

Datasheet 1: Research on age management

Summary - objectives

- 1) To define what exactly is meant by age management and what it involves
- 2) To identify the current practices of human resources managers (HRM) in relation to management of age and ageing in the workplace and examine the extent to which such age management forms part of the daily life and management practices of companies
- 3) Provide concrete, practical advice to business employers and their HRM in order to, firstly, explain to them what is meant by age management, what it consists of, the benefit of implementing such management, etc. and, secondly, help them to implement real age management

Content

The objectives of the research are to:

- 1) Define what exactly is meant by age management and what it involves
- 2) Identify the current practices of human resources managers (HRM) in relation to management of age and ageing in the workplace and examine the extent to which such age management forms part of the daily life and management practices of companies
- 3) Provide concrete, practical advice to business employers and their HRM in order to, firstly, explain to them what is meant by age management, what it consists of, the benefit of implementing such management, etc. and, secondly, help them to implement real age management

To achieve these objectives, the research will consist of 3 phases:

Phase 1: Definition and content of age management

- Practical definition of “age management” using scientific knowledge in the area, by taking, amongst other things, recent notions about social times and life stages as well as the different ages (chronological age, biological age, social age, etc.) into account
- What does age management involve?
- What are the different actions possible within age management?
- What are the different stages involved in age management?
- What workers are concerned by age management?
- What are the social times and life stages that can regulate age management and what impact do they have?
- How can HRM and other actors (employers, workers, etc.) be trained to take account of these social times and the different life stages?

Phase 2: Inventory of HRM practices in terms of age management and analysis of their implementation within companies

- What is current good practice in terms of age management within human resources departments?
- Are these practices taught or known by most HRMs?
- What practices are used in companies?

- Do these practices differ from one sector to the next or according to the size of the company?
- Are the practices different in the three Belgian Regions?
- Has awareness been raised amongst HRMs that social times should be taken into account or is their age management based solely on the chronological age of workers?
- How can awareness be raised amongst HRMs of age management and of the need to take account of social times?
- Does the age management understood and practised by HRMs correspond to what is advised by the scientific experts? If not, how is it different?
- How do HRMs perceive such age management? Do they view it as a passing fad? To what extent do they see it as being beneficial to the proper operation of HRM and, therefore, the company itself?

Phase 3: Recommendations for the successful implementation of age management within a company

- How can awareness of age management be raised amongst company managers? Of benefit to the company, including in economic terms: absenteeism, loss of skills following early departures, loss of know-how and, therefore, loss of part of company activities, high staff turnover, training of new arrivals, etc.
- How to start implementing age management in your company: raise awareness, identify the needs of the company, identify the consequences of no age management, etc.
- What concrete actions are recommended for age management?
- What clear, concrete messages should be communicated within the company? E.g. avoid any division between “young” and “old”.
- What are the factors favouring and hindering the implementation and proper operation of age management?
- Is training required or preferable to implement age management? If yes, what training?
- What are the links between improving working conditions and age management? How can both notions be incorporated?
- How can worker training be incorporated into age management?

Contact

FPS Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue, Research Unit for the Improvement of Working Conditions (DIRACT), Rue E. Blérot 1 - 1070 Brussels,
alain.piette@emploi.belgique.be - +32 (0) 2 233.46.28

Further info

*The research report (in French) can be requested from alain.piette@emploi.belgique.be
 The booklet (in French or Dutch) “Relever les défis de la gestion des âges en entreprise – Guide de sensibilisation à destination des managers et des responsables des ressources humaines” [Overcoming the challenges of age management in business - Awareness raising guide for human resource managers and supervisors] will be available in April 2012 at www.respectautravail.be; www.emploi.belgique.be*

Datasheet 2: Research on returning to work after a long-term absence

Summary - objectives

The purpose of this research is to examine the system consisting of the different bodies that govern the reintegration into the workplace of workers after a long-term absence in order to limit any harm to the worker and enable her or him to reintegrate into her or his work environment in the most satisfactory manner for her/him, the employer and for all of the work group. The research is focused on workers who are still covered by an employment contract and who are absent due to occupational illness, physical or psychological illness, an MSD, workplace accidents, etc.

The research will consider the regulations, the role of the different actors and institutions, and good practice.

Content

The purpose of this research is to examine the system consisting of the different bodies that govern the reintegration into the workplace of workers after a long-term absence in order to limit any harm to the worker and enable her or him to reintegrate into her or his work environment in the most satisfactory manner for her/him, the employer and for all of the work group. The research is focused on workers who are still covered by an employment contract and who are absent due to occupational illness, physical or psychological illness, an MSD, workplace accidents, etc.

The research will consider the regulations, the role of the different actors and institutions, and good practice.

