



# A PROTOCOL FOR SERVING OLDER WORKERS





EXPERIENCED      QUALIFIED      RESPONSIBLE      TALENTED

The Employment and Training Administration (ETA) is pleased to announce the release of the Protocol for Serving Older Workers. The protocol outlines a set of action steps that key stakeholders need to embrace to achieve the stated goal of connecting employers to older workers and older workers to jobs. These strategies will help address potential worker shortages by providing workforce services to older Americans and exploring ways for engaging older workers in response to the rapidly changing skills demands of business.

*“Older workers are important to the development of a diverse workforce, which helps in serving a diverse customer base that includes many older people. They serve as role models for younger people and excel in such areas as customer service.”*

Steve Wing  
Director of Government Programs  
CVS Corporation



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*“Mature workers bring stability, loyalty and wisdom to today’s workplace and Express recognizes their desire to continue working, at least part-time, well into the future.*

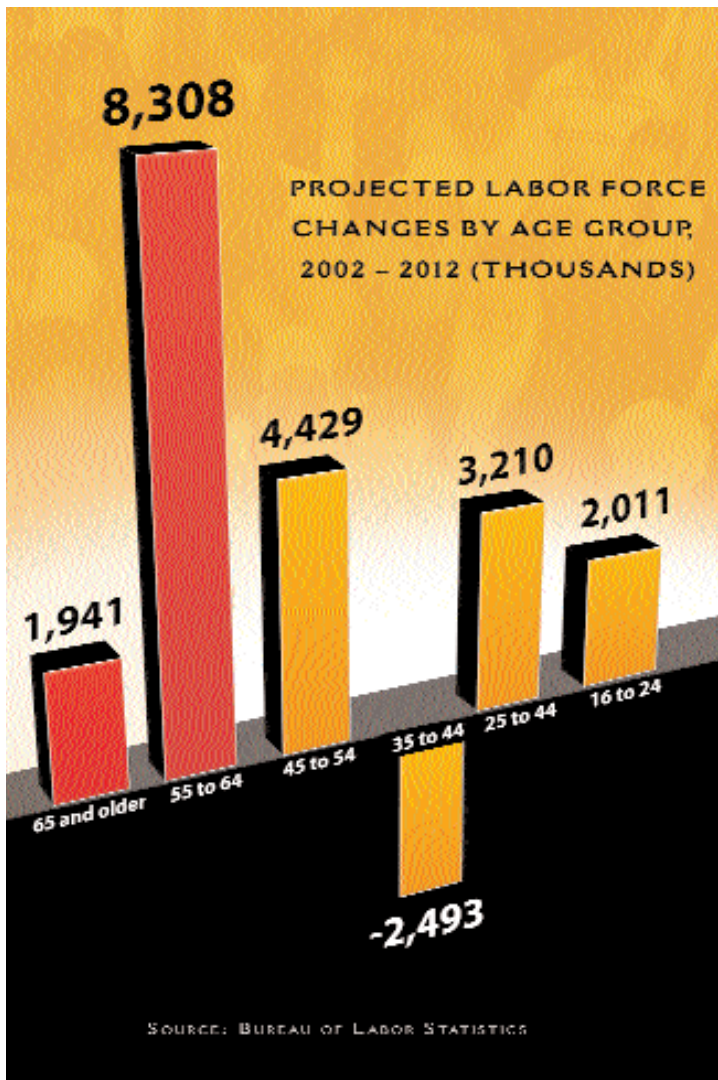
*In the coming years, the workforce will shrink as many Baby Boomers retire, leaving a gap the younger, smaller generations will be unable to fill. To lessen the impact of the approaching labor shortfall, employers need to recognize the strengths of mature workers and increase recruiting and hiring of this population.*

*Education makes the difference between surviving and thriving in today’s generational marketplace.”*

Robert A. Funk  
Founder, Chairman of the Board, and Chief Executive Officer  
Express Personnel Services

Our goal is to infuse the One-Stop Career Center system with innovative strategies for tapping into an underutilized labor pool. The strategies will help address potential worker shortages by providing workforce services to older Americans and exploring ways for engaging older workers in response to the rapidly changing skills demands of business.

