Vision 2026 including:
 - ❑ Vibrant economy
 - ❑ Increasing awareness of the Region's services
 - ❑ Identifying workforce and educational needs
 - ❑ Indicating employment to population growth
 - ❑ Framework for addressing resident's housing choices



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Slide 8

Benefits older workers bring to employers

Loyalty
Experience
Strong work ethic
Mentorship and coaching ability
Specialized knowledge – intellectual capital
Ability to connect with younger workers
Ability to work flexible hours
Problem solving abilities
Interpersonal skills
Lower turnover



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Engagement model for 50+ workers



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Slide 10

The Guide provides employer tools



- ❑ Beyond the Boomers: A York Region Employer's Guide to the Labour Force Shortage
- ❑ www.investinyork.ca



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The study gained extensive media interest and coverage



- ❑ 3 media advisories published by Corporate Communications



- ❑ 2 interviews at workshop and conference
 - ❑ First page coverage in York Region Media Group publications



- ❑ Interview with Doug Lindeblom on CBC Radio One Metro Morning



- ❑ Audiocast link:
<http://www.cbc.ca/video/news/audioplayer.html?clipid=1685106525>



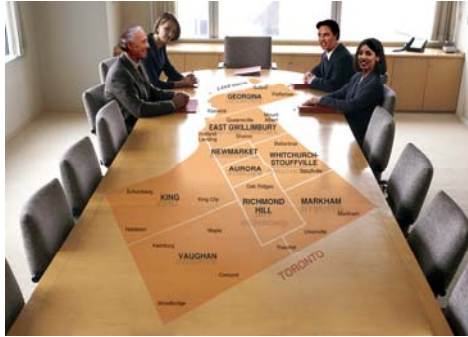
- ❑ 2 interviews on Rogers Television



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Local Municipal Impact



- Economic impact on all nine municipalities
 - Awareness creation for employers
 - Uncover strategies to act on in support of Vision 2026
 - Develop needs for Vision 2051

Future actions 2011 and 2012

Internal

- Planning Department
 - Economic Strategy
 - Incorporate aging workforce planning in new Economic Strategy
 - Long Range and Strategic Planning Services
 - Integrate to Vision 2051

External

- Community and Health Services Department
 - Strategic Service Integration and Policy
 - Develop actions for aging workforce in Labour Immigration Partnership (LIP) initiative pursuant to outcome of Immigration Settlement Strategy
 - Engage stakeholders in the LIP initiative Q1-2012



BEYOND THE BOOMERS

A York Region Employer's Guide
to the Labour Force Shortage



**EMPLOYMENT
ONTARIO**

Your job is out there. We'll help you find it.

Assessing the impact of baby boomers' retirement plans on the York Region economy.



Mayor
Frank Scarpitti
Town of Markham



Regional Councillor
Jack Heath
Town of Markham



Regional Councillor
Jim Jones
Town of Markham



Regional Councillor
Gordon Landon
Town of Markham



Regional Councillor
Joe Li
Town of Markham



Mayor
David Barrow
Town of Richmond Hill



Regional Councillor
Vito Spatafora
Town of Richmond Hill



Regional Councillor
Brenda Hogg
Town of Richmond Hill



Mayor
Maurizio Bevilacqua
City of Vaughan



Chairman & CEO
Bill Fisch



Mayor
Tony Van Bynen
Town of Newmarket

A Message from York Regional Council

Over the next five to 10 years, aging baby boomers will retire in record numbers. An estimated 100,000 to 150,000 baby boomers in the workforce across The Regional Municipality of York will retire. At the same time, younger workers may not be available in sufficient supply to meet the needs of York Region's growing economy.

To gain a better understanding of the impact on the York Region economy, the Aging Workforce Study undertook three surveys:

- **The boomer retirement survey** to forecast retirement trends, including older workers who plan to pursue second careers after retiring
- **The employer workforce survey** to identify employers' future growth and workforce needs
- **The youth career survey** to estimate the supply of youth for York Region jobs that will assist employers in making plans to recruit and train youth

The aging workforce will challenge recruitment plans of medium to large York Region employers. But the issue of workforce planning becomes even more critical at small entrepreneurial firms that comprise over 70 per cent of firms in the Region.

As employers plan for organizational knowledge loss and labour supply shortages, they need to estimate the supply of educated and trained youth able to fill job openings in York Region.

To assist employers in dealing with these challenges, the Aging Workforce Study has prepared case studies, best practices and information tools and resources to assist York Region employers as they develop workforce plans and strategies to maintain an adequate, skilled labour supply.



Regional Councillor
Gino Rosati
City of Vaughan



Regional Councillor
John Taylor
Town of Newmarket



Regional Councillor
Michael Di Biase
City of Vaughan



Regional Councillor
Deb Schulte
City of Vaughan



Mayor
Robert Grossi
Town of Georgina



Regional Councillor
Danny Wheeler
Town of Georgina



Mayor
Geoffrey Dawe
Town of Aurora



Mayor
Virginia Hackson
Town of East Gwillimbury



Mayor
Steve Pellegrini
Township of King



Mayor
Wayne Emmerson
Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville

BEYOND THE BOOMERS

A York Region Employer's Guide
to the Labour Force Shortage



*"For me life is continuously being hungry.
The meaning of life is not simply to exist, to survive,
but to move ahead, to go up, to achieve, to conquer."*

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER



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Beyond the Boomers

Introduction



1.1 Sustaining a quality workforce

As one of the fastest growing areas in Canada, the Regional Municipality of York forecasts a healthy future economy. The Region has over 102,000 businesses, with small and medium-sized companies dominating the labour market and accounting for the majority of employment growth. By 2031, 780,000 jobs will support a population of 1.5 million people, however there are three major issues that threaten to cloud the Regional economy:

- an aging population
- decreased fertility rates
- current immigration levels

If these factors are not dealt with effectively over the next 20 years, York Region employers could face insufficient labour supply to sustain their businesses.

The Economic Strategy Branch is dealing with these issues in a number of areas, including providing economic foresight and intelligence, implementing innovative programs for business, enabling business development through advancing business creation and ensuring growth through investment and marketing. The Branch is also focusing on helping all York Region businesses, and particularly small enterprises, to deal with the aging workforce and the potential labour shortages retiring baby boomers could precipitate.

1.2 The Aging Workforce Study

To deal with the aging workforce problem head-on, and to fulfill its objective of sustaining a high quality workforce, York Region Economic Strategy Branch, with funding from Employment Ontario, undertook an Aging Workforce Study (AWS) in October, 2008.

The Aging Workforce Study Program is taking action to:

- alert York Region employers of an impending labour shortage and show how it could affect their sustainability and prosperity
- help employers reduce labour shortages by urging them to take action
- provide tools to help them deal with the problem

Aging Workforce Study activities

- **measuring** the economic impact of an aging workforce
- **estimating** the labour gap retiring boomers will create
- **identifying** employment policy issues affecting older worker supply
- **increasing** awareness of the problem and the need to transfer knowledge from aging workers to younger workers
- **providing** data, best practices, tools and resources to York Region businesses
- **encouraging** employers to consider workforce planning and older worker recruitment and retention strategies
- **providing** a series of workshops, web posts and a stakeholder conference that will share best practices in workforce planning and retention strategies and provide tools, resources and a printed guide to the aging workforce
- **proposing** policy changes to regulatory bodies to increase York Region's economic growth

A unique perspective

This guide has been developed to provide employers with a unique perspective of the aging workforce's impact on York Region's economy from a global, national and regional perspective. Beyond outlining the problems of a skilled labour shortage, this guide suggests possible actions that can be taken by employers to resolve issues. The guide provides labour force estimates and identifies gaps and opportunities for increasing skilled labour. It also outlines best practices, tools and resources employers can use to address workforce planning and older worker recruitment and retention.

Educators' roles

Businesses will be increasingly dependant on educators to partner with them to meet future labour demands. As York Region's economy changes from a goods-producing to a knowledge-based economy, businesses will need educators to supply the skills and knowledge training, workplace literacy and English as a Second Language (ESL) skills required to compete globally.

Through post-secondary school education and youth career guidance services, our educators will create programs that develop relevant skills and knowledge and promote the careers local businesses will require. Labour market information in this guide is provided to help educators and local employers to increase their collaboration on academic program planning to prepare for the future.

1.3 Acknowledgements

Aging Workforce Study (AWS) Advisory Committee
In 2009 an impressive 13 member Aging Workforce Study (AWS) Advisory Committee was formed with a common goal of addressing workforce labour supply and retention issues. The Committee, which provided opinions and interests of the private sector, including large and small businesses and the public, not-for-profit and educational sectors, provided direction and highly skilled human resource expertise for the AWS project team

York Region commends the work of the AWS Advisory Committee members who gave generously of their time and expertise to recommend research sources, review staff reports and recommendations, help with marketing the program to stakeholders, and evaluate the employer tools and resources provided.

[Doug Lindeblom](#)

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Regional Municipality of York

[Sharon Vegh](#)

Manager, Economic Intelligence & Innovation
Regional Municipality of York

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Lynda Coulter
Superintendent of
Human Resources
York Catholic District School Board



Susan Edwards
Director, Human Resources
Canada's Wonderland



Dave Gordon
Vice President,
Human Resources
State Farm Insurance



**Elizabeth Gordon/
Joann McRae**
Manager, Recruitment and
Retention Services/ Senior
Recruitment Officer
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Regional Municipality of York



Ian Turnbull
President
Human Resources
Professionals for York Region
(HRPYR)



Alan Ward
Vice President, Human
Resources
Staples



Al Wilson
Executive Director
Workforce Planning Board of
York Region & Bradford West
Gwillimbury



1.4 Executive summary

York Region forecasts a healthy economic future however an aging population, decreased fertility rates and current immigration levels will be major factors in the Region's economic outlook. York Region Economic Strategy Branch, with funding from Employment Ontario, undertook an Aging Workforce Study (AWS) in October, 2008.

The Aging Workforce Study Program is taking action to:

- alert York Region employers of an impending labour shortage and show how it could affect their sustainability and prosperity
- help employers reduce labour shortages by urging them to take action
- provide tools to help employers deal with workforce planning

A potential labour shortage

Slowing population growth due to reduced fertility rates could create a shortage of qualified workers to replace retiring older workers over the next 10 years. While this factor alone could affect York's economic prosperity, the Region must also deal with issues around longer life expectancy rates and the challenges its older residents face regarding pension benefits and changes in personal investment portfolios because of the 2009 recession.

Bridging the gap

York Region's Aging Workforce Study showed that 62 per cent of boomers ages 50 and over are interested in taking on a new career. Because York Region has a highly educated population, it is well positioned to benefit from skilled and professional people's desires to continue working beyond traditional retirement ages. These highly qualified, experienced workers and the educated young immigrants York Region tends to attract could become key to resolving potential labour shortage issues.

To ensure an adequate pool of qualified workers, the Region will continue to attract qualified candidates from around the world. It will also use the skills of under-represented workers such as aboriginals, people with disabilities, women returning to work after child rearing and people who have had difficulty finding the right match for their skills to maintain labour supply.

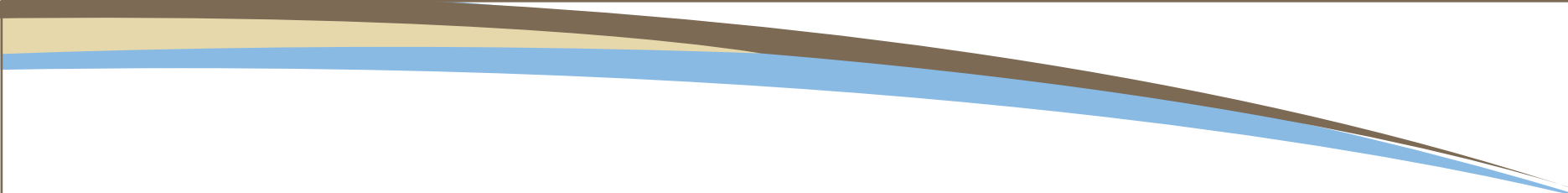
Business must refocus

In order to remain competitive in the future economy, businesses will need to refocus on knowledge-based industries such as advanced manufacturing, however it will be equally important to continue to maintain technical services, such as the trades, where workers are aging and youth recruitment is necessary.

The Regional Official Plan states that York Region can reasonably expect 780,000 jobs to be available by 2031. In an ideal situation, the Region's workforce would be approximately equal to its employment opportunities. However, the AWS Study shows that, if no remedial action is taken, there will be a deficit of three per cent or 23,500 jobs by 2031, based on current numbers of boomers in the workforce and their ages.

