

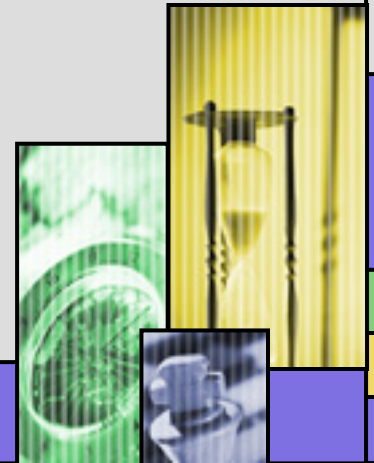
# Tools for Managing, Retaining & Training an Aging Healthcare Workforce

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**AMA**  
INNOVATIONS  
IN ADULT  
LEARNING

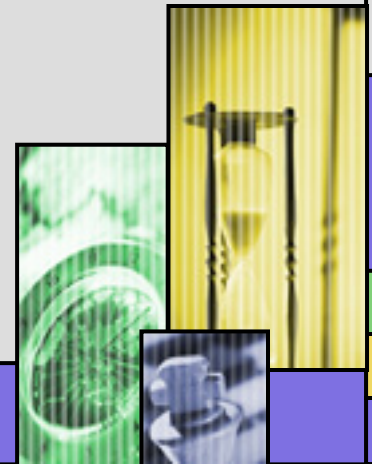


# WORKING LONGER

*New Strategies for Managing, Training,  
and Retaining Older Employees*

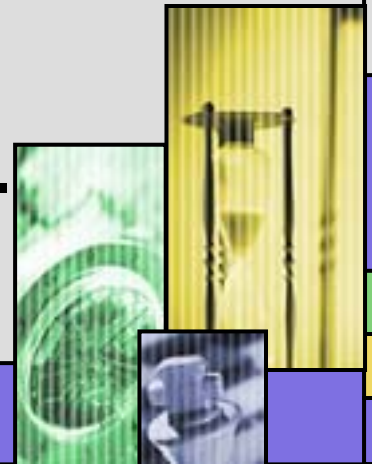
THEORY  
INTO  
PRACTICE

William J. Rothwell, Ph.D., Harvey Sterns, Ph.D.,  
Diane Spokus, Joel Reaser



# Objectives

- ✚ Examine the demographics of the aging workforce.
- ✚ Discuss the ways to train older workers.
- ✚ Identify ways to manage older workers.
- ✚ Identify the importance of retaining older workers.
- ✚ Learn how to recruit older workers.

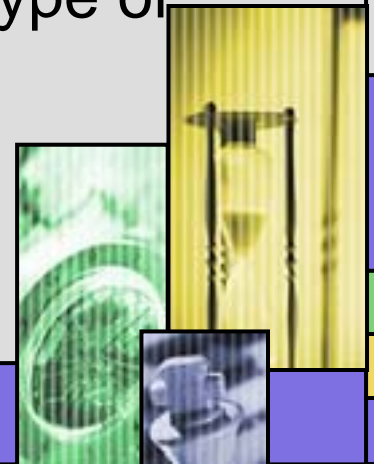


# Introduction

- ✚ Employers around the industrialized world face challenges & needs posed by the pending retirements of Baby Boomers<sup>1</sup>.
- ✚ Earlier research<sup>2</sup> examined job satisfaction of older workers. Study showed:
  - ✚ Extrinsic factors such as pay and benefits mattered less.
  - ✚ Unfortunately, employers seek to fill occupational niche with workers who are not well-suited for the type of work being offered.
  - ✚ Workers want challenging, meaningful work.

<sup>1</sup>DeLong, D. (2004). *Lost knowledge*. New York: Oxford University Press.

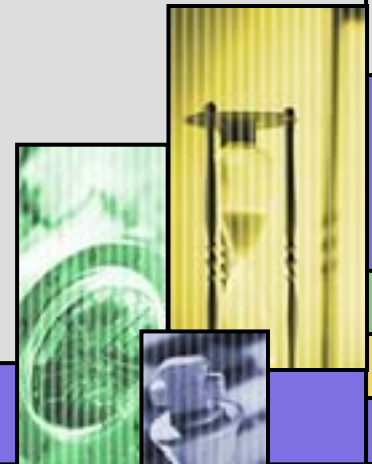
<sup>2</sup>Eichar, D.M., Norland, S., Brady, E.M., Fortinsky, R.H. (December, 1991). *The job satisfaction of older workers*. *Journal of Organizational Behavior* (1986-1998); 12(7); ABI/INFORM Global, pg. 609-620.



# Did you know?

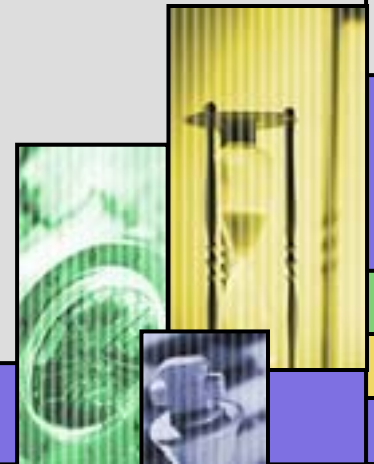
- ✚ Presently, 1 in 5 senior executives in all major companies in the U.S. is eligible to retire—with no backups in sight due to years of downsizing middle management, a natural training ground for senior executive work.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Society for Human Resource Management. (2005, June). *2005 Future of the U.S. labor pool. Survey report*. Alexandria, VA: Collision, J.