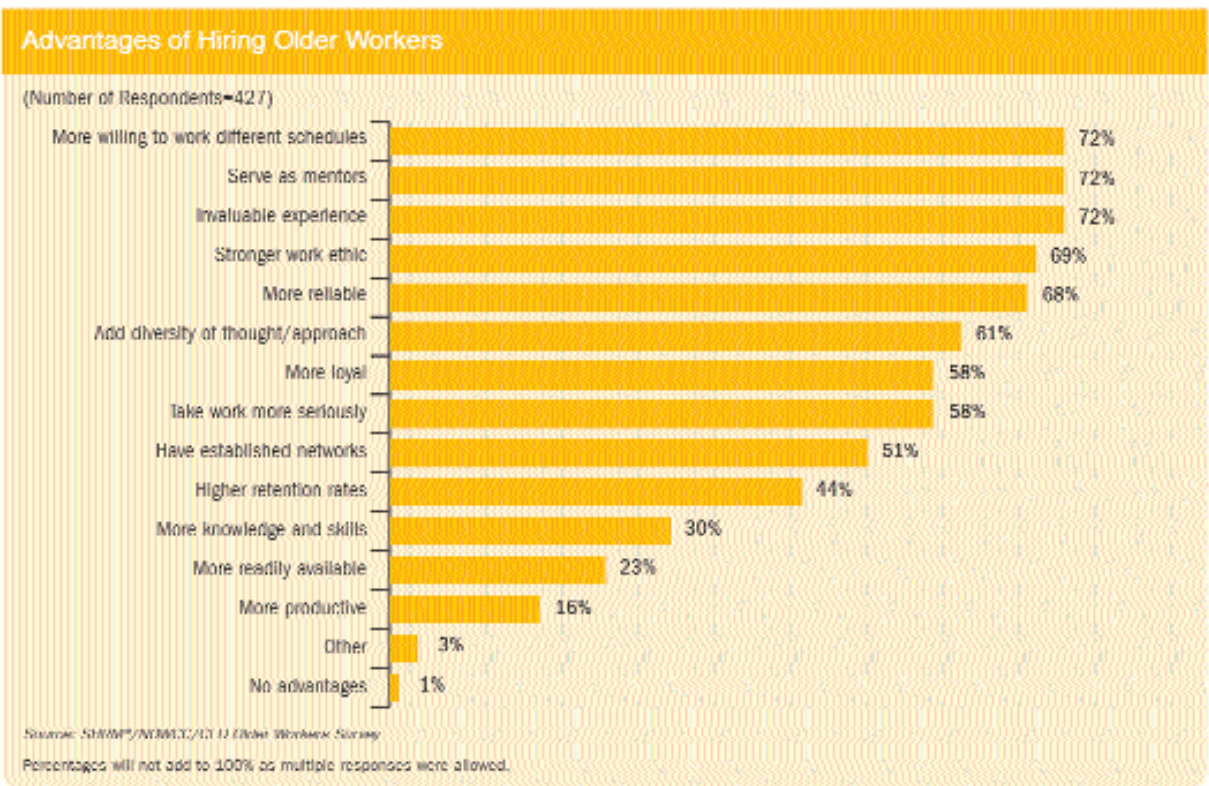
By 2030, as the baby boom generation ages, 20 percent of the population, or about 70 million Americans, will be 65 or older, compared to 12 percent today. Given



current immigration policies and retirement trends, combined with lower birth rates in recent years, the aging and retirement of the baby boom generation will likely result in a workforce that will be growing more slowly and becoming more diverse. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, as the participation rate of older age groups increases, the older population's share of the workforce will also rise.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Toosi, M. (February 2004). Labor force projections to 2012: the graying of the U.S. workforce. *Monthly Labor Review*. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Whether they are planning on starting a new career, continuing work in their current jobs, or searching for rewarding part-time work opportunities, mature workers, aged 55 or older, possess the essential qualities needed for today's jobs. Employers are beginning to recognize the value that older workers bring to the workplace including responsibility, loyalty, dedication, and their ability to be effective mentors to younger employees.



Older workers' value lies in their attention to detail, emphasis on customer service, and the technical skills and experience they bring from the medical, engineering, and manufacturing fields.