Communication is key

Creating an environment that attracts and retains highly qualified older workers can be a challenge. However there are valuable steps that even the smallest companies can take without adding significantly to the business owner's or the line manager's role. Simply talking to employees about their future plans long before they reach traditional retirement age can have huge benefits for both employees and business owners.



Discussions when employees are in mid-career allow both sides to develop long-range plans that help to resolve important issues. Retirement discussions for all employees and their life partners at age 50 are recommended as a human resources best practice.

Flexibility attracts workers

Flexible work schedules can be particularly attractive to older workers who want to remain in the workforce but who also want free time to pursue other interests. Flexibility can take many forms, including flexible work days, opportunities to take extended leaves, shorter work weeks, work from home, a combination of these options and/or other creative approaches to managing work/life balance.

Benefits are major factors

When workers are deciding whether to leave the workforce, the benefit mix, particularly healthcare benefits, can be a major factor in their final decision. Benefits are most attractive when they are flexible in their application and provide for extended coverage.

The current trend toward the spending account model of health benefits reduces the rising costs of benefit plans for employers and allows employees to tailor their plans to their individual needs. Programs aimed at reducing illness and injury, managing stress, creating work/life balance, promoting healthy eating and encouraging smoking cessation help maintain healthy lifestyles that benefit both the employee and the company.

Confronting age discrimination

If employers want to encourage older workers to stay in the workplace, they will have to take action to deal with age discrimination. There are many routes to achieving that goal, including job shadowing, mentoring of younger staff and working on project teams that include both older and younger workers. These initiatives can help to reduce conflict, increase productivity and transfer organizational knowledge.

To create a positive, inclusive workplace for older workers, employers can:

- encourage conversations about the positive aspects of aging
- dispel aging myths
- create intergenerational team building
- foster a positive environment for older worker retention and contribution

Workforce plans for future growth

Every workforce plan should include strategies for retraining staff for new economy jobs, equipping workers with relevant business communications skills, and transferring older workers' skills and unique organizational knowledge.



An Aging Workforce

2

2.1 How did we get here?

The baby boomers have influenced every aspect of our society for more than three generations and now that they are beginning to deal with later life issues such as retirement they will continue to challenge existing paradigms. The boomers have filled the need for qualified workers for more than 40 years.

But change is definitely on the horizon, driven partly by retirement and partly by changes in population growth because of reduced fertility rates that could create a shortage of qualified workers to replace older workers. The issue is complicated further by longer life expectancy rates, changes in personal investment portfolios and adequate pension benefits.

Population growth is slowing

Lower fertility rates and longer life expectancy are global issues that will affect not only York Region but all of Canada and most other countries over the next five to 10 years. For example, Canada's fertility rate has been dropping from its peak of 3.8 children per woman in the late 1950s to 1.57 children per woman in 2005. Ours is one of the lowest fertility rates in the world, according to the United Nations, and well below the 2.1 births per woman required to maintain population equilibrium in an industrialized country. As such, Canada's and York Region's population will decline in the future without immigration.

Life expectancy is increasing

At the same time, life expectancy is accelerating, rising from 73 years in 1970 to 80.7 years in 2006, with the trend expected to continue to 85.3 years in 2050. This increase, combined with reduced fertility rates, will result in financial burdens for businesses and individuals as the non-working population increases while the working population decreases. Because these issues are global, Canada is currently able to maintain a favourable position in comparison with other countries. However within just 12 years we will have one of the largest segments of senior citizens in the world.

Financial pressures are increasing

Additionally, the replacement of defined-benefit pensions with defined-contribution plans, combined with debt loads that many people carry into their senior years is creating an increasing reliance on the Canada Pension Plan and Old Age Security payments, which bring recipients only to the poverty line. Under these circumstances, many seniors are remaining in the workforce longer than they may have expected, often in a second career.

2.2 What does it mean?

Productive years are increasing

Historically, York Region's population has been more youthful than the national average but again, change is on the horizon. In 2006, York Region's seniors accounted for 10 per cent of the overall population. By 2031 our senior population is projected to double to 20.7 per cent of the population.

However, age alone does not necessarily define productive activity. The concept of 20 productive years after initial retirement is very feasible for many older people. Research shows that most private sector workers retire at age 62 and their public sector counterparts at about age 60. People who leave long-term employment at these ages can reasonably expect another 20 years or more of productive activity.

"Retirement" is less relevant

The definition of "retirement" as withdrawal from the workforce is going to become less relevant in the future. Research shows that well educated people tend to do work that requires little physical strain and they often want to continue in their professions and careers beyond traditional retirement ages.

Surveys conducted by York Region's Aging Workforce Study also showed that 62 per cent of boomers ages 50 and over are interested in taking on a new career, starting a business or doing productive volunteer work after they retire from their primary career.

2.3 How we can benefit

Boomers want to continue

Although a significant number of older people have suggested that they would like to continue to contribute to the workforce and the community after they retire, their willingness and contributions cannot be expected to resolve the issues of an aging workforce combined with a shrinking population. This is apparent by the fact that only 6 per cent of Ontario residents in the age 65 to 74 bracket are currently working.

Creative approaches are required

Nor can we safely assume that current economic conditions and the reaction to the 2009 recession will continue to fill short-term labour shortages after the economy recovers and gathers steam. Long-term solutions will require additional, more creative approaches, such as looking abroad for skilled and professional workers. While Canada will have to compete with other countries to attract the brightest and best candidates to fill its need for knowledgeable workers, York Region is, again, well-positioned to attract highly qualified candidates.

We're multicultural

York Region is already a multicultural community. Currently, the Region's population includes 43.7 per cent foreign-born residents, up from 36.1 per cent in 1996, making York Region's proportion of immigrant population higher than the provincial average of 29.2 per cent and the national average of 20.7 per cent. York Region will continue to increase its efforts to attract a large proportion of skilled immigrants.

Immigrants bring value

The Region tends to attract young working-age immigrants who can bring value to their workplace and the community for many years to come. Two thirds of York's immigrants are between the ages of 15 and 44, while only 10 per cent are over age 45. These young people are ready and motivated to develop long-term careers if they are given support around recognizing professional credentials, ESL training and developing workplace literacy skills.

York Region Immigrants are well educated with 70 per cent having a college or certificate and university degree, 20.6 per cent with high school or trades certificate and less than ten per cent with no high school.

York Region foreign born field of study on arrival

Education Major	% of recent immigrants
Engineering, computer and other sciences, mathematics	35.5
Liberal arts, humanities, social sciences	24.6
Business management, public administration	21.3
Health, fitness, parks	10.3
Other (Physical & life sciences, Personal protective & transportation services, Agriculture)	8.3

Source: Statistics Canada, 2006, extracted from Community Social Data Strategy Data Catalogue: EO1213_TGP_5A_CD_CSD

Older workers are needed

York Region must look for creative approaches to maintaining the employment ratio necessary to achieve economic growth for the Region and its 30,000 employers, both large and small. These employers, with the Region's resources and support, need to find attractive incentives such as shorter work hours to encourage older workers to extend their careers and to impart their skills and knowledge to younger workers to ensure long-term success.

Inclusiveness brings prosperity

The Region will continue in its efforts to attract the brightest and best-qualified candidates from around the world. It will also promote the contributions of under-represented workers such as aboriginals, people with disabilities, women returning to work after child rearing as well as people who have had difficulty finding the right match for their skills to ensure labour supply. These actions will be necessary to support local businesses in their ongoing efforts to lead their industries and to ensure future prosperity for all York Region residents.





York Region's Growth Position

3

3.1 Job growth and employment balance

York Region is well positioned for economic growth both now and in the future. However, that position will depend on the ability of our employers to implement innovative policies and procedures that will allow them to compete globally in a world where workers are aging and numbers of replacement workers are declining. The world is changing, in terms of worker demographics and competitive activities.

New economy jobs are growing

Traditional manufacturing has always been the pillar and the largest section of the Region's economy, accounting for 75,300 jobs or about 17 per cent of all employment. However, due to declines in manufacturing because of the economic recession of 2009, businesses will need to refocus on advanced manufacturing to remain economically sustainable.

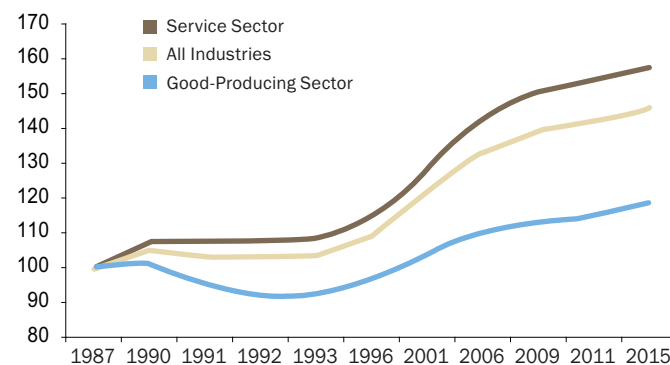
According to the Tomorrow's Opportunities & Priorities (TOP) Report 2010, the following sectors are key to York Region's future employment growth:

- manufacturing
- professional, scientific and technical services
- specialty trade contractors
- administrative support services
- health Care
- hospitality – food service and drinking places

As we change our approach, it will be necessary to transition our primary focus toward growing service sector industries, where there has been a significant increase in employment demand in Canada over the past 23 years. Economic investment is moving toward advanced manufacturing, information and communication technologies, health and life sciences, building and land development, green technology, sustainable agriculture and alternative energy industries.

Canada's employment growth by sector

**Employment Growth by Industry,
1987 - 2015, Canada (Index 100 = 1987)**



Source: Human Resources and Skills Development Canada

As we move into these new areas it will be important to recruit and retrain workers, particularly those who are in early- to mid-career, to make the necessary adjustments to prepare for the opportunities these fields will provide in the future.

Critical Boomer jobs for succession planning

It will be equally important to continue to maintain traditional services such as the trades, where workers are aging and recruitment of youth is necessary. While these positions are outside of future growth areas, they provide services that will continue to be required in the new economy. As such, it will be necessary to minimize the risk of shortages due to an aging workforce. The 2006 census provides the most recent information on occupations that employ the greatest percentage of boomer-age workers. It is important to note that these percentages may have increased in the years since the census was taken.

Occupation	2006 employment level	Percentage of aged 55 years and older in 2006
Farmers and farm managers	197,800	42.3
Real estate agents and salespersons	61,100	36.5
Bus drivers and subway and other transit operators	76,700	33.9
Senior managers - Goods production, utilities, transportation and construction	59,800	29.2
University professors	54,400	31.8

Boomer occupations in York Region

Succession planning will be necessary for all occupations that include boomers and particularly for the following fields, which employ the largest percentage of older workers:

- finance, insurance, real estate and leasing
- public administration: policy, enforcement and civil service
- health care
- education
- information technology, computers and communications
- business, building and other support services
- construction and manufacturing
- professional, scientific and technical fields

Employment balance is ideal

York Region needs to maintain a labour force that is as close to job demand as possible to drive economic growth. In an ideal situation, the Region's workforce would be approximately equal to its employment opportunities. This would provide employers in the Region with a nearby labour supply and also allow residents the opportunity to live and work in York Region.



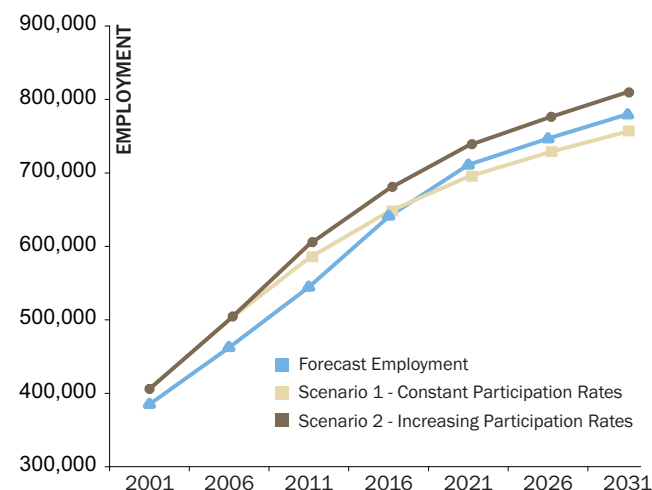
3.2 The need for action

The Regional Official Plan forecasts that the Region's employment base will reach 780,000 jobs by 2031. Based on maintaining 2006 labour force participation rates for all age groups, it is estimated that there will be a potential labour force and employment demand gap of three per cent or 23,500 jobs by 2031 (see chart below), which would challenge the ability of many local industries to compete globally against jurisdictions where older people are remaining in the workforce.

In order to remain competitive and to support local industry, the Aging Workforce Study is recommending that older workers be allowed and encouraged to stay in their jobs, as is occurring in Europe and the United States. Incentives such as shorter work weeks and training to increase skills that add to the wealth of knowledge older workers bring to the workforce would have significant appeal to many older workers who want to extend their careers.