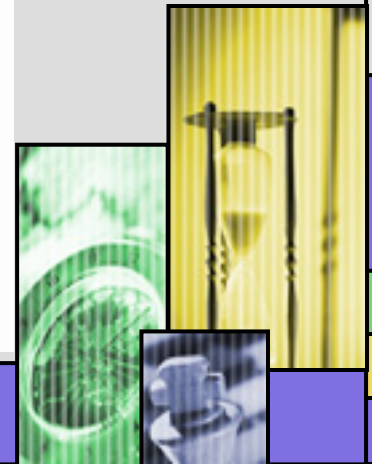
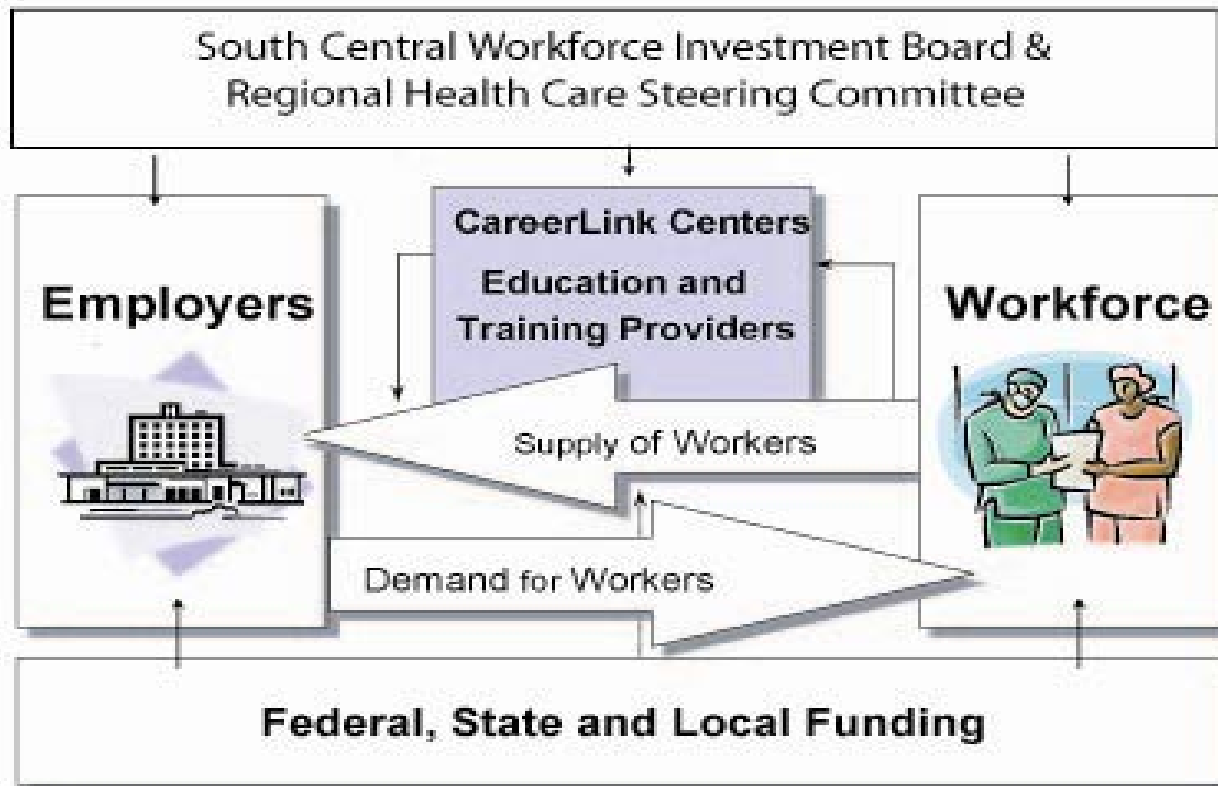
# Variability in Aging

- + Age is a factor that accounts for small amount of individual variability.
- + Aging differences



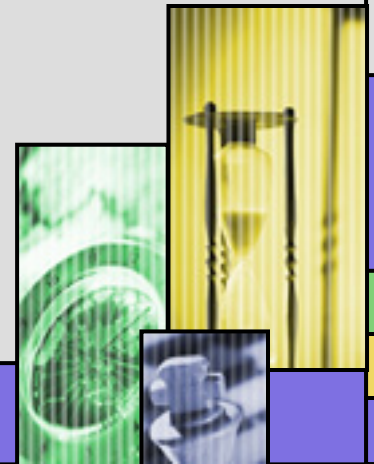
# Healthcare Workforce Shortages

## The South Central Pennsylvania Region Health Care Workforce Development System



# Shrinking Healthcare Workforce

- 26.5% of Pennsylvanians > 55
- 60% employed (Wong, et al. 2008)
- Demand for long term care expected to double by 2030 (Wright, 2005).
- Shortage of 16,000 RNs expected by 2010

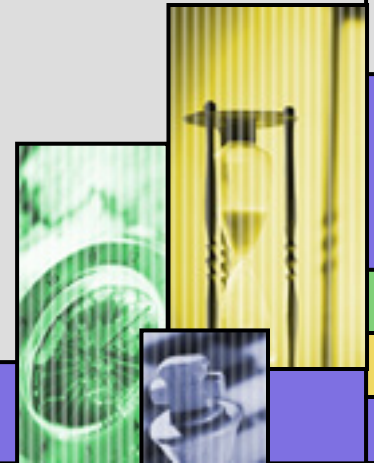




# Pennsylvania Healthcare Employer Toolkit

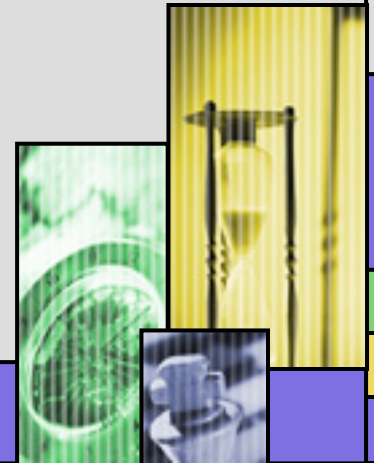
## *Southcentral PA WIB Older Worker Project:*

- Developed online guide to recruiting & retaining older healthcare workers in Pennsylvania.
- [http://www.aging.state.pa.us/aging/lib/aging/Toolkit\\_web\\_final1.pdf](http://www.aging.state.pa.us/aging/lib/aging/Toolkit_web_final1.pdf)



# Project Partnerships

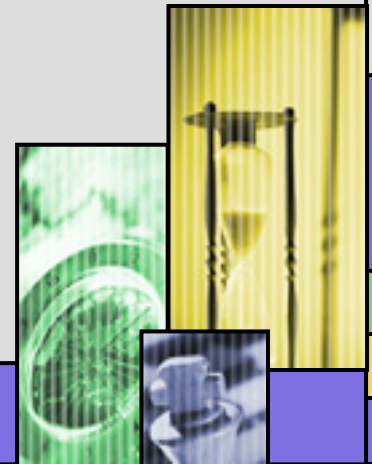
- Corporation for a Skilled Workforce
- Experience Works
- Southcentral PA WIB
- PA Department of Aging



