



AGE-FRIENDLY WORKPLACES: A Self-Assessment Tool for Employers



This document has been jointly prepared by the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for Seniors Forum. The Forum is an intergovernmental body established to share information, discuss new and emerging issues related to seniors, and work collaboratively on key projects.

Québec's participation in the development of this document was aimed at sharing expertise, information and best practices. However Québec does not subscribe to, or take part in, an integrated pan-Canadian approach in this field and intends to fully assume its responsibilities for seniors in Québec.

Sources include: *Experience Pays: Employer Guide to Recruiting, Retraining and Retaining Mature-Age Employees*, Queensland Government, Australia; *Older Worker Friendly? An Employer Assessment Tool*, Department of Workforce Development, Wisconsin, U.S.A.; *Safe and Healthy: A Guide to Managing an Aging Workforce*, Alberta Human Resources and Employment; *Finders and Keepers: Recruitment and Retention Strategies*, Alberta Human Resources and Employment

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Publishing Services

Human Resources and Skills Development Canada
140 Promenade du Portage
Portage IV, 10th Floor
Gatineau, Québec
K1A 0J9

Online: <http://www12.hrsdc.gc.ca>

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Paper

Cat. No.: HS4-115/2012
ISBN: 978-1-100-54407-6

PDF

Cat. No.: HS4-115/2012E-PDF
ISBN: 978-1-100-21221-0

HRSDC

Cat. No.: ISSD-103-09-12

Age-Friendly Workplaces

A healthy work environment means more productive and engaged employees. An important aspect of creating a healthy work environment is cultivating a workplace culture that embraces and values workers of all ages and abilities, and that includes older workers.

Age-friendly workplaces are good for business, and good for employers and employees. Adopting age-friendly recruitment practices that attract applicants over 50 years of age enables employers to draw on a wider pool of talent. Employers that retain older workers are retaining experience, corporate knowledge, productivity and diversity in their workplaces.

Any sized business or workplace can become age-friendly and adopt age-friendly practices. Take this simple assessment to find out if you offer a workplace that is attractive to older workers.

Please put a checkmark beside the items that apply to your organization.

Human Resource Planning

We know the age profile of our workforce	
We offer support in effective retirement planning, including the financial and non-financial aspects of retirement (e.g., phased retirement)	
The business case for recruiting and retaining older workers is well understood in our organization	
We have policies that recognize the diversity of all workers, including older workers	
We have policies that recognize the specific needs of older adults who are caregivers, including offering flexible work hours and ensuring workers job security upon return from their care-giving role	
Our pension plan (where applicable) offers an option for gradual retirement with a gradual decrease in work hours and increase in pension benefits	
We have implemented policies aimed at recognizing the specific needs of our employees who are returning from sick leave, whether in terms of scheduling or specific needs related to workstation ergonomics	

Recruitment

We state in our job advertisements that we seek employees:

With extensive work experience and/or skills	
From diverse backgrounds	
Other _____	

When interviewing applicants we:

Focus on skills and experience	
Use people of different ages on selection panels, if appropriate	
Make sure the interview setting is accessible to applicants with mobility and/or communication challenges	
Other _____	

We place job ads where older workers are likely to see them, such as:

Local newspapers	
Electronic websites and job banks (e.g., Third Quarter website)	
Shopping centres	
Seniors' centres or community centres	
Recruitment agencies	
Professional/trade/association newsletters	
Other _____	

Training and Development

We provide flexible training opportunities such as:

On-the-job coaching	
Peer training/cross-mentorship between older and younger employees	
Individualized training	
Job rotation	
Cross-training	
Special projects	
Job shadowing	
Other _____	

To help keep the skills of all employees, including older employees, up-to-date, we:

Conduct a training needs assessment	
Help employees develop an individualized learning plan	
Provide funds for employees to take approved training	
Pay professional dues or support attendance at industry conferences	
Other _____	

Retention

We show we value employees by:

Regularly giving positive and constructive feedback	
Encouraging, listening to and implementing suggestions from staff feedback	
Having regular staff meetings	
Establishing a culture of respect in the workplace	
Celebrating employees' achievements	
Conducting "stay interviews" to ascertain what older workers need in order to stay with the organization	
Providing information sessions on life transition issues (retirement, caregiving, aging in place, healthy aging, chronic disease prevention, etc.)	
Addressing the needs of individuals using assistive devices by ensuring our building is accessible	
Offering similar or pro-rated benefits to our part-time employees	
Other _____	

Retention

We provide, as needed, accommodations to assist employees in doing their jobs, such as:

Amplified telephone equipment	
Computer screens that allow for visual enhancement	
Ergonomic keyboards/chairs	
Modified lighting to ensure good visibility	
Reduced physical loads to minimize lifting	
Reduced above-shoulder work and other postural demands	
Grip-friendly tools, and long-handled tools to reduce bending	
Increased time between steps of a task	
Other _____ _____	

We offer flexible work options such as:

Part-time work	
Temporary work	
Seasonal work	
Consulting	
Job Sharing	
Flexible work times	
Telework or working from home	
Remote access	
Phased retirement plans	
Other _____	

We educate our staff members on:

Discrimination laws, including age discrimination	
Benefits of hiring and promoting older workers	
The importance of discussing and addressing ageism and intergenerational issues in the workplace	
Other _____ _____ _____ _____	