If a small fraction of older workers, perhaps as small as 2 per cent, were to remain in the workforce beyond age 65, worker supply and economic productivity in the Region would increase significantly. Older age groups have been increasingly involved in Ontario workplaces over the past decade. If this trend continues, there could be a surplus of 30,300 jobs as illustrated in the chart below.

Case for Boomers Working Longer



Planning is key

Employers need to plan carefully to identify and develop future human resource needs and to develop best practices for recruiting and retraining top talent in the face of skilled labour shortages.

Business also needs to partner with educational institutions to develop programs and co-op learning opportunities to deal with critical shortages of skilled and technical workers. Through joint curriculum development and co-op placement programs, local employers and educators can create a supply of skilled, job-ready employees who can then live and work in York Region.

Because York Region is part of a wider labour market, nearly 45 per cent of its residents are employed in other areas and a portion of its jobs are filled by people outside of the region. However by planning for the future and taking action now, the number of people who live and work locally can be increased.

Our colleges and universities are natural planning partners for local businesses. Together, business and post-secondary educators can develop programs for current employees as an alternative to hiring new recruits to meet labour needs. Worker certification, retraining, skills upgrading, English as a Second Language and business communications programs could be co-operatively developed to meet the needs of both employers and workers.



Action brings prosperity

York Region is attracting new industries that will carry it into the future, creating opportunities for local young people and immigrants. These activities, combined with changes to policies and procedures at local businesses to encourage older workers to continue to add value to the economy, will help to secure future stability, growth and prosperity.

A woman with short, wavy grey hair and a gentle smile stands in the foreground. She is wearing a white turtleneck under a dark blue denim jacket. Her arms are crossed. In the background, three other people are seated at a table, working on laptops. The background is softly blurred, showing green foliage and a light-colored building.

*"Age is an issue of mind over matter.
If you don't mind, it doesn't matter."*

MARK TWAIN



A Business Action Plan

Creating an environment that attracts and retains highly qualified older workers can be a challenge, particularly for the 43 per cent of York Region businesses that have no staff dedicated to human resources. However there are valuable steps that even the smallest companies can take without adding significantly to the business owner's or the line manager's role. Most of these initiatives can be implemented within existing budgets and IT resources and some may actually reduce costs and make the business more competitive.

4.1 Talking to employees

Simply talking to employees about their long-range plans long before they reach retirement age can have huge benefits for both employees and business owners. Often, both workers and business owners are reluctant to discuss the issues that surround older workers' future plans and preferred lifestyles. This avoidance can become a huge guessing game for both sides, particularly because there are so many unanswered questions that both may need to deal with.

Open discussions resolve issues

Many companies have found that open discussions when employees are in mid career allow both sides to develop long-range plans to help resolve important issues. They help employers to develop workforce plans and give employees an opportunity to get answers to questions about their future and to explore quality of life issues such as financial needs and goals, government and company pensions and health benefits. To prevent any employee from feeling singled out, these successful companies recommend retirement planning programs for all employees and their life partners at age 50.

While larger companies will probably opt for group meetings, smaller firms may want to conduct informal sessions. However, it will be important for smaller businesses to make all staff aware that retirement planning meetings are standing company policy and that everyone will attend them at age 50. Regardless of the meeting size, the sessions create an atmosphere where extended employment and retirement transition plans can be discussed.

Boomers need financial advice

Whether older workers want to retire or not, they may not be financially able to support a life of total leisure. Many boomers don't know how much money they will need to retire and, according to an RBC Financial Priorities Poll conducted by Ipsos Reid in 2009, four in ten boomers don't put money towards their retirement priorities. This lack of preparation, combined with the impact of the 2009 recession on savings and investments, has left older workers with many questions and few options.

To help answer some of these questions employers can direct staff to financial calculators, usually provided by their banks, insurance companies or personal financial planners. While these calculators can help to determine financial retirement needs and timelines, for many workers the most practical solution may be to continue working, perhaps in a more flexible environment than they've had in the past.



4.2 Employment and succession planning

Long-range employment planning

To retain competitive advantage when skilled labour may be tight and to provide for future growth needs, businesses will want to consider long-range employment planning. Because strategies for transferring older workers' skills and unique organizational knowledge are an important part of every workforce plan, businesses will want to retain workers who possess critical skills and make succession plans to support future growth when they eventually leave the company. Involving older workers in discussions of long range plans will encourage them to actively participate in the knowledge transfer process.

Business succession planning

One of the best things business owners can do for both their companies and employees is to develop a business succession plan long before considering retirement. Retirement of the business owner has a significant impact on staff and the value of the business when it is eventually sold or wound down. If workers are invited to provide input to the business succession plan it will help to ensure continuity, productivity and engagement in the succession process.

4.3 Flexibility in the workplace

Flexibility is a growing workplace trend that not only replaces rigid work schedules but also allows workers of all ages to balance lifestyle and career. This approach can be particularly attractive to older workers who want to remain in the workforce but who also want to have free time to pursue other interests.

The flexible work environment

Flexibility can take many forms, including flexible work days, opportunities to take extended leaves, shorter work weeks, work from home and a combination of these options and/or other creative approaches that provide value to both employer and worker. Some options may be of specific interest to older workers; others may also benefit young mothers/fathers and workers of all ages who have eldercare issues. While the following list of flexible work options is by no means comprehensive, it provides a starting point for discussion and consideration:

Flexible work schedule options

Option	Advantage
Compressed or extended work weeks	Increases consecutive days off Reduces commuting time
Job sharing	Allows shorter hours
Part-time hours	Reduces work hours and stress
Shift work exemptions	Reduces stress of evening and midnight shifts
Transfer to other positions	Reduces responsibility
Self-funded leaves	Allows extended time off for travel and other pursuits
Phased-in retirement	Allows fewer hours, less responsibility, and mentoring opportunities

Workplace adaptations

Option	Advantage
Changes to the work environment to improve lighting, heating, protective clothing, etc.	Improves working conditions for all staff, particularly older workers
Working from home	Reduces commuting Lets older workers continue to contribute without having to leave home Increases productivity through reduced distraction Lowers operational costs
Examine HR policies and practices around age discrimination	Removes age bias
Technology training for older workers	Increases skills Encourages growth Increases productivity

Workplace re-organization

Option	Advantage
Mentoring/training roles for older workers	Transfers knowledge to younger workers Reduces age bias in younger workers Enhances self perception among older workers
Job redesign	Allows older workers to remain involved Creates opportunities for younger workers
Intergenerational work teams	Combines youthful enthusiasm with older worker experience Allows older and younger workers to develop understanding and get to know each other

Family care support

Option	Advantage
Leave of absence and return to work	Provides opportunities for workers to care for life partners, elders and children

Health and wellness options

Option	Advantage
Employee assistance programs	Helps employees deal with all kinds of personal and business issues, including those related to age
Fitness promotion and onsite fitness facilities	Encourages health and fitness Allows staff to meet recreationally Promotes intergenerational camaraderie
Healthy aging information	Promotes wellness Dispels myths and reduces age bias
Age discrimination awareness training	Makes a corporate statement regarding age discrimination Increases awareness among younger workers Increases comfort and feelings of acceptance for older workers

York Region as an employer is a top employer, providing flexible workplace practices including compressed work weeks, part-time work, phased-in retirement, employee assistance programs and health and wellness programs.

4.4 Benefits and healthy lifestyles

Health benefits attract boomers

A major issue for older workers considering retirement is loss of benefits, particularly health care coverage. While some companies provide some form of retirement health benefits, many do not, which means retirees must buy private health care insurance, often at significant cost, or rely exclusively on government-provided plans.

When workers are deciding whether to leave the workforce or continue working, health care benefits, combined with human resources practices that are equitable, free from age bias and creatively applied, can be a major factor in the final decision. Experience has shown that health care benefits are most attractive when managers are allowed flexibility in their application. The one-size-fits-all health benefit policies of the past are becoming less common. For example, many benefit plans and employee assistance programs apply coverage to parents, children, grandparents and grandchildren.

The current trend toward the spending account model of health benefits provision allows employees to decide how they want to allocate their health care coverage dollars. This approach reduces the rising costs of health benefit plans for employers and provides benefits that meet employees' personal needs. Many health benefit plans now cover health practitioners such as massage therapists, chiropractors, nutritionists and naturopaths and include eldercare and childcare resource services.

Healthy lifestyles benefit everyone

Many successful companies also encourage healthy lifestyles to reduce illness among workers and their families. Programs aimed at reducing illness and injury, managing stress, creating work/life balance, promoting healthy eating and encouraging smoking cessation send a strong message to employees to help them maintain healthy lifestyles that benefit both the employee and the company.

Often, innovations introduced for the health and comfort of older workers benefit everyone in the workplace. Such initiatives as stress mats at cash registers, warmer clothing for those exposed to the elements, increased font sizes on computer screens and documents, as well as stretching and refocusing exercises for computer operators benefit all workers. Companies that employ these and other positive, inclusive policies find that they pay off over time by reducing turnover and recruitment costs.



4.5 Dealing with age discrimination

Although many older workers want - or need - to remain in their jobs, if employers want to encourage them to stay in the workplace they will have to take action to deal with age discrimination which, although it is illegal, continues to persist. Often, younger employees and their employers aren't even aware that they are discriminating because of preconceived myths and stereotypes that set the stage for discriminatory treatment. Such programs as job shadowing, mentoring of younger staff and project teams that include both older and younger workers can help to reduce conflict, increase productivity and transfer organizational knowledge.

Human Rights Code legislation

The Ontario Human Rights Code prohibits age discrimination against anyone over the age of 18. Discrimination against older workers is as serious as other forms of discrimination and it carries the same economic, social and psychological impact. But our society is aimed at young people. It assumes that everyone has the same physical capabilities and attitudes as young people. This focus on youth creates what is often a subtle discrimination against older people and, when age is combined with a disability or other issues that place a person in a special-status or minority group the discrimination and isolation it can create is compounded.

How does age discrimination affect the workplace?

Like the rest of society, most businesses focus on younger workers which, by default, tends to isolate older employees. Many companies prefer to hire, train and promote younger workers, a trend that can create subtle - and sometimes not-so-subtle - barriers to older workers.

Ageist workplace practices:

- job ads that emphasize phrases such as “vim & vigour”, “rejuvenate the workforce”
- recruitment campaigns that are held only at university/ college career fairs
- comments about applicants' appearance or health or “fit” in a youthful work culture
- requirements to provide copies of documents that indicate age, including when schooling was completed
- preference for younger workers, particularly for entry-level jobs
- classification as “overqualified”, which limits transition from primary to secondary careers
- judgement of diverse employment background and gaps in employment history
- requirements for “current” experience
- negative reaction to “survival” jobs worked to meet immediate economic needs after downsizing
- withholding training and promotion opportunities due to perceived lack of return on investment
- health benefits that narrowly define family, exclude eldercare and caring for grandchildren

Combating ageism in the workplace

Employers are responsible for ensuring their workplaces are free from age discrimination in human resources management practices regarding recruitment, training and retraining, work arrangements and retention. Some employers may need to review their HR policies and develop new practices with managers to stop age bias in hiring, training and promotions. They must ensure that they are operating within the law and providing an inclusive, productive work environment.

To create a positive, inclusive workplace for older workers, employers can:

- encourage conversations about the positive aspects of aging
- dispel aging myths
- create intergenerational team building
- foster a positive environment for older worker retention and contribution

Inclusive branding

Businesses may want to look at their corporate marketing to brand their company as diverse and inclusive of all cultures and ages. Images of older workers and younger workers in team environments will promote the image of intergenerational harmony.



Inclusive workplaces

Most older workers require very few, if any of the special accommodations which might be required for persons with physical disabilities. Older workers, like all employees, have specific needs, but where they need the most support is in dispelling assumptions about their capabilities. Communication can help to prevent these assumptions.

Governments world wide recognize the emerging need to attract and retain older workers and they have posted resources and best practices to guide employers in creating age-inclusive workplaces. To help local businesses attract and retain older workers, York Region is providing several tools and websites in the Tools section of this guide.



*"First you are young; then you are middle-aged;
then you are old; then you are wonderful."*

LADY DIANA COOPER



Appendices

5

5.1 Definitions

Age group definitions

To concur with the majority of Canadian aging research, the AWS program defines older workers aged 45 and up. The definition of “older workers” is inconsistently used and is described as persons aged 45, 55 and 65. “Older worker” is a culturally loaded term that has changed based on increased life expectancy and changes in retirement age and workforce participation rates.