In practical terms, this research will fulfil four objectives:

1. An inventory of the regulations in force in Belgium, definitions of the various terms used (incapacity, long-term absence, etc.)
2. The definition of the roles of the different actors (public and private), institutions (federal and under the jurisdiction of federated entities) and the procedure followed according to status, type of contract (permanent, temporary, etc.), employment conditions (telework, etc.), sector, type, cause of absence, etc.
3. An inventory of current practice, initiatives already envisaged, experiences, pilot projects and good practice in Belgium and in other European countries
4. A reflexion (terminology, impact of the cause of the absenteeism, analysis of any discrepancies between the regulations and practice, etc.) of these first three points and highlighting the factors hindering and facilitating a return to work. This last part will also propose recommendations.

Contact

FPS Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue, Rue E. Blérot 1 - 1070 Brussels,
melanie.straetmans@emploi.belgique.be +32 (0) 2 233.42.01

Further info:

The research paper (in French) can be requested from
melanie.straetmans@emploi.belgique.be

Datasheet 3 Awareness-raising campaign on the employment of older workers 2012-2013

Summary

The Federal Public Service Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue (FPS ELSD) is launching an awareness-raising campaign on the older worker. This campaign will begin in April 2012 and will finish at the end of 2013. The campaign is being managed by the Directorate-General for Employment and the Labour Market. The different directorate-generals of the FPS ELSD are collaborating on this joint project. A working group has been established with representatives from the different directorates for this purpose. The objective of the campaign is to show the values of older workers, the importance of keeping them at work for longer, their qualities, etc.

Below is a brief overview of the different elements of this campaign.

The campaign is composed of 3 elements:

1. General information for the general public

A booklet will be created for this phase.

2. Theme-based texts

With a view to supporting the awareness-raising campaign, a website will be created which will have links to already existing texts on other websites (aandeslag, REV, ONSS [National Social Security Office], Fonds de l'expérience professionnelle [Fund for professional experience], etc.)

Texts on specific themes relating to the older worker will be published on the website. The objective is to have texts on a specific theme aimed at interested parties.

3. Seminars

The seminars are intended for a specialised audience and will be organised over the course of the project on different themes.

Practical information

Contact

Federal Public Service Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue
Directorate-General for Employment and the Labour Market
Director General Jan Vanthuyne
Contact person: Joseph Remy, General Advisor
E-mail: Joseph.REMY@werk.belgie.be
Rue E. Blérot 1, 1070 Brussels
<http://www.emploi.belgique.be>

Datasheet 4: Adapt training according to age and learning style - Teaching recommendations

Summary - objectives

The main objective of this research was to highlight which teaching mechanisms and methods would be most effective with older learners (A+ = over 45 years of age) in order to facilitate the work of professional trainers tasked with providing such workers with training programmes best suited to their experience and educational history.

This objective is pursued by means of three research questions:

1. What are the specific needs of the experienced worker for the training? (motivation, training objective, the learning context, learning methods, etc.)
2. What criteria do good teaching practices in terms of training for experienced workers satisfy?
3. What advice can be given to trainers when setting up a training programme, with regard to content, teaching method, organisation and learning context?

Content

The main objective of this research was to highlight which teaching mechanisms and methods would be most effective with older learners (A+ = over 45 years of age) in order to facilitate the work of professional trainers tasked with providing such workers with training programmes best suited to their experience and educational history.

This objective is pursued by means of three research questions:

1. What are the specific needs of the experienced worker for the training? (motivation, training objective, the learning context, learning methods, etc.)
2. What criteria do good teaching practices in terms of training for experienced workers satisfy?
3. What advice can be given to trainers when setting up a training programme, with regard to content, teaching method, organisation and learning context?

Research project

This qualitative research is based on the concrete experiences of trainers, academics and experts, as well as experienced workers (over 45 years of age). Given the qualitative and exploratory nature of the research, semi-structured interviews with experts were cross-referenced with interviews with experienced workers. The issue was therefore examined from different points of view, namely that of the trainer, the academic and the experienced worker.

Results

The results for the different target groups are very similar.

Experience was one of the major **differences** cited between young workers and experienced workers: this must be acknowledged by the trainer and incorporated into the training. Separation according to age/experience is only seen as beneficial for Information and Communications Technology (ICT) training. For other areas, both the target groups and the experts interviewed advised against separating groups by age, as it contributes to prejudice and runs the risk of stigmatising people. Furthermore, many other factors play a role in training, such as experience, attitude, motivation, lifestyle, etc.

As regards **needs**, consideration should particularly be given to the different cognitive

abilities of the experienced worker. There are also a few physically related needs, but these are more limited, e.g. a more appropriate font size, comfortable chairs and good lighting.