# Benefits of Hiring & Retaining Older Healthcare Workers

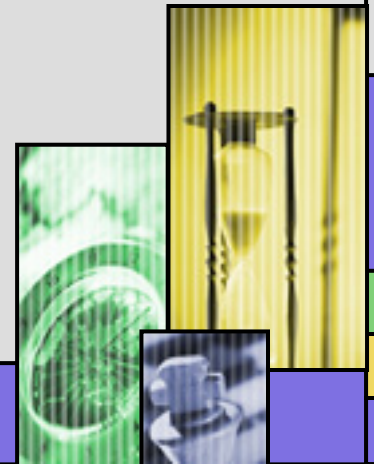
- Retaining OW might save employers money in retraining costs.
- More motivated
- More loyal
- Higher level of commitment
- ↑ turnover rates = 36% ↑ cost per discharge (JCAHO, 2003).
- ↑ mortality due to employee turnover (Hatcher et al. 2006)

Source: PA Healthcare Employer Toolkit: A Guide to Recruiting and Retaining Older Healthcare Workers. Funded by the Southcentral PA WIB and the PA Department of Aging.



# AARP Employer Assessment Toolkit

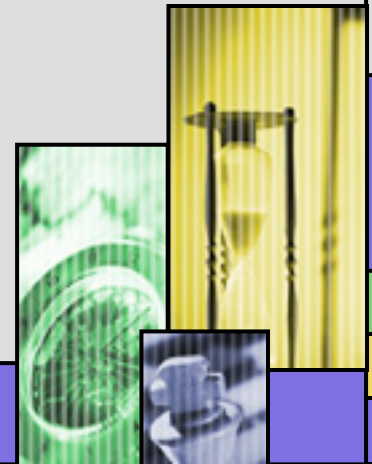
- <http://www.aarpworkforceassessment.org/template/index.cfm?CFID=16300585&CFTOKEN=13169026>



# Quality of Work Life

- Interaction between the work environment and family relationships
- Translating information learned in training into the workplace
- Burnout ↓ QWL<sup>1</sup>
- Sandwich Generation

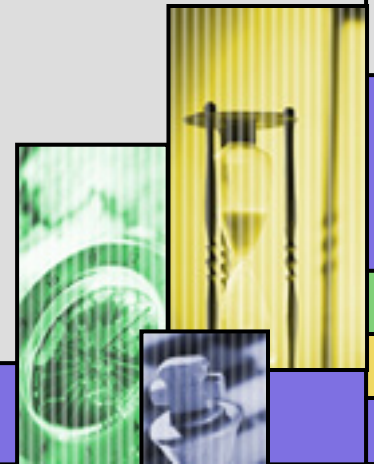
<sup>1</sup>Spokus, D. (2008). *Factors Influencing Older Worker Quality of Life an Intent to Continue to Work*. Dissertation submitted for publication.



# Training Programs

- Training is designed as a “one size fits all” experience and is contrary to the distinct preference for individualized training that reflects how people learn and in what styles people learn best.
- Training is what we do for others.

Source: Shunk, D.H. (1996). *Learning Theories: An Educational Perspective* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.). Englewood-Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall).

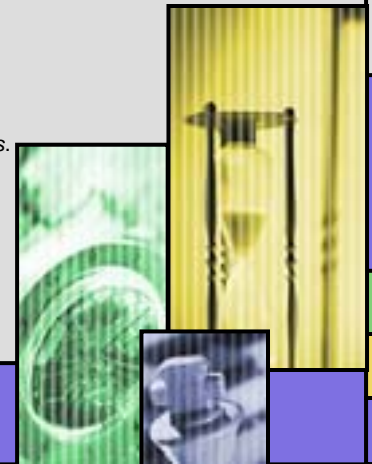


# Training

- ✚ Element of retention.
- ✚ Increases adult optimization
- ✚ Possibly reverse some decrements that are results of non action.
- ✚ Older workers may fear failure (self-fulfilling prophecy)
- ✚ Plan specific training programs that are age-segregated, allowing the extra time needed to complete the training.<sup>1</sup>
- ✚ Buffet approach promotes career development.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Fisk, A., Rogers, W., Charness, N., Czaja S. & Sharit, J. (2004). *Designing for older adults: Principles and creative human factors approaches*. Malabar, FL: CRC Press.

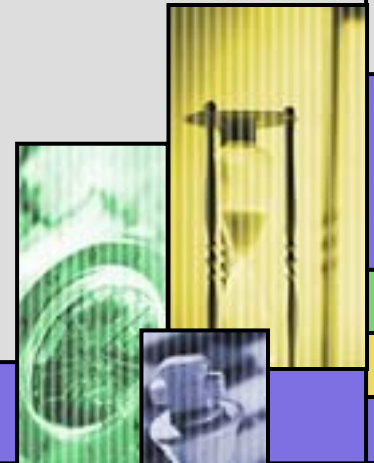
<sup>2</sup>Rothwell, W., Sterns, H., Spokus, D. & Reaser, J. (2008). *Working Longer: New Strategies for Managing, Training & Retaining Older Employees*. New York, NY: AMACOM.



# Training

- ✦ Program should be relevant to the job.
- ✦ Proper training has the potential to compensate for inadequate design.<sup>1</sup>
- ✦ Training programs may be differentially effective for different age groups.<sup>2</sup>
- ✦ Proper instructional design that capitalizes on intact abilities & compensates for declining abilities holds much promise for proficient novice-level performance and substantive proficiency gains with training.<sup>3</sup>

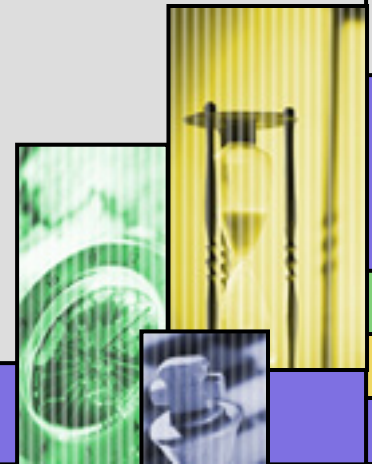
<sup>123</sup>Source: Rogers, W. & Fisk, A. (2003). Technology design, usability, and aging: Human factors techniques and considerations. In N. Charness & K. Warner Schaie (Eds.), *Impact of technology on successful aging*, (p. 7). New York: Springer.