Age group definitions for Boomer vary. For purposes of the Aging Workforce Study Program, the following definitions, age ranges and ages were used, based on Statistics Canada classifications. Youth were classified as those aged 17 – 25; the age range represents students and new workforce entrants.

Generation Label	Birth Year	Age Range
Pre-Boomers	1945-1939	64-70
Boomers	1946-1964	45-63
Gen x	1965-1979	30-44
Gen y	1980-1991	18-29

It's important to understand that minimum and maximum working ages vary. Although they are generally accepted as starting at age 15 and continuing to age 65, among OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) countries there are extremes of working ages, some of which begin before age 15 and continue well past age 70.

Statistics Canada's monthly household Labour Force Survey defines working age as all persons aged 15 years and over. Statistics Canada's Census data defines the working-age population to include persons aged 15-64 (based on the assumption that workers retire and collect CPP at age 65). York Region's survey included workers up to 70 years of age because it explored why workers continue to participate beyond age 65.

Labour force participation rate is defined as the ratio of labour force to the working population age, expressed in percentages. The labour force includes the employed plus the unemployed. People who are not considered part of the labour force are those who are not working and are not available for work. Some of the people not considered to be part of the labour force include: housewives, students, disabled or retired persons, seasonal workers, armed forces, and those in jail or mental institutions.

Alternative work options

Condensed/compressed work week programs allow employees to work four ten hour days, rather than five eight hour days or some other combination of longer days to accrue a day off in a two- or three-week cycle.

Flex time is an arrangement which allows employees to alter their work day hours beyond the traditional “nine to five”. This provides for staggered scheduling and can effectively address time zone business needs and employees' commute, education and child/elder care needs.

Phased-in retirement is a modified work practice which is designed to allow an employee to gradually wind down work activities while providing organizational knowledge transfer and allowing succession planning. Phased-in retirement programs can be a combination of modified work schedules, mentoring a successor or providing an alternate work option instead of an abrupt end to work.

Self-funded leave is a program in which the employer retains a portion of the employee's salary to provide for extended time off with the option of returning to work. A common option is 80/20, in which an employee receives 80% of wages for four years and takes the fifth year off work while still receiving "banked wages" and pre-paying any additional benefits (e.g. health care & pension etc.).

Human resources planning

Ageism or age discrimination – what's the difference?

"Ageism" refers to attitudinal barriers or ways of thinking about older persons based on negative stereotypes about aging and/or structuring opportunities based on the assumption that everyone is young.

"Age discrimination" is based on actions that result in treating someone as unequal due to age. Although discrimination is a legal term, human rights advocates are concerned about attitudes that contribute to discriminatory practices.

Succession planning is part of planning for future human resource needs. The process involves identifying key or critical jobs in the organization that may become available due to staff progression or retirement and identifying a pool of internal talent to be developed in advance of replacing those key positions.

Workforce planning is basically having the right people in the right place at the right time. It is a human resource plan that is integrated with an organization's strategic direction.



5.2 Tools

Workforce planning best practices

How do others do it?

Now more than ever, it is crucial to take action to keep skilled, knowledgeable mature employees in the workforce. To help you, we've identified 14 companies and public organizations that have innovative programs to retain, recruit and manage older workers beyond traditional retirement age.

Some of these initiatives will undoubtedly be easier to implement at larger companies that have professional Human Resources Departments, however smaller companies, that must deal with HR issues in addition to other duties, may be able to adapt some of them to suit their specific needs.

Most of the organizations listed have been winners of the American Association of Retired Persons (ARRP) International Innovative Employer Award. To help you explore these initiatives further we are providing website links for each organization.

Company	Industry Classification (NAICS)	Location	Website	Employees	% aged 50+
Adecco Employment Services Limited	Administration & support services	Toronto, ON	www.adecco.ca	436	13
BMW Group	Motor vehicle manufacturing	Munich, Germany	www.bmwgroup.com	71,596	20
BT Group	Telecommunications	London, United Kingdom	www.bt.com	103,524	30
Catholic Children's Aid Society	Healthcare & social assistance	Toronto, ON	www.ccas.toronto.on.ca	580	14
Centrica plc (Direct Energy, Canadian subsidiary)	Utilities	Windsor, United Kingdom	www.centrica.com	27,338	14
Domestic & General Services Limited	Finance & insurance	Nottingham, United Kingdom	www.corporate.dom-gen.com	747	9
EllisDon Corporation	Construction	Mississauga, ON	www.ellisdon.com	1,000	NA
HDB (Housing & Development Board)	Real estate - public administration	Singapore	www.hdb.gov.sg	4,949	34
National Healthcare Group	Health care - hospitals	Singapore	www.nhg.com.sg	9,819	16
Royal Plaza on Scotts	Accommodation services	Singapore	www.royalplaza.com.sg	393	25
SICK Inc. (Sensor Intelligence)	Manufacturing – computer and electronic products	Waldkirch, Germany	www.sick.de	1,879	17
Sozial-Holding der Stadt Mönchengladbach GmbH	Healthcare - hospitals	Mönchengladbach, Germany	www.sozial-holding.de	740	35
University of Toronto	Educational services	Toronto, ON	www.utoronto.ca	20,236	NA
Walmart (Canada)	Retail trade	Mississauga, ON	www.walmart.ca	82,00	NA

They offer retirement . . . or re-employment

Retaining workers makes sense

Retirement candidates who qualify at [Domestic & General Services](#) may be re-hired to work full-time or with flexible hours in their current jobs on a yearly contract basis until they are 65. Modifications of duties are considered as part of the contract.

Mentors transfer knowledge

[Walmart's](#) alumni program invites retirees to become mentors on a flexible hours schedule with such benefits as a profit-sharing plan, employee discounts and a stock options program as well as health, dental and life insurance benefits.

Benefits are attractive

[Catholic Children's Aid Society](#) begins working with mature workers at age 50 to develop a future vision. Those who continue working receive flex time and as well as a full range of health benefits.

At least three years before retirement age, [National Healthcare's](#) employees attend pre-retirement planning and counselling sessions and at retirement they are invited to continue working to help deal with a shortage of health-care workers. They may remain in their current position or assume one of a variety of capacities with varied work hours and benefits such as medical and dental coverage and annual leave. In some areas, 90% of workers remain past retirement age.

They recruit mature workers

Age is not a limitation

[BT](#) removed all age limits from its graduate and apprenticeship programs and its recruitment policies. The company also commits its recruitment agencies to provide a range of ages in all candidate short lists.

Several best practice companies hold job fairs that focus on recruiting mature workers. Promotional materials are targeted at older candidates and mature employees staff recruitment booths. Paper applications are provided for candidates who feel uncomfortable with online forms and initial interviews are often conducted by telephone to prevent age bias.

Alliances can help

Often local or national organizations that focus on older adults can help to source highly skilled mature workers. [Adecco](#), for example, has pursued an alliance with the Canadian Association of Retired Persons (CARP) to help support its national recruitment strategy, which actively targets candidates ages 50 and over.

They offer flexible work schedules

Flexibility takes many shapes

Catholic Children's Aid Society provides flexible start and end hours, job sharing and a salary deferment plan that allows workers to bank 20% of their salary for four years and take the fifth year off. An extended hours plan lets workers receive one paid day off every two weeks.

BMW accepts every request from a mature worker for part-time work and promotes new approaches, including temporary part-time, intermittent part-time, job sharing among groups of employees and tele-working. Recently, BMW introduced Full-Time Select, which allows workers to take off up to 20 additional days per year as part of its Today For Tomorrow program to provide opportunities for older workers.

More than 14,000 BT employees now work at home and 75,000, or about 75% of all staff work a flexible schedule. **BT** has found that its flexibility has reduced sick time and staff turnover. In addition, BT provides a portfolio of options for all employees which provide particular value to older staff. This Achieving the Balance initiative allows employees the following options:

- Wind Down to provide more personal time
- Step Down to allow employees to move to positions of reduced responsibility and stress
- Time Out to provide sabbaticals for up to two years
- Helping Hands to allow a charity to second an employee for up to two years
- Ease Down to let employees reduce their level of responsibility while still retaining a position in the company

More satisfaction, fewer absences

With 60% of its workers on flexible schedules, seventy percent of **Centrica's** workers say they are either "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their jobs and they feel committed, empowered and fulfilled.

Self-funding is an option

SICK Inc. allows employees to transfer a specific amount of overtime pay to an account and allow it to grow over time. The funds can then be used to reduced regular working hours for a period, to reduce workday hours leading up to retirement, to start retirement early or to increase pension contributions.



They train older workers

Training is valued

[Adecco's](#) Skill Builder program, which is accessible from any personal computer, allows employees ages 50 and over to access thousands of courses in the privacy of their homes.

Older workers also appreciate that Adecco helps them apply the skills they bring to the job by providing an extensive three-month training program that familiarizes them with the company's unique systems and processes. Courses are also available at Adecco's University Learning Centre, including Cross-generational Workers in the 21st Century and Making Cross-Generational Teams Work.

Time and sensitivity help

[SICK Inc.](#) recognizes that recruits may require a little more time to grasp new concepts – particularly when those concepts involve computer literacy. Most of SICK Inc.'s training is done with mixed age groups, except IT training. Because younger workers tend to pick up IT concepts more quickly than older workers, they hold separate sessions for different ages.

Learning is life-long

Life-long learning is a recurring theme with companies who recruit and train older workers. [Centrica](#) has encouraged lifelong learning by removing the age limit for enrolling in the British Gas apprenticeship program, with the result that one recent program graduate was 57 years old.

The [HDB](#) provides retraining for mature staff to help them stay abreast of issues related to technological advances. It also encourages academic upgrading, including university-level courses, self-directed learning, a refresher orientation program and courses on managing multi-generational teams.

[National Healthcare](#) also funds courses that lead to academic and professional accreditations for staff of all ages. Healthcare attendants who aspire to full nursing status are encouraged to do so, while those who prefer to continue as healthcare attendants may apply to take a course to achieve an advanced standing.

At [Sozial-Holding](#) mature workers are actively encouraged to take training programs to improve their career paths. More than half of its recently certified housekeepers were age 45 or older. Many of those certified housekeepers were previously unskilled.

They protect health

Onsite prevention

The [Housing and Development Board](#) helps older staff take care of their health by:

- providing on-site health screenings
- allowing an hour off each week during the work day to exercise
- providing an employee assistance plan to manage personal and work-oriented issues

[BMW's Health Forums](#) encourage employees to protect their health by promoting physical and mental balance and healthy eating,. Each employee who participates receives an in-depth health profile and the company compiles those profiles to identify where employees need more information. It works closely with the German Pension Fund and a group of rehabilitation centres to help employees recover from long illnesses and it has launched a program to promote the importance of early discovery of cancer.

[Domestic & General Services](#), [Centrica](#) and [Royal Plaza](#) promote health awareness through regular health presentations.

[Royal Plaza's](#) Fun and Health Ministry also organizes monthly recreational activities that provide exercise and promote positive relations among all staff and particularly between different age groups

[Centrica](#) has also introduced a Building Confidence program to help managers handle employees' workplace health issues. Through training sessions, the program discusses a wide range of topics such as musculoskeletal disorders, confidentiality, and the Disability Discrimination Act.

[Walmart](#) allows older workers to take longer rest breaks and provides warm clothing for those who work near the door. As well, thick mats are provided in areas where workers must stand for long periods.

When staff return to work at [Sozial-Holding](#) after leaves of absence, the company interviews the employee to ascertain what workplace issues could have contributed to the problem. The company is then able to take preventive measures.

Healthy activities

To help employees relax, [Royal Plaza](#) provides a recreation room equipped with massage chairs, internet access, computer gaming consoles, and a reading corner.

Several companies provide discounted gym memberships and active social activities. A few provide medical massages, smoking-cessation training, nutrition and back-training courses.

They accommodate mature workers

It starts with hiring

For candidates who have been out of the workforce for an extended period, [Adecco](#) provides insights into typical interviewing approaches and strategies for presenting their qualifications. Working-at-height and lifting restrictions are in place to protect employees and support is provided for family issues and disabilities. Adecco's employee assistance program provides support and counselling around personal issues including elder care and if an employee requires a leave of absence for compassionate care or other emergencies his or her job is protected during the absence.

An Age Action Group at [Centrica](#) reviews company policies to make sure they exceed legal requirements with regard to age diversity. This group has changed retirement and downsizing processes, removed limits for apprenticeship training, developed a healthy aging program, developed an e-learning program on age awareness and improved flexible work hours programs.

At [National Healthcare](#) an employee health and safety committee ensured that 19-inch monitors were available for mature workers to relieve eye strain.

To make newcomers feel at home more quickly, [Royal Plaza](#) pairs up mature new workers with long-term employees to help them settle in to their new workplace.