The main **expectations** are paying personal attention to the needs of experienced workers. Experienced workers expect their experience to be recognised and incorporated into the training. They also place great value on having a trusting relationship with their trainers.

Insofar as **teaching methods** are concerned, the universal principles of “good teaching” are, in the main, emphasised. For the experienced workers group in particular, it is important that the participants are not treated in an overly teacher-pupil fashion; the trainer must position him or herself as one of the participants. Furthermore, consideration should be given to the uncertainties of older workers; they do not really appreciate role playing.

Experienced workers are **motivated** to undertake training. According to the experts interviewed, personal development is THE number one reason for undertaking training, as well as “to move with the times” and social contact. The less qualified add “job security”.

The sharing of knowledge after training depends on the sector and the employer. It also depends on policy within the company: a policy of transparency, structural evaluation of training and training carried out within the framework of performance evaluation interviews are factors that contribute to the more transparent circulation of information about training.

Contact

FPS Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue, Rue E. Blérot 1 - 1070 Brussels,
birgit.berghmans@werk.belgie.be. +32 (0) 2 233.49.28

Further info

The research report (in Dutch) can be requested from birgit.berghmans@werk.belgie.be
The booklet (in French or Dutch) “Adapter la formation en fonction des âges et des styles d’apprentissage. Conseils pédagogiques” [Adapting training according to age and learning style. Teaching recommendations] will be available in April 2012 at
www.respectautravail.be; www.emploi.belgique.be

Datasheet 5: Changes in physical and physiological capabilities according to age in the working population (CAPA)

Summary - objectives

The CAPA project has a dual objective: firstly, to map via a questionnaire survey, the stereotypes associated with age and identify their effects on professional decisions of workers to, secondly, better compare them with existing scientific literature in order to qualify them, confirm them, invalidate them and combat them

Content

1. Responses to stereotypes concerning the older worker (see booklet below)

Prejudices such as physical problems or the lack of resistance to stress of older workers, but is there any truth in them? What impact do they have on the decision to prematurely leave the labour market?

The booklet “Responses to stereotypes concerning the older worker” attempts to answer these questions. It firstly maps, via a survey, the stereotypes associated with age and, secondly, compares them with the scientific literature.

- Brochure “Responses to stereotypes concerning the older worker”
J. Malchaire*, N. Burnay*, L. Braeckman**, S. Lingier**
* Occupational Health and Physiology Unit, UCL
** Department of Public Health, Universiteit Gent

2. Tools for understanding ageing in the workplace (see booklet below)

A qualitative section using focus groups has enabled us to enhance our knowledge by adding to the analyses provided by the survey questionnaire approach (2006). This methodology facilitated a better understanding of the existing professional dynamics between the generations within the day-to-day practices of the company. The results of these meetings can be found in this new publication. The objective of the publication is, therefore, to offer readers elements for consideration in order to better identify the issues of age in the workplace, particularly in terms of stress and depression, and training for seniors, as well as to better understand the reason for premature departures.

- Booklet “Tools for understanding ageing in the workplace”
Professor Nathalie Burnay*, Professor Lutgart Braeckman**, Vicky De Windt**,
Kathleen Van Hyfte**
* Faculté universitaire Notre-Dame de la Paix (FUNDP, Namur)
** Department of Public Health, University of Ghent

Contact

FPS Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue, Rue E. Blérot 1 - 1070 Brussels,
alain.piette@emploi.belgique.be +32 (0) 2 233.46.28

Further info:

Further info available on our website (booklets)
<http://www.emploi.belgique.be/CAPA-F.aspx>

Datasheet 6: The Fund for professional experience (Fonds de l'Expérience Professionnelle/Ervaringsfonds)

Summary

The Fund for professional experience is a budget fund that was created to increase the employment rate of older workers in Belgium.

Starting from the belief that a “working environment that is more pleasant for older workers” motivates such workers to work for longer, this Fund encourages actors in the labour market to improve the opportunities, conditions and organisation of work for them.

The concept of “workability” is a key notion in the projects of the Fund.

The concept of “workability” relates to the balance between the worker (health, knowledge and skills, intention to stay, etc.) on the one hand and the specific nature of the working environment (safety, demands of the position, physical and psychosocial demands) on the other.

A sustainable job is only possible where both elements evolve in a harmonious fashion.

The Fund for professional experience subsidises employers who invest in the adaptation of their older workers’ working environment.

A three-phased approach is proposed to this effect.

The ideal, in a project, is to firstly measure the workability (1), and then make a diagnosis (2) in order to improve the workability (3).

The Fund for professional experience also supports sectors that raise awareness amongst their members at the launch of appropriate projects by the Fund for professional experience.