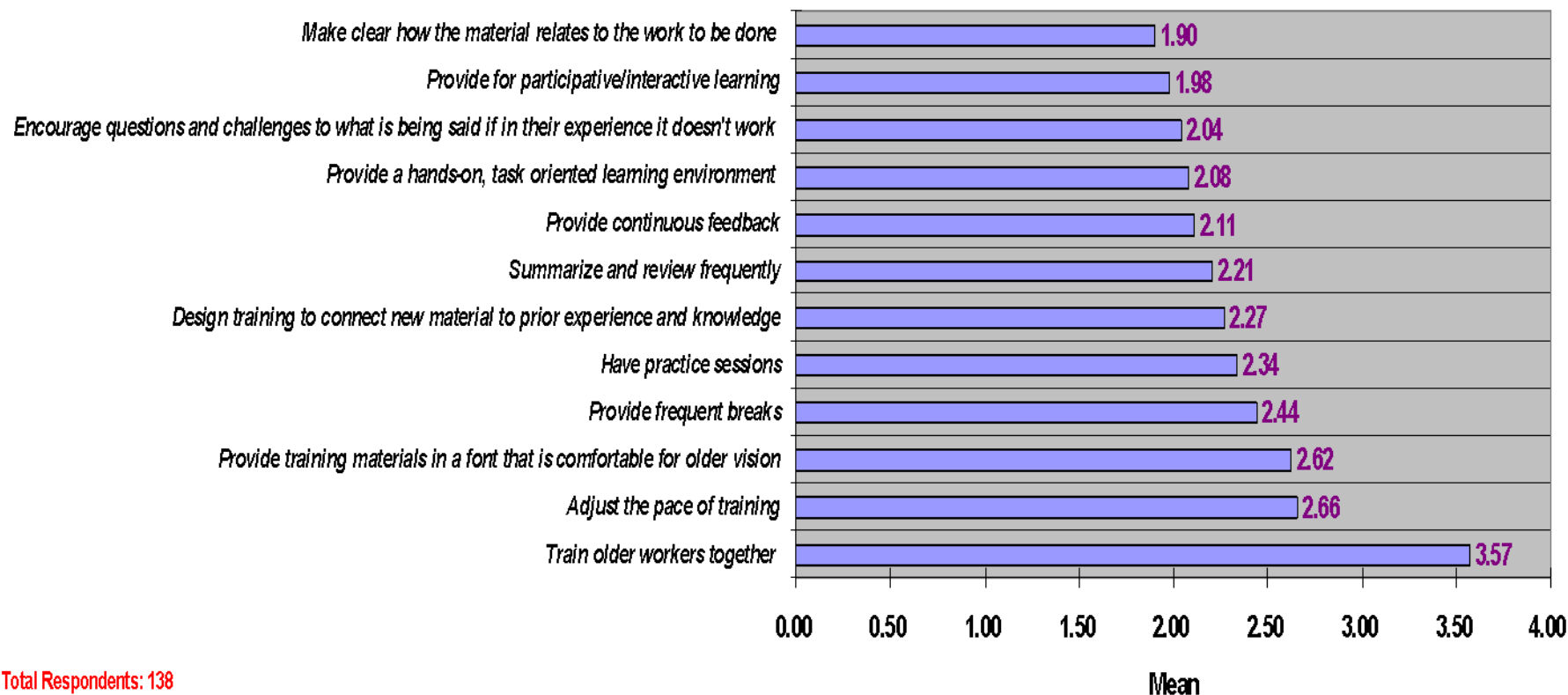
# Improving Healthcare through First-Line Supervisory Development training programs

- Communication
- Conflict management & problem solving
- Human resources
- Cultural diversity
- Coaching and mentoring
- Dealing with customers



# Employer Practices in Designing Training for Older Workers

Q7: When designing training for older workers, to what extent do you

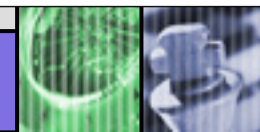


Total Respondents: 138

Skipped this question: 70

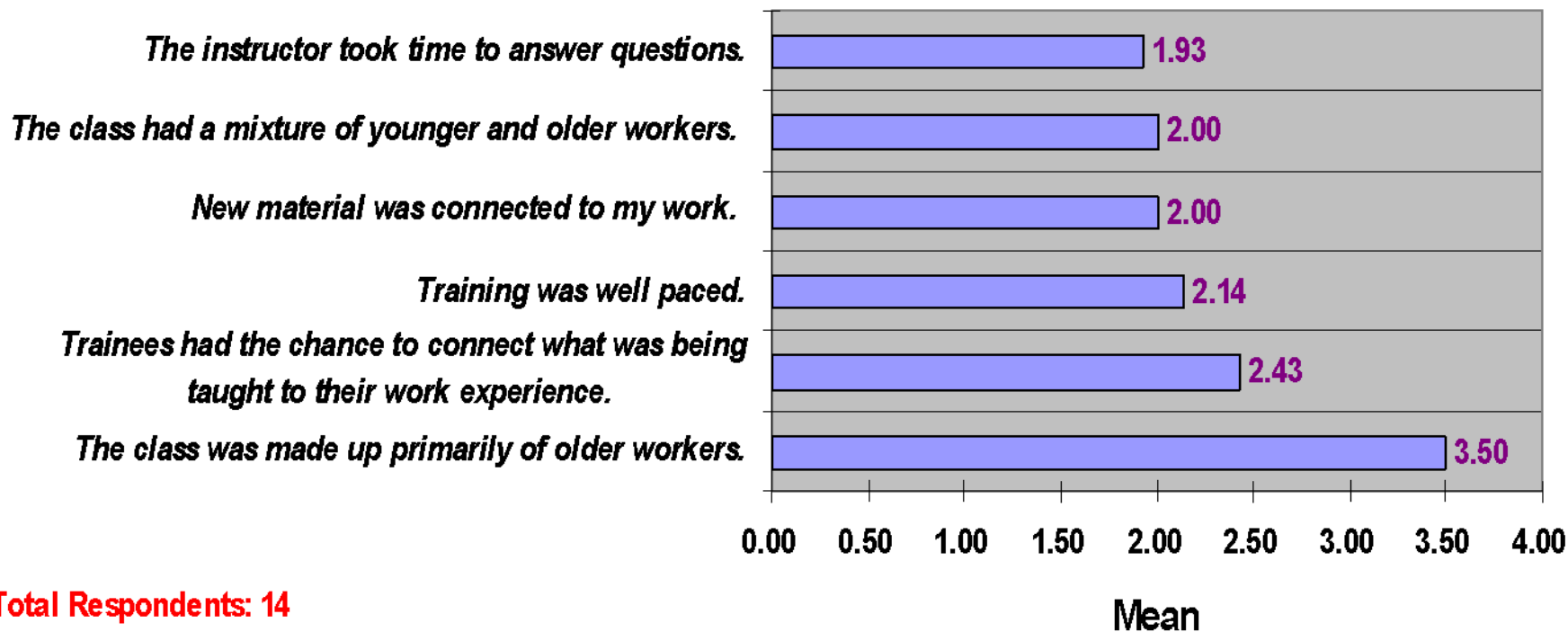
Scale: 1 = Strongly agree; 2 = Agree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Disagree; 5 = Strong Disagree