Circumstances are accommodated

[BT](#) provides a Passport initiative that provides detailed information about special circumstances which may affect an employee's personal performance. Details may include who to contact in an emergency, whether there are workplace activities the employee would rather not participate in, medications and their effects, as well as simple procedures that allow time off when required. The Passport information is given to the employee's manager and passed on if a new manager comes online to allow the affected employee to deal with personal issues without having to give reasons to new managers.

BT also provides up to four free counselling sessions to discuss a range of issues, including health. This support, BT says, is particularly valued by mature workers.

[Centrica](#) created a Carer's Network to help those with home caregiving duties to discuss common issues.

Ergonomics benefit workers

The ergonomic design of [BMW's](#) production plant benefits all workers, particularly those who are mature. Their production line floors allow a worker to move with a vehicle. Floor mats are mandatory, as are safety shoes and chairs that relieve the musculoskeletal system. The company also provides lifting equipment for car bodies and components that can be adjusted to the operator's height.

[Royal Plaza](#) provides hydraulic platforms to replace ladders, improved housekeeping and luggage trolleys to improve workplace safety and pallet jacks for heavy lifting.

They manage diversity and ageism issues

Partnerships pay

Developing partnerships, as [Adecco](#) has, with age 50+ groups such as CARP and organizations for persons who have disabilities can help businesses to develop new approaches to dealing with diversity and ageism issues. These organizations can provide new perspectives on workplace issues.

[Sozial-Holding](#) deals with the age and diversity issue head-on with a motto: We're older, so what? That single phrase tells older workers that their abilities are recognized and that they are assessed by their value rather than their age. This approach to diversity is reflected at Sozial-Holding by the fact that about one in three workers are age 50 or over.

Ageism targeted

[Centrica](#) has developed an online learning program that challenges employees to make decisions to take action to deal with ageism in situations based on workplace scenarios. The company also provides a Diversity and Age Awareness Program for new hires and a refresher course for current employees.

[National Healthcare's](#) ENCORE web site provides information on re-employment, training and ergonomics; the site also invites health care experts and gerontologists to provide tips about a wide range of health issues.

Managers are trained

[BMW](#) provides a training program for managers, Demographic Development: Challenges and Prospects, to dispel prejudices and raise awareness of age-based leadership. Executives at [Royal Plaza](#) are specifically trained for managing a multi-generational workforce to deal with changes in workplace demographics. At [Walmart](#), educational material on working with colleagues of varying ages is posted on the website.

They plan succession

[University of Toronto](#) begins transition to retirement and transfer of knowledge three years in advance. This allows the retiring faculty member time to make a personal transition to a new lifestyle and it allows the university to do succession and staff planning.

[EllisDon](#) identifies candidates who are qualified to fill critical positions several years before workers in those roles are ready to retire. Two years before the mature worker retires, a successor is chosen and the older worker moves into a mentor capacity for one year, then moves into a support role for the second year to facilitate knowledge transfer.

Recruiting & retaining older workers best practices

Business success is highly dependent on recruitment and retention and the two activities correlate with each other. Companies that recruit the right staff have less turnover and those who retain staff with the right processes and policies recruit less. While finding great employees is crucial, those employees must feel engaged in a positive work environment. The following recommendations will help to develop an environment recruits will want to join and employees will want to stay involved with.

Develop a reputation as an “Employer of Choice” or “Best Employer”

- cultivate a reputation as a great place to work and make it part of your recruitment strategy
- encourage employees to recommend your company to friends and associates
- find out what you're doing right by asking current employees why they stay
- explore why workers leave by conducting impartial third-party exit interviews
- allow potential employees to see themselves working for you by developing your corporate image as an inclusive, diverse culture
- use your corporate website to show why your company is a great place to work
- inform the media when staff participate in community activities, charitable drives and significant company events
- share important employee activities such as milestones, births, etc. in a newsletter or other internal communications medium
- tell workers they matter by celebrating successes to let them know their value

Use your York Region location as a drawing card

- emphasize that York Region is a clean, friendly, safe place to live and work
- point out that living and working in the local community reduces commute times and pollution

Develop great leaders

- make leadership development a priority to keep employees happy and committed
- ensure that all leaders:
 - ▶ communicate with staff and listen actively
 - ▶ are trained to manage staff effectively
 - ▶ provide coaching
 - ▶ review employees' performance to provide feedback and acknowledge great work
 - ▶ provide learning opportunities for career growth
- train leaders in conflict resolution, interpersonal communication, leadership coaching, change management strategies, team building and diversity training
- encourage mentoring between older and younger workers to foster mutual appreciation and increase knowledge transfer

Hire within

- make all workers, regardless of age, aware of hiring opportunities and encourage internal candidates to apply
- be aware that advancing young workers may create vacancies that are perfect for older workers
- encourage individuals to grow and develop their careers internally
- provide opportunities for advancement regardless of age
- inform retired employees of company changes and opportunities for temporary or full-time employment

Capitalize on referral programs

- referrals are a very inexpensive way to find quality staff
- establish an employee referral program and communicate success
 - ▶ give employees incentives to find like-minded candidates among their personal contacts
- develop a referral program with customers who know you well, to tap into their network of possible candidates



Develop workforce plans

- identify the critical positions in your company and document the specialized skills and knowledge each requires
- develop a workforce plan to attract & retain workers who meet those criteria
- develop skills within the organization through mentoring and under-filling the position with less experienced staff as part of succession plans
- start retirement discussions at least five years in advance to start developing succession plans for crucial positions
- enter retirement discussions with an open mind and remember: many workers don't want to retire at age 65
- take a creative, flexible approach to managing a multi-generational workforce; stringent policies may create more problems than they solve
- protect your investment in mature workers:
 - ▶ bring retirees back to lead special projects or train younger workers
 - ▶ set up web sites to capture and share knowledge
 - ▶ use retention strategies for those with critical skills
 - ▶ offer phased retirement for critical personnel
 - ▶ involve older staff in leadership training programs for potential managers

Design recruitment ads carefully

- emphasize that candidates of all ages are welcome and valued
- make workplace flexibility a focus of part-time and full-time job ads
- use images of staff of all ages to help candidates see themselves working for you
- emphasize flexible benefits packages
- balance phrases such as “high energy” and “motivated” with “experience” and “skills”

Offer fair compensation

- balance of salary and benefits to attract talent
- check to see what your competition offers recruits
- promote your work environment, including career opportunities, work/life balance and leadership as strong incentives for joining the company
- ensure that benefits communications identify needs of generational groups
- gain an understanding of generational differences in the workforce and focus on the specific needs of each group
- offer ongoing learning, career development, training courses and peer-to-peer programs

Keep performance issues separate from age issues

- Age issues must be dealt with separately from performance management to avoid ageist bias and negative stereotyping

Monitor to avoid discrimination

- monitor recruitment by age
- monitor promotions by age
- monitor pay rates by age
- monitor training and professional development by age

Provide age awareness training

- train to dispel myths and negative stereotypes of aging and older workers
- train managers and human resources staff on positive recruitment strategies and how to avoid age discrimination practices

Innovative sources for job candidates

- professional affiliations
- university alumni
- associations, churches, seniors' groups
- publications targeted at the 50+ demographic e.g. financial management, gardening, travel and other magazines
- mall walkers, community event attendees, active seniors programs

Guides

The Conference Board of Canada, 2009, ***A Perfect Match? How Nonprofits are Tapping into the Boomer Talent Pool.***

Report provides actionable advice for employers and case studies.

www.conferenceboard.ca/documents.aspx?did=3161

Business Link - Age Positive, United Kingdom, ***Recruitment: An Age Positive Guide***

Guide on recruitment best practices.

www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/AP_Recruitment_Guide.pdf

Business Link - Age Positive, United Kingdom,

Selection: An Age Positive Guide

Guide on selection best practices.

www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/AP_Selection_Guide.pdf

Business Link - Age Positive, United Kingdom.

Flexible Working: An Age Positive Guide

Guide on flexible working best practices.

www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/AP_Flexible_Working_Guide.pdf

Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters, Nova Scotia,

Best Practices in Employee Attraction, Recruitment and Retention in Manufacturing Working Guide.

Guide provides resources which are targeted at small or medium-sized manufacturing firms without defined human resources function.

www.cme-mec.ca/pdf/

HRBestPracticesGuideforManufacturersFinal.pdf

Crawfordconnect.com, ***Hiring Outside the Baby Boom Box.***

Web article identifying five actions for nonprofits to attract workers.

www.crawfordconnect.com/pdfs/Hiring_Outside_the_Baby_Boom_Box.pdf

American Hospital Association, January 2010, ***Workforce 2015: Strategy Trumps Shortage.***

Report on the aging demographic impacts the health care sector and includes older worker retention strategy.

www.aha.org/aha/issues/Workforce/workforce2015.html



Tools to assess recruitment & retention

Doing Business in Halifax website - **Access workforce planning benchmarking tool** - from Nova Scotia.

Online tool provides an individual company assessment and provides benchmark data and options for further reading.

See "Assessment Tool" located toward bottom of web page.

www.greaterhalifax.com/en/home/businessresources/businessretention/smartbusiness/results/default.aspx

British Columbia, Building Small Business Human Resources, **Online Employer Quiz**.

Online tool to assess recruitment, retention & leadership practices against benchmarks and provides individual feedback and resource links to develop HR plans.

<http://hrskills.smallbusinesscheckup.com/tool.html>

The Sloan Centre on Aging & Work, June 2010, **Talent Pressures and the Aging Workforce: Responsive Action Steps for the Manufacturing Sector**.

Report provides a sector workforce analysis, appendix of tools for workforce planning and benchmarking practices.

<http://www.bc.edu/research/agingandwork/>

... then search talent pressures

Also, see Sloan's **Talent Management Study** publication page for other sector-specific reports for construction, wholesale trade, finance & insurance, health care & social assistance sectors etc.

www.bc.edu/research/agingandwork/projects/talentMgmt.html

Employment links for mature workers

- Seniors for Hire www.zoomerjobs.ca
- Retired Worker www.retiredworker.ca
- Boomer Jobs www.boomerjobs.com

Case studies

Eurofound, February 2006, **Combating age barriers in employment: a European portfolio of good practice**.

Report provides an extensive range of HR good practices in a wide variety of sectors.

www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/htmlfiles/wp9753.htm

The Urban Institute, Washington, January 2008, **Current Strategies to Employ and Retaining Older Workers**.

Report identifies attractive benefits and improving employment opportunities for older workers.

http://63.88.32.17/reports/Employ_Retain_Older_Workers_FINAL.pdf

HR benefit trends

This section is designed as a quick reference to flexibility, retirement, training, ergonomic and health benefits trends, many of which are discussed in greater detail in A Business Action Plan, Section 4 of this guide.

Flexible work options

Flexible work options which allow staff to control their work scheduling is one of the biggest trends toward increasing retention and engagement. The reduction in turnover costs flexible work options yield is well documented.

The following options may be attractive to all employees and particularly to older workers:

- allow part-time, flex time and compressed work week hours
- encourage job sharing
- offer contract work, temporary, seasonal work and leaves of absence
- split shifts and allow early or late start times to match lifestyles
- allow staff to bank hours for “responsibility care” leaves
- encourage horizontal moves to change the pace and promote new ideas
- provide the option to retrain for a new position to prevent boredom
- make sabbaticals available to allow workers to pursue personal interests
- permit workers to take a few months or years off for eldercare
- allow telecommuting to be combined with in-office work
- offer casual and special project work as part of an on-call worker/retiree pool and provide some worker benefits
- increase availability of vacation and sick time through a paid time-off bank to let older workers deal with medical and eldercare issues privately
- create an internal employment centre for older workers and retirees
- support self-help groups in which older workers can get together to discuss career development, working conditions, aging issues etc.