Although the One-Stop system serves a significant number of older workers (5.6 percent of those served during Program Year 2002 were aged 55 or older<sup>2</sup>), it has historically directed mature workers to the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP). While SCSEP is a valuable asset for serving older workers, it should not be the only option available to them. SCSEP, in fact, serves only low-income individuals aged 55 or older and has the capacity to serve approximately one percent of the eligible population. This approach has limited business and industry access to older workers and mature workers' choice with regards to the myriad of workforce investment services available for them through the One-Stop Career Centers. Mature workers provide One-Stop Career Centers with an invaluable asset for meeting the needs of their business customers.

It is important for the workforce investment system to capitalize on this talented pool of workers by ensuring that the full array of One-Stop Career Center services are made available to them.

Our workforce investment system must be geared to serve a larger number of older workers by forging partnerships with business, industry

and mature worker intermediaries to ensure successful placement of older workers in jobs and to rapidly respond to business demand. Businesses, on their part, need to

**Advantages of Hiring Older Workers Compared to Other Workers by Industry**

	Number of Respondents	Established Networks of Contacts/Clients
Educational services	30	53%
Government	20	50%
Health	33	49%
High tech	23	91%
Manufacturing (durable goods)	35	57%
Manufacturing (nondurable goods)	27	44%
Services (nonprofit)	27	48%
Services (profit)	59	39%

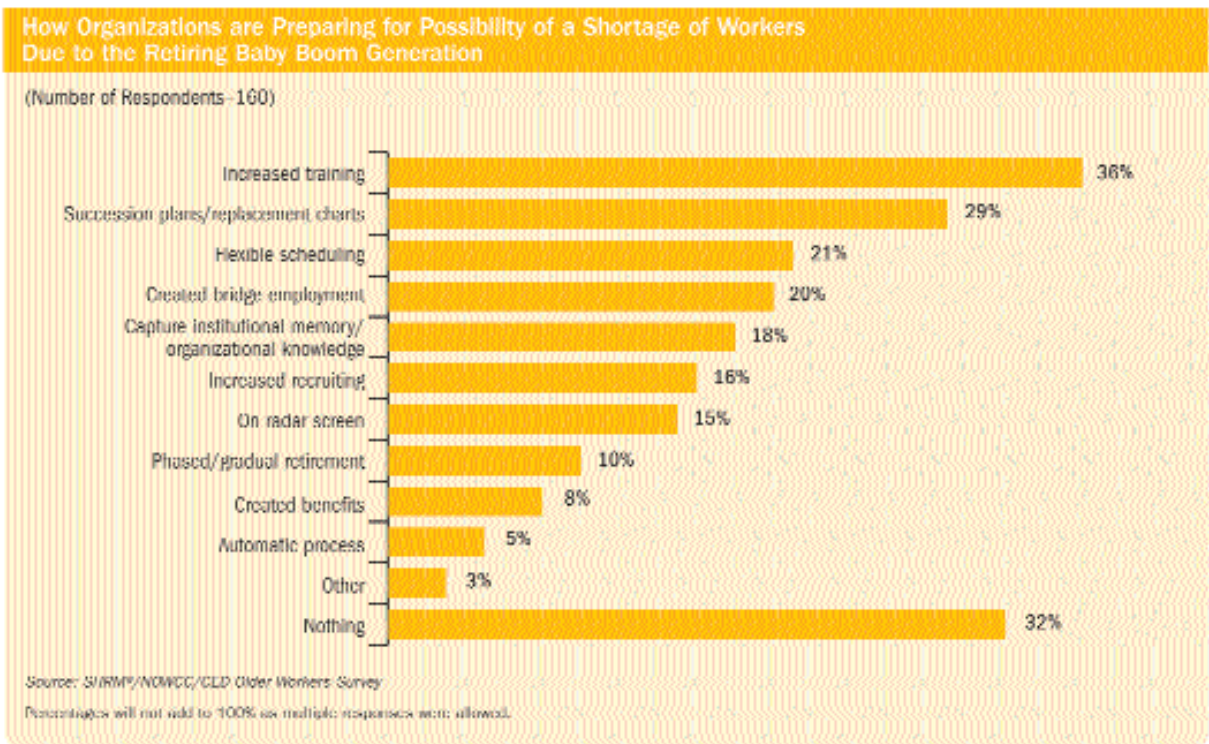
Note: Sample sizes of the industry categories are based on the number of respondents answering the industry question; however, the statistics shown are based on the actual number of respondents by industry that answered the question using the provided response options.

Source: SHRM's/NOVOC/CEC Older Workers Survey

Percentages will not total 100% as multiple responses were allowed.