Source: Reaser, J., Spokus, D., Sterns, H., & Rothwell, W. (2006). *A Survey of Employers*. Unpublished survey results. Arlington, VA: National Older Worker Career Center (NOWCC). All rights reserved.

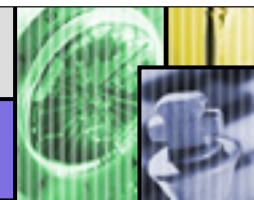


# What Do Older Workers Say Was Particularly Good About the Training They Last Attended?

**Q10: What was good about the last training program you attended and what needed improvement?**



Source: Reaser, J., Spokus, D., Sterns, H., & Rothwell, W. (2006). *A Survey of Older Workers*. Unpublished survey results.  
Arlington, VA: National Older Worker Career Center (NOWCC). All rights reserved.

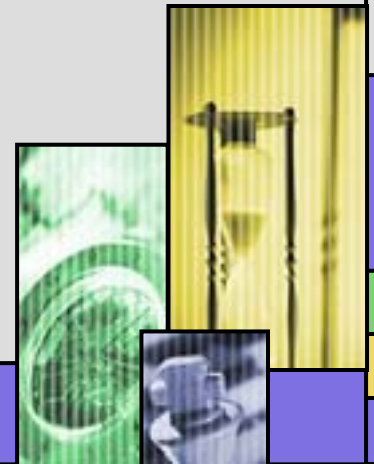


# Managing Older Workers

## Colleague Support

- ✚ Social & behavioral aspects make a difference in health and well-being.
- ✚ Social stimulation contributes to personal identity.
- ✚ Workplace provides sense of belonging & community.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Source: Federal Interagency Forum on Aging Related Statistics (2000). *Older Americans 2000: Key Indicators of Well-Being*.



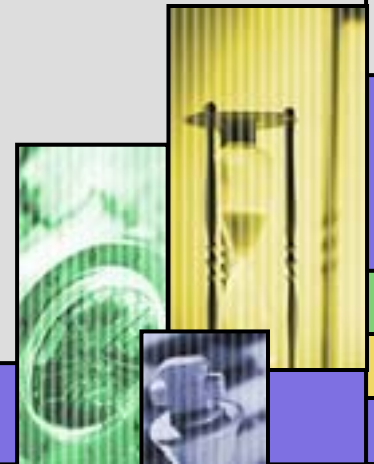
# Supervisors play a critical role in making work “work”

1. Job autonomy  
(control over work content, method and pace)
2. Workplace **flexibility**
3. Learning opportunities and challenges on the job
4. Supervisor support for job success
5. Involvement in management decision-making



# Supervisory Support

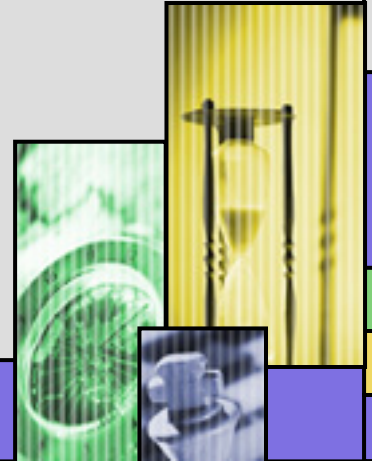
- ✚ Perceived as interpreters of organizational processes
- ✚ Predictors of retention rates



# Retention

“One of the most important determinants of remaining in the work force is feeling valued, appreciated, and respected within the company.”<sup>1</sup>

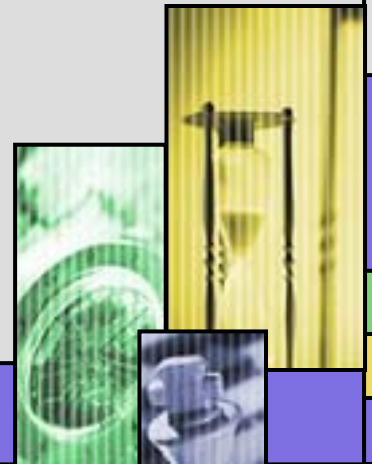
<sup>1</sup>Source: Sterns, H. & Sterns, A. (2005). Past and future directions for career development theory. In *Thriving on an aging workforce: Strategies for organizational and systematic change*. Paulette B. Beatty and Roemer M. Visser (Eds.). Malabar, FL: Krieger.



# Cost of Turnover

- ✚ In the health care industry, the per-patient cost was 35% greater in centers with high nurse turnover.<sup>1</sup>

Source: *A Business Perspective on Workplace Flexibility: When Work Works, An Employer Strategy for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Institute for a Competitive Workforce, 2005, p. 2, and *Talent Keepers News*, II (3), Summer 2003, p. 1.





# Recruitment

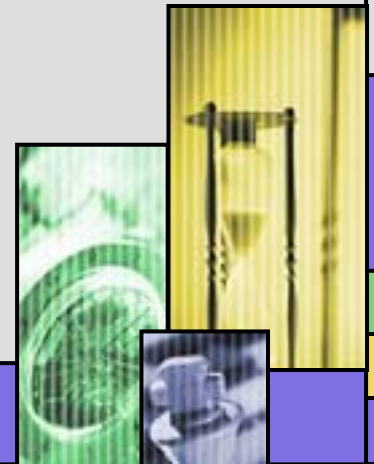
## Trends in the Work Place Include:

- ✚ Shift away from goods—producing industries & growth in the service & trade industries.
- ✚ Decline in long-term careers in one organization & emerging need for workers to develop portfolio for an open market.
- ✚ Understanding that careers can no longer be studied & managed without taking into consideration the context of the family such as work/family life issues.