Up to now, the Fund has impacted thousands of workplaces.

Five sectors have concluded a memorandum of cooperation.

Objectives are formulated based on the annual budget allocated.

These concern awareness-raising within the Belgian work environment of the problem of an ageing population and the promotion of the regulations in force.

Furthermore, the Fund for professional experience actively participates in conferences and symposiums on the theme of work and ageing of the population.

Practical information

Information is available at www.fondsdelexperienceprofessionnelle.be. Companies can request a grant by means of a grant application. Sectors can negotiate a memorandum of cooperation by contacting the administration.

Contact

*FPS Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue
Fonds de l'Expérience Professionnelle, Anne HIMPENS, Coordinator, +32 2 233 4580,
anne.himpens@emploi.belgique.be, Rue Ernest Blérot 1, 1070 Brussels,
www.fondsdelexperienceprofessionnelle.be*

Datasheet 7:
Flemish Region-Actions of Government
and Social Partners on 50+ at the labour
market
The agreement “All together for 50+”

01-04-2009

1

The agreement “All together for 50+”

- Agreement between social partners and the Flemish government (2009)
- Framed within broad policies for global career management, competence management, age management and adapted work organizations
- Focus on specific, individual and targeted guidance for elderly workers both employed as unemployed.
- 2 specific actions:
 - To start with a specific activation approach for unemployed 50+ (“the systematic approach”)
 - To launch an awareness campaign to get more people over 50 to work= “De juistestoel.be”-> “The Right Chair.be”

01-04-2009

2

An activation approach for unemployed 50+ (“the systematic approach”)

Gradual approach:

- Started with incoming unemployed 50-52 in May 2009
- Extended to incoming unemployed 53-55 in April 2011
- Extended to incoming unemployed 56-57 by June 2012 (according to recent agreement February 2012)

01-04-2009

3

• Main characteristics:

- Screening by public employment service VDAB during intake with special attention for
 - Competences
 - Work experience
 - Health conditions
 - Motivation
- Personal counselling:
 - 50+consulents/50+ clubs PES VDAB
 - Bijblijf consulents (trade unions)
- Active approach on vacancies
 - job-hunting, jobcoaching, jobdating
 - JOBKANAAL (special channel for vacancies)

01-04-2009

4

Awareness campaign : the right chair 50+.be

- **Aim:** to get more people over 50 (back) to work.
"You'll feel better and will want to work longer if you sit on a chair that suits you – if you do the job that suits you"
- Directed towards **all actors** in the field: employers, employees, unemployed; all civil society organizations (social partners, NGO's, private organizations,...)
- Providing a **TOOLBOX50+**: stimulating employees and employers to take up:
 - policy measures
 - use of HR tools
- Supported by a **communication campaign**: posters, flyers, post-its, electronic downloads such as banners, visuals, articles,...
- www.dejuistestoel.be

01-04-2009

5

The website « the right chair.be »

DEJUISTE STOEL.BE 50+
De info die 50-plussers aan het werk houdt

Werkgever?
Waarom zou ik blijven investeren in 50-plussers?
Doe de test
Meer info

Werknemer?
Waarom zou ik langer willen blijven werken?
Doe de test
Meer info

Toolbox 50+: tips en instrumenten
De Toolbox 50+ barst van de info en tips voor werknemers. Vul een zoekterm in of ga op zoek via het menu.

Zoek:
Thema:
Gebruiker:
 Enkel beleidsmaatregelen
Zoeken

V voorkom tekort aan personeel. Doe de Leefijdscan
Stress op het werk? De Stress-o-meter zet u op weg

Some examples of instruments/measures:

- Argumentation tool:
 - For employers: “why should I be willing to invest in my older workers ?”
 - For employees: “Why should I be willing to work longer ?”
- 4 central themes, some examples:
 - 1. Creating legitimacy:
 - Age scan: charts and questionnaire (with benchmark companies in similar sector)
 - Diversity plans (subsidies and personal advice for employers to work on awareness/motivation/actions for HRM)
 - 2. Careers in development
 - Career advice
 - Certifying prior learning competencies
 - Internal and external jobmobility

01-04-2009

7

Some examples of instruments/measures:

- 3. Health and well being
 - Prevention of stress at work and burn-out
 - Tips for healthy lifestyle
 - The ‘Experience’ Fund and Diversity plans (subsidies for employers to invest in employability of workers)
 - Part time work; subsidies for reduction of labour time (timecredit, flemish ‘encouragement benefits’)
- 4. The organization of work
 - Flexible work
 - Leadership and intergenerational management
 - Mentorship
 - Self-managing teams

01-04-2009

8