Phased-in retirement

Many workers prefer to ease into retirement while continuing to provide value to their employers. Some of the following approaches can accommodate these workers:

- explore various retirement options well in advance
- provide financial planning sessions to prepare for full retirement or decreased work schedules
- discuss and create options for modified work, flexible schedules and training roles
- reduce work hours, allowing shorter work weeks and part-time hours
- reduce responsibilities
- invite back retirees as mentors, coaches and short-term project leaders

Retirement planning seminars

- start early and include employees' life partners
- hold seminars that explore work/life balance as well as financial issues
- provide meaningful information to help workers make intelligent decisions
- build a network to encourage retirees to become corporate ambassadors who promote community involvement, customer relations and public relation goals

Training

- create an age awareness policy and a system for measuring its effectiveness with regard to recruitment, training, turnover and other employment issues
- train HR staff, managers and other key personnel regarding age awareness
- review job ads and recruitment practices for age discrimination
- train all employees in age discrimination awareness, present age and performance data to change attitudes toward older workers
- involve older workers in discussions of age barriers and how to overcome them
- provide on-going training opportunities, including technical training, to older workers
- offer mentorship and coaching skills development for older workers

Ergonomics & job redesign

- allow older workers to select preferred shifts or to be excluded from working shifts
- create mentoring roles for older workers
- develop a pool of older workers who can temporarily fill leadership roles
- permit flexibility within job roles and redesign the job if necessary
- reduce physical demands such as lifting and standing
- allow older workers to decide when they need a break
- modify a position to reduce travel demands and other forms of stress
- introduce assistive technologies such as larger fonts, and larger screens
- ensure that project teams include a wide range of ages

Health benefits

- allow older workers to choose their health-care priorities by introducing health-care spending accounts
- give older workers full benefits for working 30 hours weekly
- offer extended health benefits and health related services
- pro-rate benefits for employees on flexible work schedules
- broaden benefit plans to include extended family and elder care
- provide para-professional services such as massage, naturopathic and nutritionist services as part of benefit plans
- promote gym, yoga and active lifestyle programming
- provide nutritional counselling to promote health
- make health monitoring, diabetes and cardio screening available
- subscribe to an employee assistance program
- encourage workers to use fitness facilities and provide them on-site
- promote work-life balance and holistic approaches to wellness

Other benefits

- provide free online training opportunities available to workers
- introduce video games and relaxation zones to create a social work environment
- allow flexibility regarding the internet, cell phones and instant messaging
- retailers can provide employee discounts as a benefit

Case studies

Georgetown University Law Centre, Washington, 2010,
Workplace Flexibility 2010 –

Flexible Work Arrangements: Selected Case Studies.

Case study looks at company policies, how they were developed and how flexibility benefited American companies.

http://workplaceflexibility2010.org/images/uploads/FWA_CaseStudies.pdf

Families & Work Institute, New York, 2008,

A Guide to Bold New Ideas for Making Work Work.

Guide looks at flexible, innovative workplace practices and provides extensive case studies that illustrate the benefits of these practices.

www.familiesandwork.org/3w/boldideas.pdf

Human Resources Vol.2008 No. 12, December 2008,

Managing Benefit Plans - Work-Life Balance: Making Flextime Work for Your Firm.

Research study shows how flexibility, learning opportunities and supervisor support improve profitability.

<http://business.highbeam.com/1954/article-1G1-191316395/worklife-balance-making-flextime-work-your-firm>



Understanding ageism and age discrimination

Ageism or age discrimination – what's the difference?

The difference between ageism and age discrimination is simple: ageism refers to attitudes and age discrimination refers to behaviours. Because attitude shapes action, ageism must be controlled to minimize its impact on older workers.

“Ageism” refers to ways of thinking about older persons based on negative stereotypes about aging that create barriers to older employees. We can also see ageism in our tendency to structure society as though everyone is young.

“Age discrimination” is based on actions that result in someone being unequally due to age. Although “discrimination” is a legal term, human rights advocates are concerned about attitudes that contribute to age discriminatory practices.

Workplace examples of ageist comments

“This job requires a lot of energy and enthusiasm, are you sure you can handle it?”

“You’re over-qualified for this entry-level position.”

“We’re looking for someone with career potential.”

“You don’t need this training . . . not at your age. What would the benefit be?”

“We’re looking for a more youthful fit for our work culture.”

At what age does age discrimination apply?

The Human Rights Code addresses age discrimination situations as they apply to persons ages 18 and over. The Code does not specify a specific age for older worker discrimination; the term “older worker” has to be interpreted in the context of the workplace.

For example, in a work place where the average age is 25, a 37 year-old would be considered an “older worker”. If this person wasn’t hired because he or she was considered unable to fit the workplace culture, age discrimination could be alleged.

Age discrimination is occurring in the workplace

According to a 2008 AARP survey of older workers, “thirteen percent of older workers say that they have experienced some form of age discrimination during the past five years: not getting hired for a job (9%); being passed over for a promotion (5%), being denied access to training or personal development (3%); or being passed up for a raise (3%)”.

Researchers who conducted a 2008 Auckland University study found that older workers were less likely to be interviewed for jobs than their younger colleagues. For example, candidates age 25 and over was twelve times more likely to be short listed and interviewed for low demand HR administrative positions than candidates age 55 over who had an equal resume.

Some forms of age discrimination can be easily identified:

- job ads suggesting age preferences such as: “recent grad”, “first job” “entry-level job”, “youthful”, “energetic”.
- refusing to hire, train or promote people based on age-based assumptions
- using increased health and safety risks as an excuse for not hiring or not continuing to employ an older worker
- targeting older workers, or other age groups, during workplace downsizing or reorganization activities.

Ageism may be less obvious but equally injurious when it becomes a subtle issue in the hiring process, in performance management practices and in the overall workplace culture. Employers must review their workplace practices and policies carefully to remove what may be subtle but systemic age discrimination.

Age-positive practices

The best way to prevent age discrimination is to promote a culture of inclusion in the workplace. Employers can identify potential areas of discrimination and take action to address stereotypical perceptions of aging workers.

- address the main barrier: perceptions and attitudes (ageism and myths)
- communicate a vision of an inclusive workplace that seeks to respect differences, dispel myths and emphasize the value of collaboration between generations
- develop age-positive inclusive programs, policies and practices:
 - ▶ ensure application forms are free from age identifying data such as the years in which academic and other credentials were earned
 - ▶ use phone interviews for the initial selection process to avoid bias
 - ▶ repost job ads that are focused on skills, experience, abilities and qualifications that avoid reference to minimum or maximum years of experience
 - ▶ use such interviewing best practices as asking for specific job-relevant qualifications, using agreed-upon selection criteria & interviewing durations, keeping factual notes, using mixed age interviewers, avoiding comments about age or physical appearances

- provide regular training and remind managers and staff of their responsibilities regarding age discrimination
- take action to effectively deal with all forms of discrimination
- develop a system that measures and analyzes the workforce composition (age inventory) for workforce planning
- analyze training days taken by age group to ensure equity
- assess worker engagement & satisfaction measures by age to continually audit for ageist practices
- create an understanding of healthy aging and the aging process
- dispel preconceived notions, myths, and stereotypes about older workers
- ask how a worker can do the tasks or accomplish functions without making assumptions about ability; provide accommodations where feasible, as you would with any worker
- ensure benefits are equitable and fair to all. For example, childcare and eldercare should be interchangeable and educational opportunities should be open to all

Work productivity myth busters

Older workers are stereotyped as being less productive, having higher illness absences and less adaptable to change, particularly technological change. But research does not support these ageist stereotypes. Research reports show that older workers are highly-productive, offer considerable on-the-job experience and perform as well as or better than younger workers in the areas of creativity, flexibility, information processing, accident rates, absenteeism and turnover.

Additional ageist myth busters

- older workers do not fear change; they fear discrimination
- mature workers learn as well as younger workers with appropriate training methods and environments
- older workers are 7% less likely to be absent than early career employers (National Study of Business Strategy and Workforce Development 2007)
- HR professionals say willingness to work different schedules is an advantage of hiring older workers (2003 report by the Society for Human Resources Management)
- Boomers present no barrier to youthful workers who want to advance in the workplace because many of them are seeking a career change that focuses on work/life balance and opportunities to reduce stress in their later career.
- not all older workers require workplace accommodation but if a worker develops a disability at any age, the employer has a duty to consider, on an individual basis, how to help the employee to continue to participate and contribute to the workplace.

Guides & tools

Business Link - Age Positive, United Kingdom, **Removing ageism – make it your business.**

Guide includes a three step checklist to identify and eliminate age discrimination in the workplace.

www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/acfa9.pdf

Business Link - Age Positive, United Kingdom, **Age-Positive Publications.**

Website that includes employer guides, case studies, research and statistics on a variety of topics & sectors.

www.dwp.gov.uk/age-positive/

Business Link - Age Positive, United Kingdom, **Age Isn't an Issue: Science, Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies Employers' Guide to a 21st Century Workforce.**

Guide that includes a step by step process for all areas of employment.

www.semta.org.uk/employers/marine/age_isnt_an_issue.aspx

Ontario Human Rights Commission website.

Human Rights 101 eLearning.

Web-based learning program creates understanding of Ontario laws around discrimination.

www.ohrc.on.ca/hr101/

Ontario March of Dimes - Thinking Outside the Box, **Creative Solutions for Accommodating Disabilities: What to consider as you work an accommodation.**

Interactive web-based tool that provides a checklist of questions and suggestions to consider when developing an employee accommodation.

www.totb.ca/english/checklists.asp

Ministry of Community & Social Service,
Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities.

Website provides accessibility tools, videos, stories and tips for accommodating people with disabilities.

www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/en/mcsc/programs/accessibility/tools/index.aspx

Business Takes Action website.

Website providing information on training programs available to Ontario employers to promote hiring of persons with disabilities in all sectors.

www.businesstakesaction.ca

Case studies

European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, Ireland, December 2005, **Combating Age Barriers in Employment – Research Summary.**

Research paper that identifies age management practices and recommends actions. It also identifies pitfalls and unintended spin-offs of actions.

www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/htmlfiles/ef9718.htm

European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, Ireland, 2006, A **guide to good practice in age management.**

Guide describes best practices in implementing age management strategies. It includes International case studies. www.eurofound.europa.eu/pubdocs/2005/137/en/1/ef05137en.pdf



Discrimination law

Ontario Human Rights Commission, February 2007,
Policy on discrimination against older people because of age.

Report that describes examples of discriminatory employment practices and workplace benefits.

www.ohrc.on.ca/en/resources/Policies/agepolicyen/pdf

Ontario Human Rights Code

Website resources providing information about discrimination and accommodation law issues.

www.ohrc.on.ca/en/resources/code



Healthy aging – dispelling myths

Physical age is irrelevant because everyone ages differently. Meaningful contributions can be made at any age.

Younger workers – including many managers – are often unaware that they discriminate against older workers on the basis of unfounded stereotypes about aging. The following points dispel inaccurate perceptions about older adults. They make it clear that health and safety cannot be used as an excuse to exclude older workers.

Old age and health

Myth: Age brings on illness and disease.

Reality: Health is determined primarily by lifestyle, exercise, nutrition and self image

Fact: Individuals age in entirely different ways, depending on their actual age in years, their biological age in terms of physical changes and their psychological age based on how they see themselves. Self-image is a strong factor in perception of age.

Body changes

Myth: Older workers have less physical strength and endurance.

Reality: Many older workers are capable of performing virtually the same physically demanding work as younger counterparts in spite of minor body changes. Often small changes to accommodate older workers have benefits for the health and safety of all workers.

Facts:

- People lose between 15-20% of muscle strength and range of joint motion between ages 20 and 60, but those changes depend on individual abilities. Older workers may be able to do the same tasks as younger workers when they are performing at their maximum level.
- We all use our muscle strength to maintain good posture and solid balance to avoid falls. Employers can protect all employees, and particularly older workers, whose muscle strength may be reduced, by providing non-skid flooring.
- As people age their bodies are less able to regulate internal temperatures due to physical activity or work environment temperatures. Extra clothing or lighter attire, depending on the work conditions, can resolve these issues.
- Peripheral vision, depth perception and resistance to glare decrease with age but brighter lighting, increased text size and background contrast in the workplace easily accommodate these visual issues.
- Hearing changes, if they happen, occur most often at the higher frequency range of sounds. In noisy environments, staff may need to ensure that they are clearly understood.

Brain changes

Myth: Cognitive functions deteriorate with age.

Reality: There are some declines in cognition but they are not inevitable.

Facts:

- Everyone at every age thinks and learns differently. Research is currently being done on strengthening brain capacity and brain plasticity, the lifelong ability of the brain to develop through new experiences.
- Our ability to talk and express ourselves remains constant and sometimes improves with age and, while information processing, speed and memory may decline in some people, many individuals may naturally develop strategies to support their specific issues as well as their individual working and learning styles. Older workers, and workers of all ages who have attention difficulties, typically find that a quieter, evenly-paced work environment is better suited for them than a noisy work area that requires ongoing multi-tasking.
- Regardless of age, workers who are challenged to learn new concepts, work on complex issues and find creative solutions to problems throughout their careers find it easier to take in new information and ways of doing things than those who are limited to repetitive tasks.

Absence rates

Myth: Older workers take more time off work.

Reality: Older workers have strong work ethics and are sick less frequently than younger workers.

Facts:

- Younger workers are absent more often for short periods of time with non-certified sickness than older employees, creating the largest source of absence and disruption for employers.
- Although older workers may be off work for longer periods due to chronic disease, workplace health programs can significantly reduce chronic diseases and the absences they create.

Workplace injuries

Myth: Older workers have more accidents in the workplace.