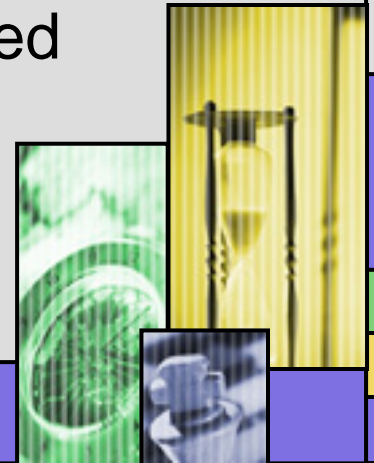
# Outdated HR Policies

- + Offer early outs to retirees
- + Glass ceilings
- + Questionable job security
- + Lack of flexibility



# What can Employers Do?

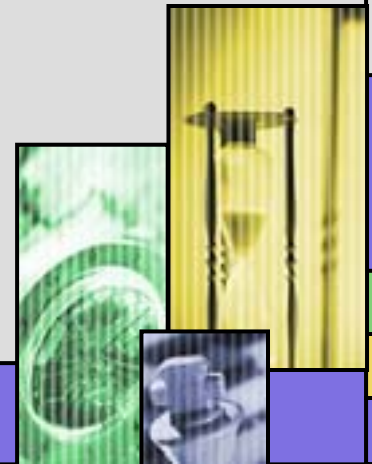
- Job redesign, sharing or transfer
- Phased retirement rather than “Cliff” retirement
- Workplace Healthy Lifestyle Programs
- Part-time retirement
- Flextime and flex locations
- Bridge employment
- Consulting partners/unretirement
- Contracting for time-limited periods on assigned projects as ambassadors
- Mentors and coaches



# Age-Related Tips<sup>1</sup>

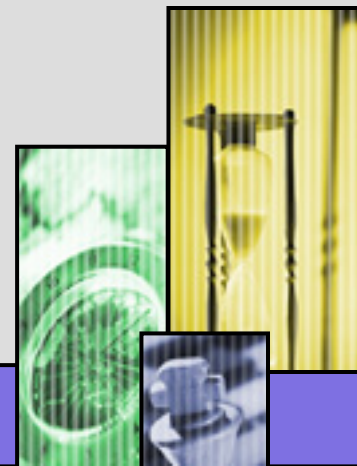
- + Design/redesign workstation due to physical needs
- + Install adjustable light sources to enhance select areas.
- + Provide lift aids
- + Provide rest
- + Avoid rapid, awkward & repetitive actions
- + Provide foot traction

<sup>1</sup>Sterns, A.A. , Sterns, H. L. and Hollis, L.A. (1996) The productivity and functional limitations of older adult workers. In W. C. Crown (Ed.) *Handbook on employment and the elderly*. Pp. 276-303. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press.



## Research Study:

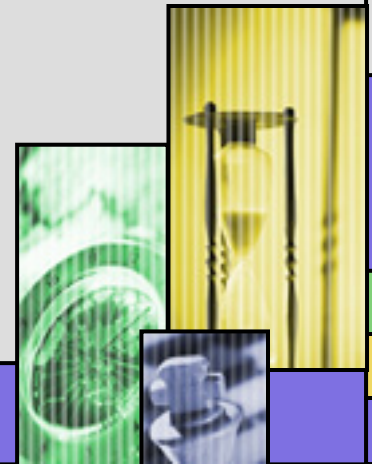
***What Best Practices do  
Employers Report Regarding  
Recruitment, Training and  
Managing Older Workers?***



# Results

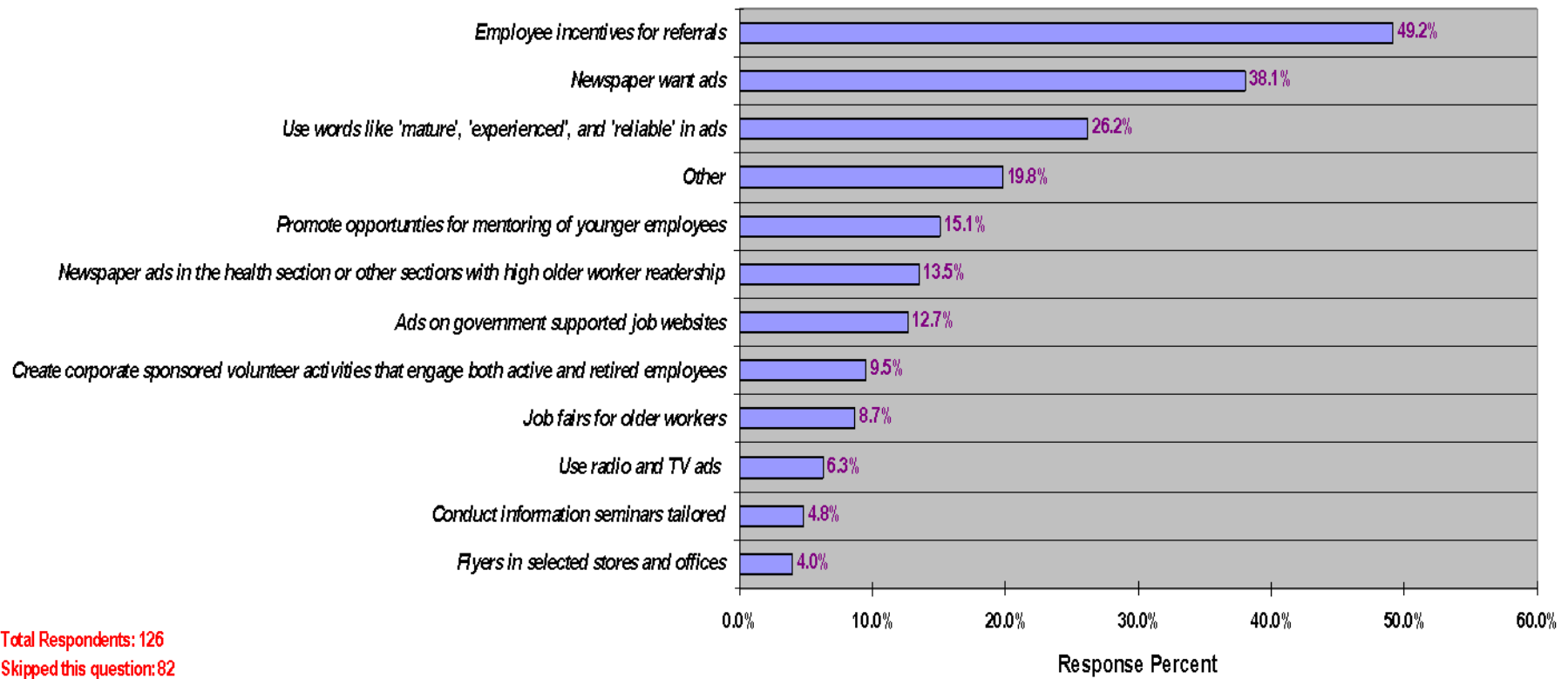
Responses indicate:

- 49% used employee incentives for referrals to recruit older workers.
- 57.7% use flex-time work schedules as incentives to hire and retain older workers.
- 58.6% of older workers are flexible and open to change.
- 31.9% invite retirees and semi-retirees to holiday events and get-togethers to maintain personal and professional ties.



# How does your organization recruit older workers?

Q5: How does your organization recruit older workers?



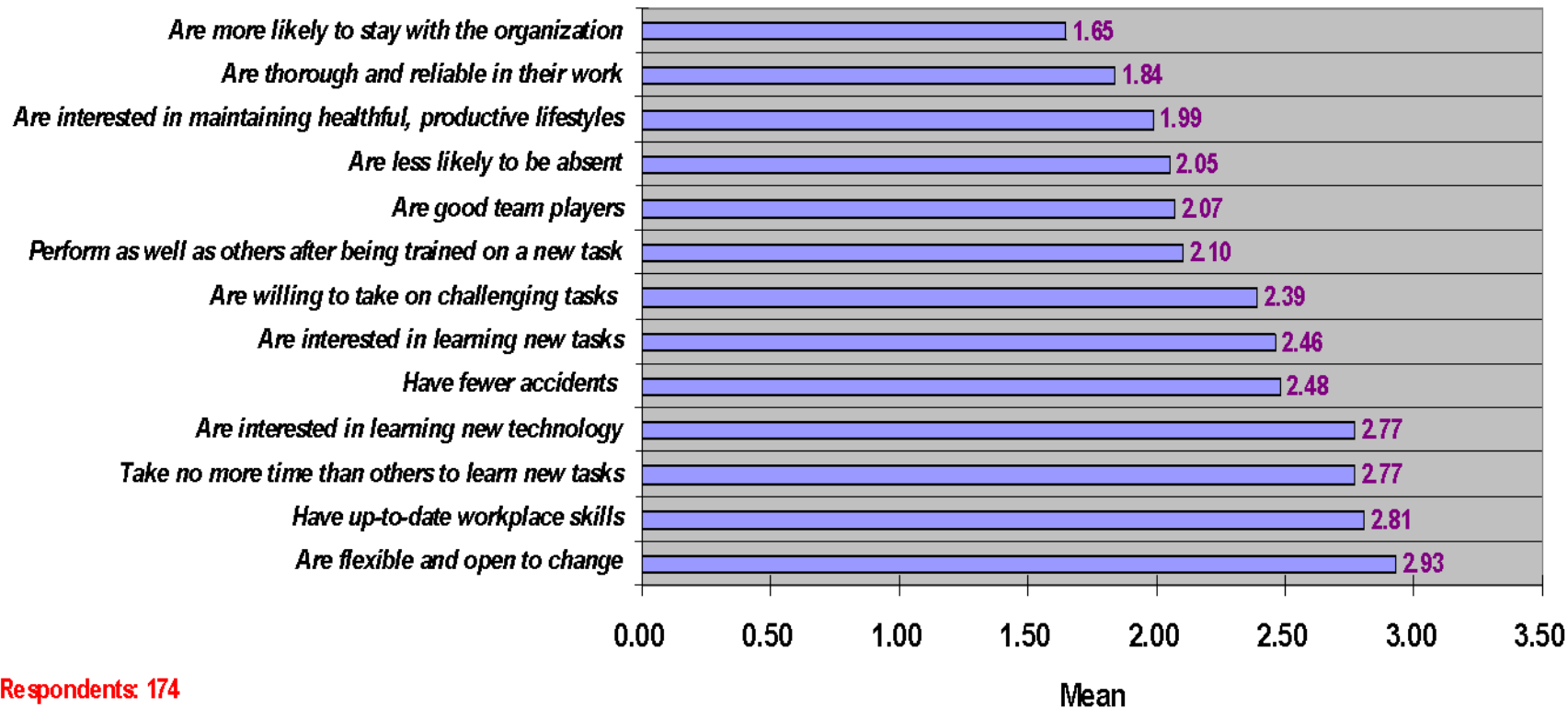
Source: Reaser, J., Spokus, D., Sterns, H., & Rothwell, W. (2006). *A Survey of Employers*.

Unpublished survey results. Arlington, VA: National Older Worker Career Center (NOWCC). All rights reserved.



# To what extent is each of the following true in your experience with your older workers?

Q2: To what extent is each of the following true in your experience with your older workers?