<sup>2</sup> Social Policy Research Associates. (April 2, 2004). PY 2002 WIA Summary Report - Adults. [http://www.doleta.gov/Performance/results/WIASRD/PY2002/WIA\\_Summary\\_02\\_adult.pdf](http://www.doleta.gov/Performance/results/WIASRD/PY2002/WIA_Summary_02_adult.pdf)

develop strategies to attract and retain older workers, such as introducing alternative work arrangements and phased retirement programs.



*“We value all our employees, regardless of their ages. I’m sure we all will benefit from their experience and proven track records.”*

Ronald R. Peterson  
President  
The Johns Hopkins Hospital and Health System



The following outlines a set of action steps the various stakeholders need to embrace to achieve the stated goal of connecting employers to older workers and older workers to jobs.

## Stakeholders:

The success of the strategies to provide better services to businesses and older workers revolves around the full engagement of the stakeholders' capacities and resources. In devising the respective protocol, six stakeholders have been identified:

1. U.S. Department of Labor
2. State Workforce Investment Boards (WIB)
3. Local Workforce Investment Boards (WIB)
4. One-Stop Career Centers
5. Mature Worker Intermediaries and Service Providers
6. Business and Industry

## **U.S. Department of Labor**

### **Proposed Action Steps:**

- Provide leadership to the public workforce investment system through policy issuances and models for effective strategies for linking mature workers to businesses that need skilled workers, such as the national partnership between AARP and a number of major businesses, i.e., Home Depot.
- Promote increased awareness and use of electronic tools, such as Monster.com, Career Builder, and the CareerOneStop operating system, including the Online Coach — a tutorial resource on utilizing the E-Tools — to enhance job search and placement services to untapped labor pools such as mature workers. ([www.CareerOneStop.org](http://www.CareerOneStop.org))
- Promote partnerships that educate and assist businesses in connecting to the full range of services provided by the local workforce investment system. Heighten awareness of the crucial role mature workers play in the 21st century workforce among national employers and partners.
- Work collaboratively with state and local partners to develop outreach strategies geared towards untapped labor pools such as older workers, utilizing existing efforts such as the High Growth Job Training Initiative.
- Assess the current Workforce Investment Act (WIA) performance goals for One-Stop partner programs to determine unintended consequences (i.e., not considering part-time job positions as a performance measure) that might have a negative impact on One-Stop incentives to serve untapped labor pools such as older workers.



## State Workforce Investment Boards

### Proposed Action Steps:

- Develop state policies and requirements that direct and support the development and inclusion of enhanced services to older workers in the statewide workforce investment system.
- Negotiate WIA performance standards with the U.S. Department of Labor that better reflect the services offered to older workers by One-Stop partner programs.

*“At UHS we’ve always relied upon the strong contributions of our mature workers. The skills, experience, and reliability they bring to their jobs are invaluable to the success of our company. In 10 years, 20 percent of all workers will be 55 and older, which we see as very positive for UHS.*”

*We will make every effort to recruit and retain this very critical workforce over the next several years.”*

Alan Miller  
CEO

Universal Health Services



### Local Workforce Investment Boards

#### Proposed Action Steps:

- Conduct a local labor market environmental scan and an analysis of the labor shortages facing businesses and industry and the untapped labor pools in the local workforce investment area, relying on electronic tools such as the Quarterly Workforce Indicators (QWI), which reflect the local employment and demographic trends.

### Labor Market Information Example

Employment Projections by Major Occupational Categories, 2002-2012									
Occupation	2002		2012		Change: 2002-2012 Annual Average Job Openings				
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Total*	Growth*	Replacements
<b>Total, All Occupations</b>	<b>4,247,100</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>4,722,500</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>475,400</b>	<b>11.2</b>	<b>153,420</b>	<b>53,240</b>	<b>100,190</b>
Management, Business, and Financial Occupations	421,300	9.9	481,100	10.2	60,500	14.4	13,790	6,130	7,600
Professional and Related Occupations	823,700	19.4	985,600	20.9	161,900	19.7	32,170	16,300	15,880
Service Occupations	790,000	18.6	925,700	19.6	135,700	17.2	35,700	13,610	22,090
Sales and Related Occupations	469,600	11.1	522,300	11.1	52,800	11.2	20,400	5,390	15,010
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	827,700	19.5	849,400	18.0	21,600	2.6	24,100	5,130	18,980
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	4,100	0.1	5,400	0.1	1,300	32.3	250	130	110
Construction and Extraction Occupations	170,600	4.0	193,300	4.1	22,800	13.4	5,690	2,280	3,410
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	152,400	3.6	163,600	3.5	11,200	7.3	4,740	1,320	3,420
Production Occupations	244,700	5.8	226,300	4.8	-18,400	-7.5	6,060	270	5,800
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	343,100	8.1	369,100	7.8	26,100	7.6	10,530	2,690	7,840

