

Becoming a Mature Worker Friendly Company

With a quarter of the U.S. workforce aged 50 or older many companies are concerned about the brain drain of the soon to retire. Becoming a mature worker friendly company will help slow the exodus of the experienced workers.

Studies coming out of AARP, Boston College, Civic Ventures, and the Society for Human Resource Management, to name a few, indicate that workers age 55-64 would like to continue working beyond traditional retirement age if more flexibility were offered.

What will your company have to do to retain and attract the older experienced workers?

Offer flexible work arrangements. This includes flexible start and end times, allowing for time off during the day, the ability to work 4 ten hour days or 30 hours a week, seasonal employment, and increased time off during the year, are some examples of how companies are addressing the flexible work arrangement needs.

Provide continuous training opportunities. Opportunities to keep workers up to date in technology, ability to learn new skills, a chance to train for a new job role, and provide personal development seminars such as wellness, physical fitness, and retirement planning, will help create loyalty and excitement about coming to work.

Telecommute options. Provide the option to work from home a day or two a week or from a more convenient branch office. Companies report that the vast majority with telecommute options have more productive workers. With the high cost of commuting these days it will be an appreciated benefit.

Job sharing. Split a job between two employees with prorated salary and benefits. This helps create a bridge job to move employees towards retirement while helping your company retain the talent.

Create a cultural environment to reduce age bias. Ensure that internal policies are age friendly and audit those policies to ensure compliance. Provide periodic employee education on the company vision to create an inclusive, respectful culture.

Offer reasonable physical accommodations. These might include workstations that give the option to sit or stand, amplification equipment for telephones, computer screens capable of displaying large type or glare screens, increased task lighting, or ergonomic keyboards.

Ask older workers. When in doubt survey your mature workers to ask what they want. What would make them choose to postpone retirement? Act upon suggestions that are implementable to your company.

Attract older workers. Take advantage of job boards geared towards older workers. Advertise your mature worker friendly company policies to attract mature workers. Reach out to organizations that serve the mature community.