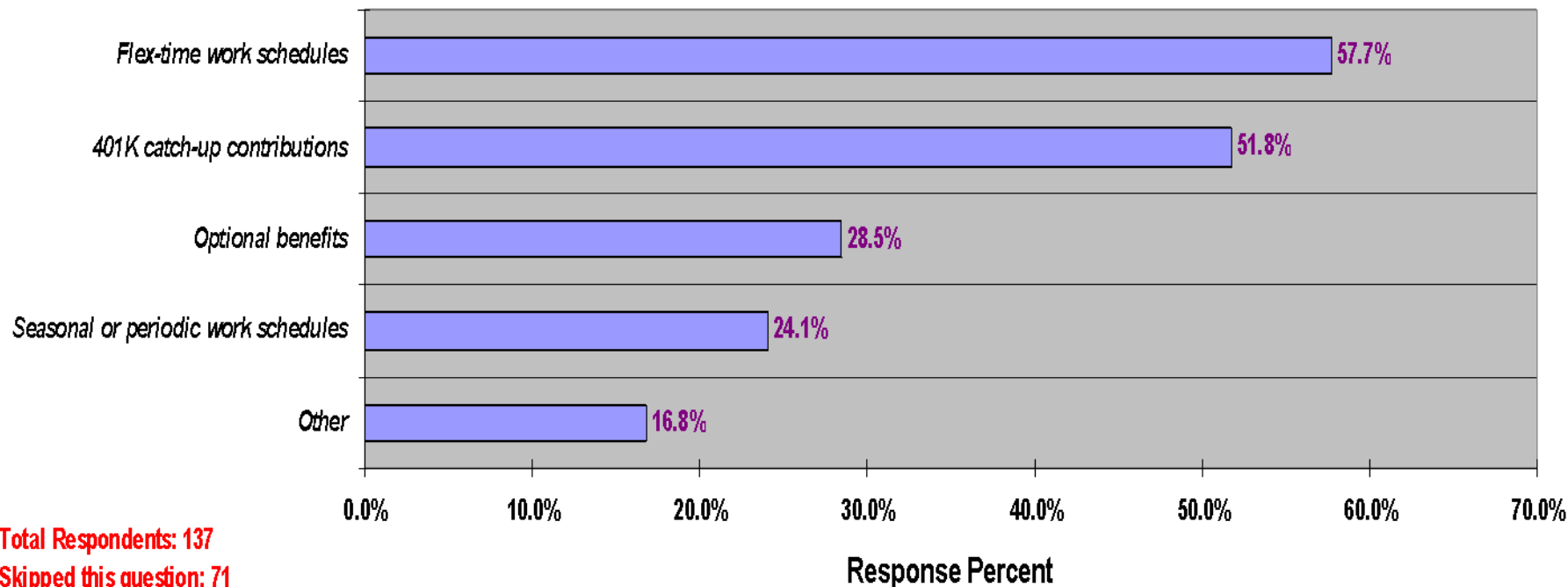
Total Respondents: 174  
Skipped this question: 34





# What incentives are considered by your organization when deciding to hire or retain an older worker?

Q4: What incentives are considered by your organization when deciding to hire or retain an older worker?



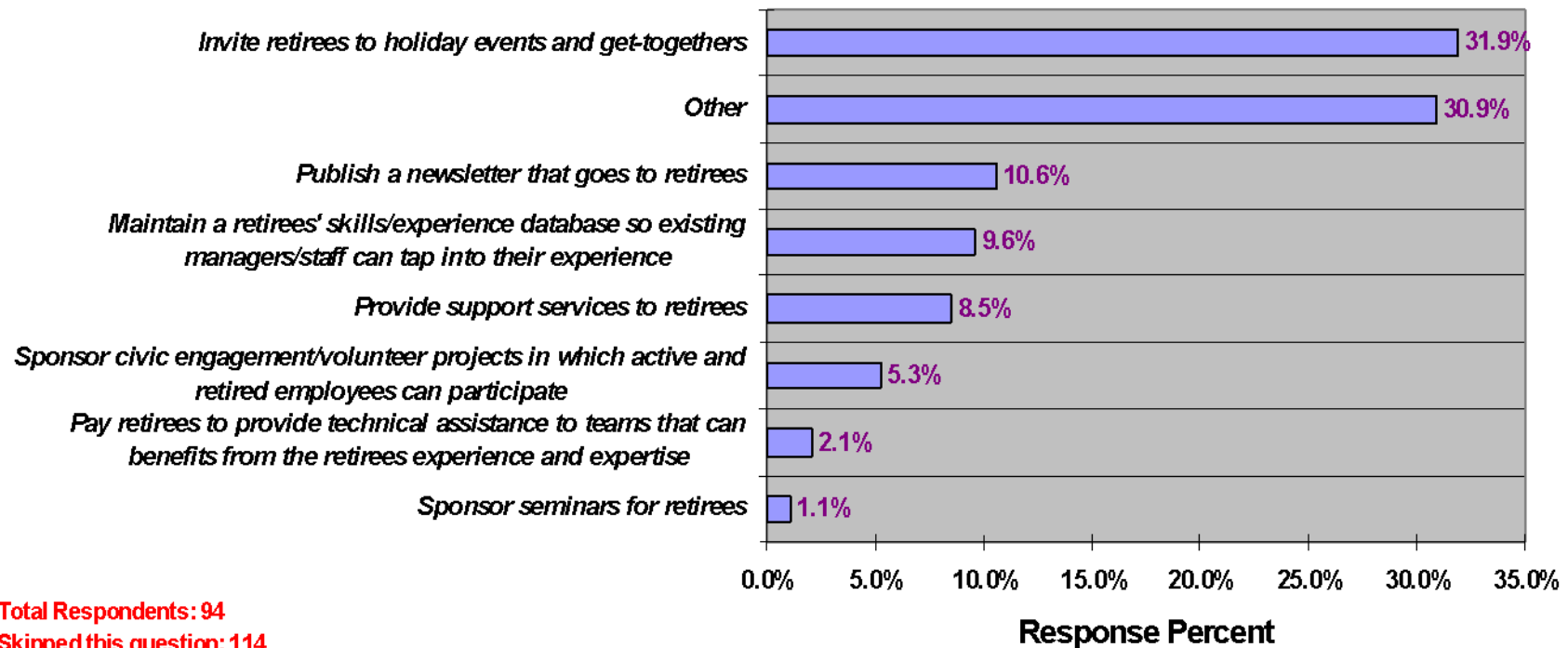
Source: Reaser, J., Spokus, D., Sterns, H., & Rothwell, W. (2006). *A Survey of Employers*.

Unpublished survey results. Arlington, VA: National Older Worker Career Center (NOWCC). All rights reserved.



# What approaches does your organization use to maintain personal and professional ties with retirees & semi-retirees?

**Q14: What approaches does your organization use to maintain personal and professional ties with retirees and semi-retirees?**



**AMA**  
INNOVATIONS  
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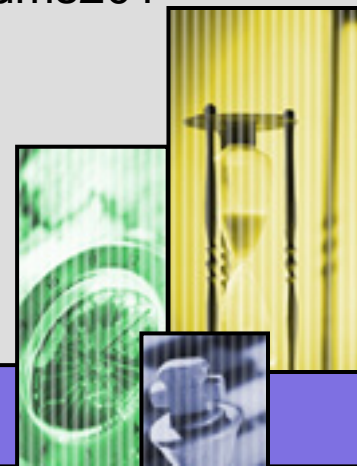
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# References

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