- Use the **Power of e<sup>3</sup>** (employment, education, and economic development) to work collaboratively with business, industry, education and training providers, and economic development organizations to develop strategies for connecting the older worker population with businesses that are searching for skilled workers. Intermediary organizations are a valuable resource in making such a connection.



- Identify stable concentrations of businesses in a local workforce investment area that are experiencing labor shortages and channel their needs to achieve effective placement of untapped labor pools, including older workers.

- Forge partnerships with training and educational institutions, such as community colleges, that would provide intensive and targeted basic computer-literacy training courses to mature workers or other skill-based training to help equip mature workers with today's skills.
- Ensure that activities authorized under Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 are represented by membership on WIBs, as required by the Workforce Investment Act. These activities will assist WIBs by leveraging their expertise, outreach, and existing networks to enhance WIB decision-making.
- Institute education sessions geared to inform One-Stop staff of the unique aspects of serving mature workers.
- Develop a standard process of receiving feedback from area employers utilizing One-Stop Career Center services and engage in continuous improvement practices in response to this feedback.



MOU signing at the Lake County, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services.

Seated from left to right, first row: Robert J. Dawson, Program Administrator, Employment and Training Division; Paul Magnus, Vice President for Workforce Development, Mature Services, Inc., Martin Singer, One-Stop Career Center Administrator  
Standing, second row: Art Liacoano, Director, Department of Job and Family Services