Reality: Young workers are more accident prone.

Facts:

- Employees over 50 file fewer workers' compensation claims than younger workers. The largest number of claims are filed by employees age 30-34.¹
- Repetitive strain injuries can cause physical problems at any age. Some of the most common injuries to older workers include soft tissue damage to the shoulder, neck and lower back. These types of injuries can be reduced significantly through redesign of tasks and proper training.
- Stress reduction and proper rest for workers of all ages, and particularly older workers, who do physically demanding work can reduce issues such as arthritis, degenerative disc disease, low back pain and shoulder impingement syndromes.

Best practices to promote productivity and health of all workers

- promote stretching programs at key times such as at the beginning of shifts and at breaks
- alter job tasks and processes
- provide assistive devices such as hand trucks and hoists to reduce worker effort
- avoid requiring employees at any age to work at maximum endurance repeatedly or for extended periods of time to prevent injury
- perform health and safety risk assessment and maintenance on a regular basis
- improve lighting and provide non-skid floors to reduce slips, trips, and falls
- provide clerical workers with access to head sets and other ergonomic office equipment
- ask employees to recommend ways to improve safety and health in the workplace
- make workplace adjustments on the basis of individual and business needs, not age
- encourage or provide regular health checks for all staff, regardless of age
- communicate lifestyle risk factors (smoking, obesity, poor diet etc.) Show how these risks increase costs of treating medical conditions, recovery from injury and days off work
- provide recognition for healthy lifestyle changes

More resources

University of North Carolina, North Carolina Collaboration on Lifelong Learning and Engagement, 2009,

Myths About Older Workers

One-page document focuses on dispelling key older worker stereotypical myths with US facts.

www.aging.unc.edu/nccolle/files/MythsAboutOlderWorkers.pdf

World Health Organization, Denmark, 2008,

Demystifying the Myths of Ageing.

Booklet debunks twelve prevalent aging myths and suggests actions to improve healthy lifestyles. The format lends itself to easy reading and is useful as an organizational learning tool. It provides European examples.

www.euro.who.int/en/what-we-publish/abstracts/demystifying-the-myths-of-ageing

Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety website, **Aging Workers**

Web article uses a question and answer format to describe workplace issues concerning older workers.

www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/psychosocial/aging_workers.html

Health and Safety Laboratory, Great Britain, 2005,

Facts and misconceptions about age, health status and employability.

A research report with an executive summary of debunked myths. The report provides evidence to support myth-busting data. www.hse.gov.uk/research/hsl_pdf/2005/hsl0520.pdf



Business succession planning

After you've built a successful business that has considerable value, what do you do when you want to retire? What's a lifetime of effort worth in dollars? How can you protect the value of the business and the employees who rely on it? What succession options will work for you?

You can get answers to these and other questions through easily-accessible resources at absolutely no cost to you. The Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB), the Workforce Planning Board of York Region and Bradford West Gwillimbury (WPB) and Markham Small Business Enterprise Centre all provide resources to help you develop an effective business succession plan.

Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB), Succession Planning Guide

CFIB's guide outlines the steps involved in a typical succession procedure. The guide looks at various options business owners may want to consider and what factors may influence their decisions.

www.cfib-fcei.ca/english/member_assistance/ontario/207-exiting_your_business/1227-how_to_build_a_succession_plan.html

Contact: 416.222.8022

Email: msont@cfib.ca

Workforce Planning Board of York Region & Bradford West Gwillimbury (WPB), Succession Planning Webinars

WPB provides a series of four webinars to help small and medium enterprises in York Region to plan for retirement. The seminars topics include: Financial Planning, Business Valuation, Business Coaching and Negotiating Price.

www.wpboard.ca/english/.webinar

Contact: 905.967.0605

Markham Small Business Enterprise Centre (MSBEC), Succession Planning Guide

MSBEC provides a list of seven essential questions business owners should ask themselves when they are developing a business succession plan.

<http://msbec.markham.ca/advice/royalbank1.htm>

Contact: 905-477-7000 x6722

Email: msbec@markham.ca

5.3 References

Guides, reports, case studies, tools and websites were selected to enhance employers' knowledge of workforce planning and strategies for addressing the aging demographic. Information sources are grouped under the following titles:

1. Flexible workplace case studies
2. Workforce planning
3. Alternate sources of labour
4. Ageism and inter-generational challenges
5. Workforce training
6. Older worker studies
7. Older worker employment policies

1. Flexible workplace case studies

Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service, United Kingdom, April 2009, ***Flexible Working and Work-life Balance Booklet***.

Guide provides practical information for employers to create flexible work solutions and includes definitions, best practices, tips, checklists, and questionnaires. Uses UK legal requirements which may differ from Canadian legislation.

www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1283

Workplace Flexibility 2010 Georgetown Law, Washington.

Congressional support for flexible work arrangements, definitions, laws, policy and case studies.

Report describes the merits and US legal requirements to provide flexible work options and case studies.

www.workplaceflexibility2010.org

2. Workforce planning

Doing Business in Halifax website.

Workforce planning benchmarking tool.

Online workforce planning benchmarking tool employers can use to assess their workforce planning practices. Provides individual results to benchmark against typical scores and directs to links for further information.

www.greaterhalifax.com/en/home/businessresources/businessretention/smartbusiness/results/default.aspx

See "Assessment Tool" located toward bottom of page.

Government of Alberta,

Strategic Workforce Planning – How to guide.

Guide used to identifying and addressing workforce gaps in 5 steps. <http://employment.alberta.ca/472.html>

Ken Dychtwald, Tamara J. Erickson, and Robert Morison,

Workforce Crisis: How to Beat the Coming Shortage of Skills and Talent. (Boston: Harvard School of Business Press, 2006.)

Book providing employers with suggested strategies for workforce planning and engaging older workers.

David DeLong,

Lost Knowledge: Confronting the Threat of an Aging Workforce. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004)

Book providing organizational knowledge retention strategies and succession planning. The author advocates taking multiple approaches to managing organizational change.

3. Alternate sources of labour

The Canadian Chamber of Commerce Connect! **Canada's Demographic Crunch: Can underrepresented workers save us?**

Released Oct. 14, 2010

Report provides ideas for addressing demographic crunch and suggests need to take urgent action by various stakeholders to boost workforce productivity.

www.chamber.ca/index.php/en/media-centre/

See pdf in Media Centre listing.

One Voice Network, 2010. **The Untapped Labour Pool - a guide to hiring people with disabilities for employers.**

Guide describes a process to help York Region employers to advertise, interview, hire and integrate this diverse group.

www.onevoicenetwork.ca/resources/resources/

Human Resources Development Canada website provides a variety of information.

Part 1 Older Workers in the Canadian Economy, Section 5. The Challenges to Re-employment for Older Workers and Their Experience with Adjustment Programs

www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/publications_resources/lmp/eow/2008/page03.shtml

Aging Workforce and Other Studies

http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/lp/spila/wlb/aw/06recent_additions.shtml

Temporary Foreign Worker Program

www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplaceskills/foreign_workers/index.shtml

Conference Board of Canada, August 2010, **Sustaining the Canadian Labour Force Alternatives to Immigration.**

Paper proposes increases in productivity and increasing Aboriginal labour force participation.

www.workforcewindsoressex.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/sustaining_the_labour_force1.pdf

Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities, **Targeted Initiative for Older Worker.**

Website information about an Employment Ontario initiative is intended to assist older workers with programming that increases their employability

www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/eopg/programs/tiow.html

Ministry of Community and Social Services, **Business Takes Action (BTA).**

Website provides assistance to employers on hiring & retaining people with disabilities. Funded by and delivers free workshops and tools to Ontario businesses.

www.businesstakesaction.ca

Workforce Planning Board of York Region Bradford, West Gwillimbury

Website provides York Region labour market information and various employer supports around labour supply and business planning. www.wpboard.ca

4. Ageism and inter-generational challenges

Ageism

Business Link - Age Positive, United Kingdom,

Removing ageism – make it your business.

Guide that provides for a three step age positive business checklist to identify and eliminate age discrimination in the workplace.

www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/acfa9.pdf

Business Link - Age Positive, United Kingdom,

Employing Older workers.

Website full of employer information, guides, and tools for recruiting and retaining older workers. Info has a European context but provides solid HR best practices.

www.businesslink.gov.uk

then click through [Home > Employment & skills > Equality and diversity > Employing older workers](#)

Business Link - Age Positive, United Kingdom,

Age Isn't an Issue.

Guide provides employers with information about aging myths and strategies to recruit and retain older workers including the guide.

<http://businesslink.gov.uk>

then click through [Home > Employment & skills > Recruiting people > Finding new people > Employing older workers](#)

European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions,

Combating Age Barriers in Employment – Research Summary, 1997

Research paper identifying age barriers in employment.

www.eurofound.europa.eu/pubdocs/1997/18/en/1/ef9718en.pdf



Inter-generational challenges

Conference Board of Canada, November 2009. ***Winning the Generational Wars" Making the Most of Generational Differences and Similarities in the Workplace.***

Report addresses popular stereotypes and describes what employers can do to leverage differences and create inclusivity. <http://sso.conferenceboard.ca/documents.aspx?DID=3285>

Health Canada, ***The Challenge of Working with Different Generations***, (Employee Assistance Program Newsletter Volume 17, Number 2. 2008-2009).

Article provides tips for engaging different generations in the workplace.

www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ewh-semt/occup-travail/empl/_news/17-02-eng.php

The Sloan Center on Aging & Work, March 2009. Age & Generations:

Understanding Experiences at the Workplace.

Report illustrates various generations' age perceptions and how these groups experience quality employment (e.g. flexibility, benefits, culture).

http://agingandwork.bc.edu/documents/RH06_Age&Generations_2009-03-20.pdf

Harvard Business Review, July-August 2009.

How Gen Y & Boomers Will Reshape Your Agenda.

Report describes the benefits that attract how to engage & retain workers.

<http://hbr.org/2009/07/how-gen-y-boomers-will-reshape-your-agenda/ar/1>

5. Workforce training

Rick Miner, March 2010, ***People without Jobs, Jobs without People – Canada's Labour Market Future.***

Report illustrates the double impact of an aging workforce and the changing economy from goods-producing to knowledge-based economy. Advocates for changes to education system and career training to prepare for the knowledge economy.

www.collegesontario.org/research/research_reports/people-without-jobs-jobs-without-people-final.pdf

Toronto Workforce Innovation Group, April 2010,

An Economy Out of Shape: Changing the Hourglass.

Report analyses the impact on jobs as the economy moves toward a knowledge-based economy and actions to be taken to partner, train and increase productivity.

www.workforceinnovation.ca/solutions/economy-out-shape-changing-hourglass

European Foundations for the Improvement of Living and ***Working Conditions. Working Conditions of an ageing workforce.***

Report identifies factors shaping Europe's ageing workforce: promoting career and employment security; maintaining health and well-being of workers; developing skills and competencies; and reconciling working and non-working life.

www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/htmlfiles/ef0817.htm

6. Older worker studies

The Sloan Center on Aging & Work, Oct 2009, ***Talent Management Study: The Pressures of Talent Management.***

Study describes the aging workforce impact, provides an assessment guide and describes innovations in workforce planning.

http://agingandwork.bc.edu/documents/IB23_TalentMangmntStudy_2009-10-23.pdf

Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, ***Aging Workforce Overview***, 2007.

Report analyzes the aging demographic, describes ageist myths and discriminatory practices against older workers. Includes employer challenges, options and current practices.

www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/lp/spila/wlb/aw/02overview.shtml

Institute for Employment Studies, UK, October 2009.

An Ageing Workforce; The Employer's Perspective.

Report identifies factors to attract retain and manage older workers.

www.employment-studies.co.uk/pubs/report.php?id=468

Malatest & Associates, Ottawa, February 2003.

The Aging Workforce and Human Resources Development Implications for Sector Councils.

Research report that forecasts the impact of ageing workforce in Canada and the need to develop sector specific approaches to address labour supply.

www.cpsc-ccsp.ca/PDFS/Aging%20Workforce%20Final%20Report.pdf

Human Resources Development Canada, Expert Panel on Older Workers, 2008.

Supporting and Engaging Older Workers in the New Economy.

Report analyses and recommends methods of enhancing labour market prospects for older workers.

www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/publications_resources/lmp/eow/2008/older_workers_2008.pdf

Government of Canada – prepared for the United Nations Commission for Social Development for the United Nations Second World Assembly on Ageing, 2002,

Addressing the challenges and opportunities of ageing in Canada.

