Attracting and Retaining Older Talent
The Aging Workforce

• The Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts that by 2022, 25% of all US workers will be over 55.
• The number of workers 55 and older has already increased by 12% since 2007.
• By 2050, the number of individuals in the labor force who are 65 or older will grow by 75%; the number 25 to 54 will only grow by 2%.
• According to the Harvard Business Review, to finance retirement, many workers currently in their fifties will work into their seventies; individuals in their twenties could well be working into their eighties.
• According to SHRM, older workers will be the largest source of talent in the next two decades.
• In a 2015 Gallup poll, 37 percent of non-retired Americans said they don’t expect to stop working until after age 65 – up from 14 percent who said this in 1995.
The PwC 2015 Global CEO Survey found that only 8% of CEOs include age as a dimension of their D&I strategy.

According to AARP, two-thirds of workers ages 45–74 report they have seen or experienced age discrimination on the job. Of those, 92 percent say it is very or somewhat common. Among people in this age group, women are more likely than men to say that they have seen or experienced workplace age bias (72 percent vs. 57 percent).

According to studies by AARP, age-inclusive HR practices can improve organizational performance and reduce employee turnover.

Studies found that teams with age diversity performed better on complex decision-making tasks, and the productivity of older and younger workers was higher in companies that utilized mixed-age work teams than in companies that didn’t.

Source: AARP
50+ Worker Priorities

- 70% want a flexible work schedule
- 95% stay employed because they need the money
- 53% say a 401K plan is essential
- 72% work to support their families
- 60% keep working to fully fund their pensions
- 19% have taken time off or quit to provide caregiving

Best Employers for Workers 50+

- 98% offer flex time and compressed work schedules
- 94% offer telecommuting
- 74% offer job sharing
- 94% offer medical insurance to part-time employees
- 60% offer phased retirement programs
- 38% provide designated time off for caregiving

Source: AARP/SHRM
The Families and Work Institute National Study of Employers found:

- 92% of employers allow at least some groups of workers to have control over when they take breaks.
- 87% allow time off during the workday to attend to important family or personal needs without loss of pay.
- 82% allow periodic changes to starting and quitting times within some range of hours.
- 66% allow workers to occasionally work some of their regular paid hours at home.
- 29% allow job sharing.
- 28% allow sabbaticals.
- 18% allow at least some employees to work part-year.

Source: SHRM Foundation
Challenges:

- An AARP study found that 58% of adults ages 45 to 74 are responsible for some combination of parents, spouses or children.
- Almost one out of five workers ages 45 to 74 have taken leave from a job to care for an adult family member, and 4% quit for this reason.
- According to SHRM, caregiving responsibilities are one of the primary reasons why older workers need work schedule and work location flexibility.
- Most surveys find that caregiver responsibilities fall more heavily on women than on men and tend to have a greater impact on women’s career trajectories.
- Substantial caregiving responsibilities can have a negative effect on the health of caregivers themselves, adding yet another challenge to their ability to work productively.

Strategies:

- Reduced hours and workload
- Awareness-raising and skills development among managers and the workforce
- Caregiver-specific assistance through an employee assistance program (EAP)
- Flexible spending accounts that can be used to pay for elder care services with pretax income
- Leave banks that allow participating workers to donate some of their accrued paid leave and, in return, withdraw paid leave from the bank after exhausting their own
- Work options that allow retirees to work a certain number of hours without jeopardizing pension benefits.
- Job-sharing opportunities, for example, assigning shared responsibilities to several older workers, or partnering an older worker with a younger trainee.

Source: SHRM Foundation
In an effort to retain older workers, CVS Caremark’s ‘snowbird’ program transfers several hundred pharmacists and other employees from northern states each winter to pharmacies in warmer states. The older workers help the southern CVS locations keep up with the surge in business during the colder months. The older workers are offered a flexible schedule, and their duties include training and mentoring newer employees. “A good number of our pharmacy customers are going to be mature customers, and as part of our focus on diversity, we want a work force that reflects our customer base,” said David Casey, CVS’s vice president for work force strategies. As part of its Talent is Ageless program, CVS Caremark partners with community agencies to recruit, hire and train workers ages 50 to 99. Since the program began, the percentage of the Caremark workforce age 50+ grew from 6 percent to 18 percent.

Fidelity’s customers wanted call center representatives with a first-hand understanding of common life decisions, so Fidelity hired retirees to staff its 401(k) call centers and offered flexible work arrangements to attract and keep them.

As a way to attract mature engineers to its firm, Burns and McDonnell offers 100 percent vesting in its employee stock ownership plan when workers reach age 62, regardless of years of service.

Atlantic Health System allows retirees in the 1000 Hour Club to return to work either on a part-time or per diem basis three months after retirement. A retiree can work up to 999 hours annually and still collect retirement benefits.
Goldman Sachs’ returnship program was specifically designed for individuals who have left the workforce for two or more years and are ready to return. This paid program offers returning workers opportunities in a variety of divisions. The returnship offers a guided period of exploration, and provides individuals with an opportunity to sharpen their skills in a work environment that may have changed significantly since their last experience as an employee. It also gives participants the ability to explore a new area of expertise and learn new skills. The program was launched in the US in 2008, and given its success, was expanded globally.

Barclays expanded upon the success of its apprenticeship program (which appointed over 2,000 apprentices) to offer apprenticeships targeted to candidates over age 50 who are returning to work or looking for a new career. The bank said it considers mature workers from unrelated fields, and that the only experience needed is practical experience. This is not a PR stunt; the bank states it values older workers who have life experience and can better relate to the financial needs of mature customers. Barclays already has a Digital Eagles offering, a team at Barclays established to help customers with online issues. An extension of this is Barclays’ Silver Eagles, a team of tech-savvy older workers geared up to help mature customers with online banking. The new apprenticeship program builds on this effort to capitalize on the life skills of experienced employees. The bank predicts that bringing in apprentices over 50 years of age will make the institution more accessible, and ensure a better fit with more mature customers.
Hartford created a reverse mentoring program to help senior leaders learn about social media from younger workers. Junior mentors were required to apply for the program and were screened on qualities required for effective mentoring. Senior leaders committed to structured sessions with their mentors. The program is such a success, it has spawned ideas for reverse mentoring on other topics, such as sustainability and green corporate practices.

Of Newport News Shipbuilding’s 21,000 employees, about 2,900 are Apprentice School alumni. Many of them are now in leadership positions at the company.
PNC’s employee Business Resource Group Igen focuses on intergenerational issues and provides a forum for the transfer of knowledge from older generations to younger generations.

AT&T's >50 ERG focuses on professionals 50 and older; another ERG focused on young professionals, called oxyGEN, sponsors events to educate seniors about mobile technology.