### **One-Stop Career Centers**

#### **Proposed Action Steps:**

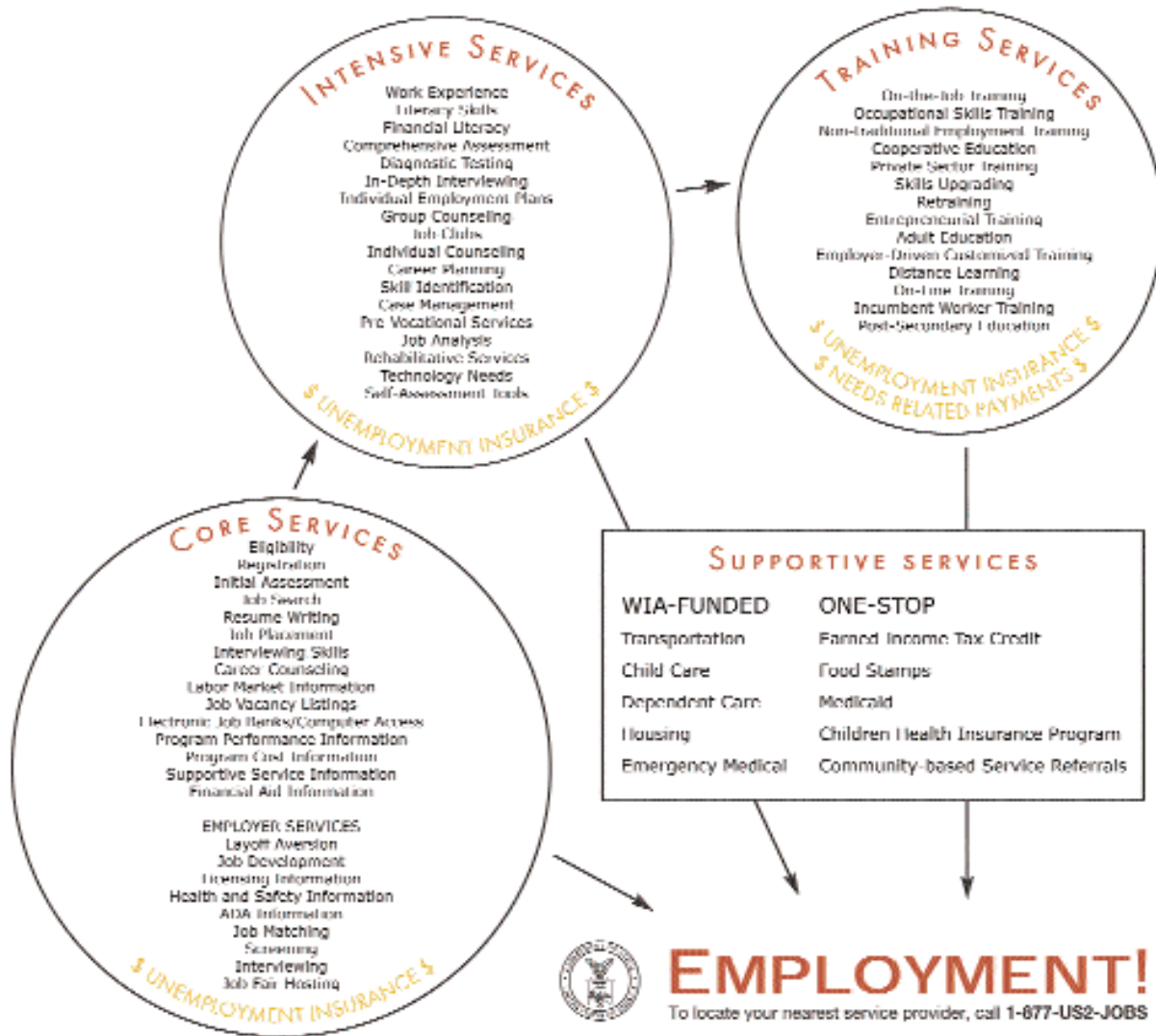
- Collaborate with business and industry to identify and post job vacancies appropriate for mature workers. One-Stop staff would then refer these workers to available job opportunities.
- Educate businesses about alternative work arrangements and phased retirement programs that may attract older workers.
- Use Mature Worker Service Providers as workforce intermediaries, reaching out to older workers and referring them to One-Stop Career Centers for services and developing working relationships with businesses interested in hiring mature workers.
- Ensure that staff is available to help mature workers navigate computer tools such as web-based software, etc.
- Offer a broad array of services, including intensive services, to older workers, based on the local workforce investment area's strategic plan. Align services to better serve older workers and provide workforce solutions to businesses.
- Stress personalized follow-up services and post-placement services to ensure employment retention and advancement.



A Mature Services meeting at the Cuyahoga County, Ohio Workforce Development Office

# One-Stop Career Centers

National System-Local Access 1-877-US2-JOBS



## One Stop Partners:

- Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Activities
- Employment Service
- Adult Education
- Post-Secondary Vocational Education
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Welfare-to-Work
- Title V of the Older Americans Act
- HUD Employment and Training Activities
- Trade Adjustment Assistance
- Veterans Employment and Training Programs
- Community Service Block Grant
- Unemployment Insurance
- Job Corps
- Indian and Native American Programs
- Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Programs

### **Mature Worker Intermediaries and Service Providers**

#### **Proposed Action Steps:**

- Create within their web sites interactive links to the U.S. Department of Labor’s CareerOneStop E-Tools, a collection of user-friendly, electronic tools that include America’s Job Bank, America’s Career InfoNet, America’s Service Locator, and the Online Coach.
- Provide the U.S. Department of Labor’s Toll-Free Help Line (1-877-US2-JOBS) with advance notice of upcoming workforce initiatives for enhanced coordination.
- Access national business partners who have a local presence and job openings through America’s Service Locator.
- Conduct outreach in local communities to educate businesses and community leaders about the advantages of hiring older workers.
- Serve mature workers by operating as a specialized recruitment arm for One-Stop Career Centers, working collaboratively to connect mature workers to employers with labor shortages.