Report describes factors which may impact policy changes to address tomorrow's seniors.

www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/publications_resources/research/categories/population_aging_e/madrid/page00.shtml

Power Point presentation of the UN report.

www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/lp/spila/wlb/pdf/overview-aging-workforce-challenges-en.pdf

Ontario's Workforce Shortage Coalition, September 2007, ***The Challenge Ahead; Averting a Skills Crisis in Ontario – Report on Consultations Across Ontario.***

Report recommends actions for employers and other stakeholders to avert skills shortages.

www.workforcecoalition.ca/downloads/coalition_consultation_report.pdf

Statistics Canada, 2008, Survey of Older Workers (\$ data) .

Survey factors centre around workers' decision factors on whether to retire or keep working.

www.statcan.gc.ca/bsolc/olc-cel/olc-cel?lang=eng&catno=89M0030X

AARP Policy Institute, April 2009, **Older Workers on the Move: Recareering in Later Life- Research Report.**

Report describes the new process of retiring and factors for remaining in the workforce.

www.urban.org/uploadedpdf/1001272_olderworksonthmove.pdf

Ministry of Finance,

Ontario's Long-Term Report on the Economy, 2010.

Report describes the aging population as a critical economic issue.

www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/economy/ltr/

7. Employment policies

European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, **Working Conditions of an Ageing Workforce**, 2008.

Report on policy responses to the ageing demographic in Europe. www.eurofound.europa.eu/pubdocs/2008/17/en/2/EF0817EN.pdf

Australia, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, Experience + website,

Productive Ageing Package.

Website promotes employment of 50+ aged workers in Australia who want to stay in the workforce.

www.deewr.gov.au/Employment/Programs/ExpPlus/Pages/ProdAgeingPack.aspx

Human Resources Development Canada, 2002,

Collective Agreements and Older Workers in Canada.

Report helps employers to gain a better understanding of current workplace practices and how collective agreements can address emerging workplace issues. Suggests adapting best practices on flexibility, leaves, training security anti-discrimination and retirement transitions.

www.rhdcc.gc.ca/eng/lp/spila/wlb/pdf/caowc-dftaccc-en.pdf

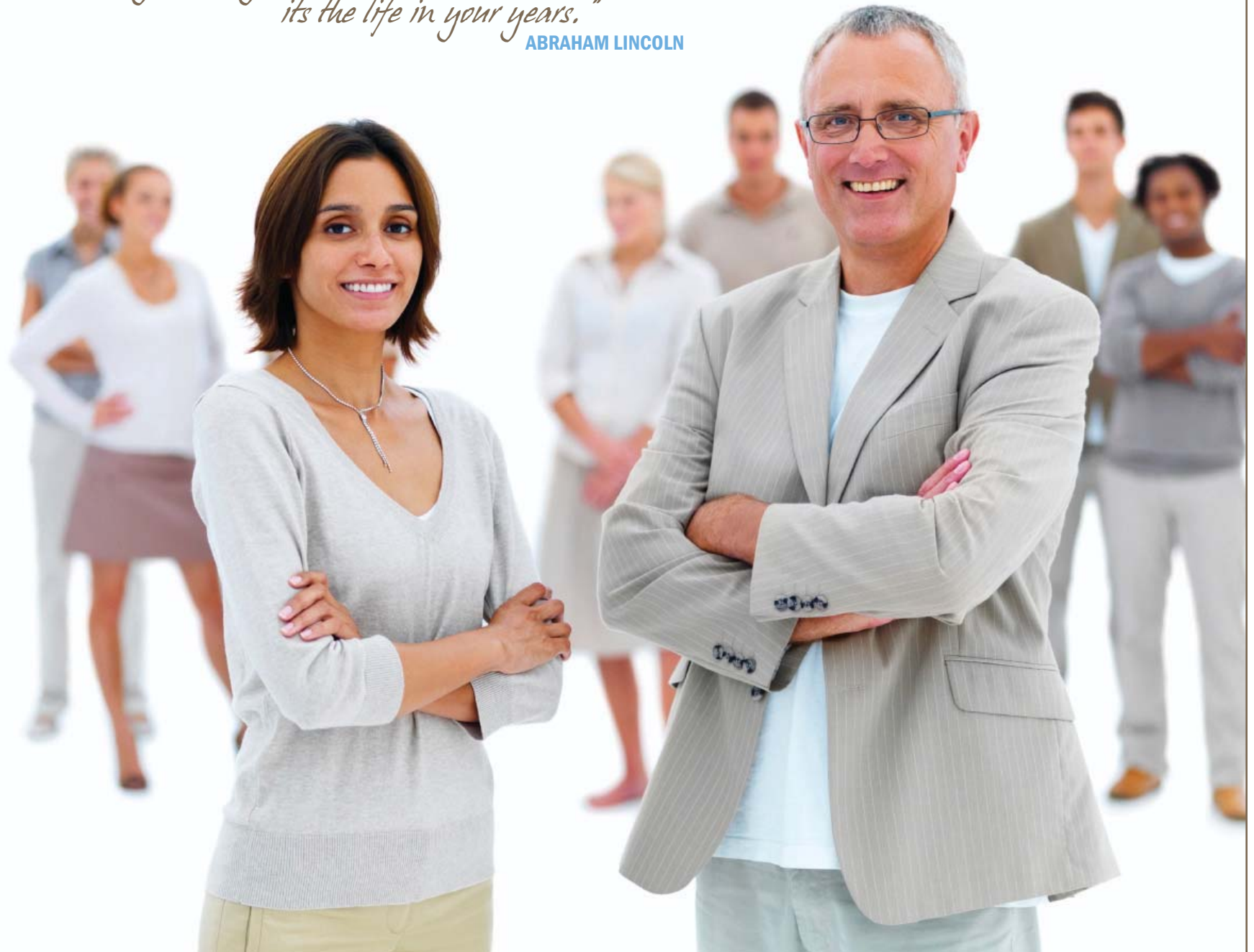
European Commission, Brussels, March 2010,
Europe 2020: A Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

Older worker retention strategy proposes increasing employment of 20-64 age population through the greater involvement of women, older workers and better integration of migrants in the workforce.

www.era.gv.at/space/11442/directory/11486/doc/18950.html

*"And in the end,
it's not the years in your life that count,
it's the life in your years."*

ABRAHAM LINCOLN



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Aging Workforce Study Stakeholder Conference

Tuesday, February 22, 2011

The Regional Municipality of York Expert Café



Linh Lee



Stephen Maio



Sylvia Patterson



John Waller



Jessica Wong

Café Opening: York Region's Vision for 2051 *John Waller, Planning and Development Services*

York Region is undertaking a long term visioning exercise to address trends and issues that the Region will face over the next 40 years. York Region will provide insight into the development of this vision for 2051.

Employer Focused Worker Health Programs *Facilitated by Linh Lee and Jessica Wong, Community and Health Services*

Workplaces are the ideal location for making a positive impact on the health and wellness of adults. The worksite organizational culture and environment can have a powerful influence on health behaviour of employees and provide opportunities for employees to adopt healthier lifestyles. A healthy workplace benefits both the employees and the organization, a healthy workplace is a great investment.

Employment and Labour Law *Facilitated by Stephen Maio, Legal Services*

Even if a company has a written job application process, training & retraining policies prohibiting age discrimination, these written guidelines can be violated. Participants will get the opportunity to discuss with Labour and Employment counsel.

Health Care Sector *Facilitated by Sylvia Patterson, Community and Health Services*

The health care sector is currently experiencing and is forecasted to experience skilled labour shortages. Participants will learn how the sector is coping as the aging population exerts pressure on housing and long term care in York Region.

Envisioning the Future: York Region's Vision for 2051 *Facilitated by John Waller, Planning and Development Services*

Interested participants will be presented with the opportunity to learn how York Region uses employment, labour force, and forecast information to understand how issues and trends aid in the development of strategic plans. Participants will learn how the Region's Vision 2051 exercise will guide economic development and labour force from today to 2051.

Exhibitors

Brain Works Global Inc.
Business Takes Action
Employment Ontario - Employment Service Delivery Network
Markham Board of Trade
Markham Small Business Centre
Richmond Hill Small Business Enterprise Centre
Seneca College
Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC)

Vaughan Chamber of Commerce
Welcome Centre Immigrant Services
Whitchurch-Stouffville Chamber of Commerce
York Region, Local Immigration Partnership
York Small Business Enterprise Centre
York University - Career Centre
York University - Knowledge Mobilization

Contact

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(905) 830-4444 ext. 1492



Aging Workforce Study Stakeholder Conference

Tuesday, February 22, 2011



7:00am
to
3:30pm

Le Parc Conference & Banquet Centre

8432 Leslie St, Markham ON

Beyond The Boomers

A York Region Stakeholder's Conference
Addressing the Labour Force Shortage



Aging Workforce Study Stakeholder Conference

Tuesday, February 22, 2011

Acknowledgments

In 2009, an impressive 13 member Aging Workforce Study (AWS) Advisory Committee was formed with a common goal of addressing workforce labour supply and retention issues. York Region commends the work of the AWS Advisory Committee members who gave generously of their time and expertise to recommend research sources, review staff reports and recommendations, help with marketing the program to stakeholders, and evaluate employer tools and resources.

The following are the Aging Workforce Study Advisor Committee:

Deborah Bonk-Greenwood, Vaughan Chamber of Commerce
David Cox, Southlake Regional Health Centre
Lynda Coulter, York Catholic District School Board
Susan Edwards, Canada's Wonderland
Dave Gordon, State Farm Insurance
Elizabeth Gordon, York Region District School Board
Diana Harper, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities
Dr. Rhonda Lenton, York University
Jon Olinski, Seneca College

Sylvia Patterson, The Regional Municipality of York
Ian Turnbull, Human Resources Professionals for York Region
Alan Ward, Staples
Al Wilson, Workforce Planning Board
The Regional Municipality of York:
Doug Lindeblom, Director of Economic Strategy
Sharon Vegh, Manager of Economic Intelligence & Innovation
Susan Bergman, Aging Workforce Project Coordinator

Opening Remarks



Ted McMeekin, MPP
Parliamentary Assistant to
The Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities



Regional Councillor John Taylor
Chair of Planning and Economic Development Committee
The Regional Municipality of York



Doug Lindeblom, Master of Ceremonies
Director of Economic Strategy
The Regional Municipality of York

Keynote Presentation



Dr. Rick Miner

Jobs without People, People without Jobs

Dr. Miner's keynote will consider the dual trends of an aging population and the need for a more educated workforce. He will discuss the implications of an aging population, a direction for preparing for the jobs of the future and the role that institutions, governments and businesses will need to take in these processes.

Miner & Miner Ltd. | minerandminer.ca | 416.921.7058

Break Out Sessions



Anne Moore



Viki Scott



Elizabeth Walker

Ergonomics for the Aging Workforce *Facilitated by Anne Moore*

Fitting the task to the person is generally a good guideline for any company in order to optimize productivity and minimize the risk of musculoskeletal disorders such as lower back pain or hand/wrist pain. While this is important for all workers, the question becomes how do human capabilities change with age? This workshop will review age related changes in ergonomic concerns and introduce design considerations geared to a healthy workplace for an aging workforce.

York University, School of Kinesiology and Health Science | yorku.ca/health/kine/

Employment and Labour Law Awareness *Facilitated by Viki Scott*

To remain competitive employers will be required to develop strategies addressing the need for maintaining levels of business intelligence and for knowledge and skills transfer. In doing so employers will need to have a better understanding of the employment and labour law framework for employing the older worker. The session will instruct participants on the benefits of engaging stakeholders in the design, development and implementation of "age positive" employment policies, procedures and programs.

Scott Associates | scottassociatesinc.com | 416.756.4785

Creating Flexible Workplace *Facilitated by Elizabeth Walker*

Owners and managers of small businesses will gain insights and tools to recruit and retain boomers and youth. Find out what you can do right now to engage the energy and enthusiasm of young people, and retain their loyalty and contributions to compete better. Learn how to win from the experience of older workers, and get a substantial pay back for a relatively small investment. At the end of this session, you will have a good idea of the most practical approach for your company, and an action plan you can put into place right away.

Schulich Executive Education Centre | York University | seec.schulich.yorku.ca

Chrysalis Creative Marketing | elizabeth.walker@symatpico.ca | 905.377.8269

Interactive Lunch Session



Jill Hewlett

Cognitive Fitness - The Key to Successful Leadership *Facilitated by Jill Hewlett*

We often tend to believe this "brain fitness" stuff is most relevant to our parents and grandparents, however, if you are reading this, you need it! Everyone with a brain can benefit from learning about how his or her brain works and how to maintain it with proper care. The more cognitively fit you are, the better equipped you are to make decisions, solve problems, and deal with stress and change. Cognitive fitness will help you be more open to new ideas and alternative perspectives. It will give you the capacity to change your behavior and realize your goals.

Brain Works Global Inc. | brainworksglobal.com | 905.830.6902