*“Diversity is a central theme to management at Pitney Bowes. As America’s population ages, we see our ability to attract and retain employees of all ages—including people over 50—as an important part of workforce planning for the future.”*

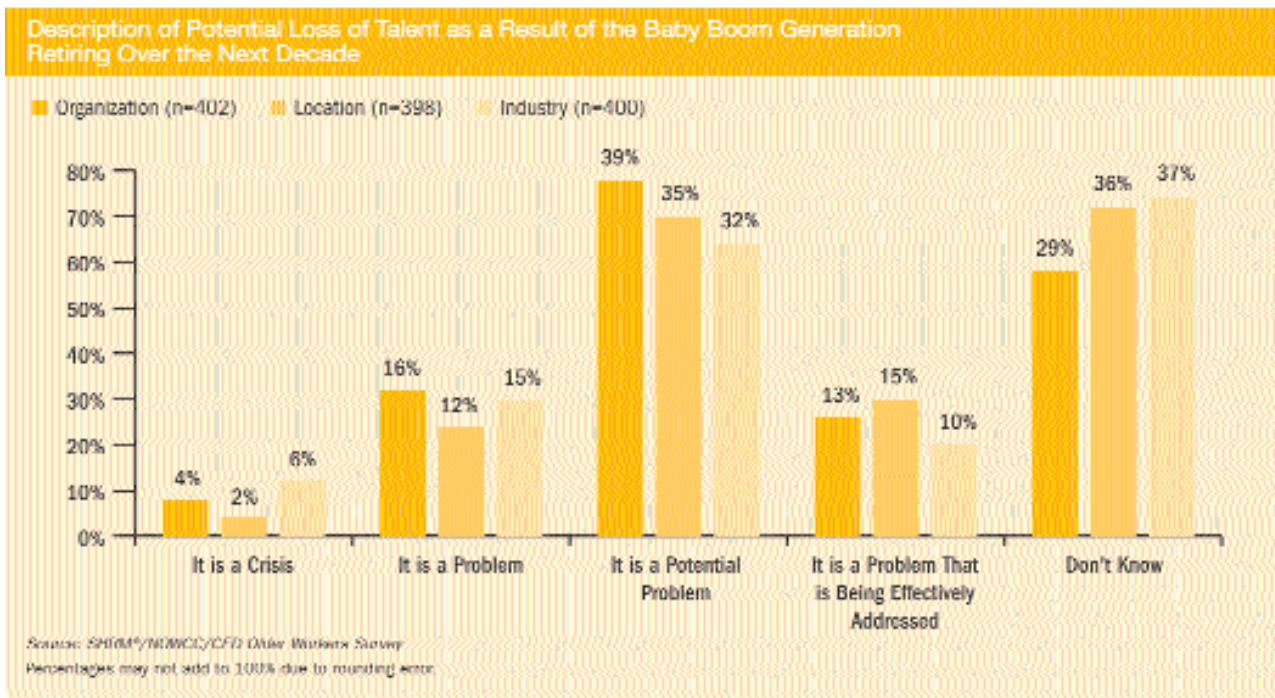
Johnna Torsone  
Senior Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer  
Pitney Bowes



## Businesses and Industry

### Proposed Action Steps:

- Participate on local WIBs as a strategic partner, assisting in the development of effective strategies for leveraging untapped labor pools and resources.
- Collaborate with One-Stop business resource staff to identify and post job vacancies.
- Partner with Mature Workers Intermediaries to recruit the mature worker labor pool through One-Stop Career Centers, reducing recruitment time and responding rapidly to business demand and worker shortages.
- Be receptive to advertising job opportunities, especially part-time and seasonal work opportunities, for mature workers utilizing America's Job Bank and state and local job posting services.
- Consider alternative work arrangements and phased retirement programs to attract mature workers and accommodate their needs.
- Provide feedback to the public workforce investment system about the quality of referrals and services received at local One-Stop Career Centers.



*This information reflects opinions concerning projected talent loss to respondents' organization, location, and industry as a result of the baby boom generation retiring over the next decade.*

## Resources

### **Books and Publications**

Coy, Peter with Brady, Diane, "Old. Smart. Productive," *Business Week*, June 27, 2005.

Dychtwald, Ken, Erickson, Tamara and Morison, Robert, *Retire Retirement, Rekindle Careers and Retain Talent*, 2005. <http://agewave.com/pubken.shtml>

Freudenheim, Ellen, "The Boomers' Guide to Good Work: An Introduction to Jobs That Make A Difference," 2005. <http://civicventures.com/guide.html>

Freudenheim, Milt, "More Help Wanted: Older Workers Please Apply," *The New York Times*, March 23, 2005.

Goggin, Judy and Roman, Bernie, "Our Next Chapter: Community Colleges and the Aging Baby Boomers," reprinted from: *League of Innovations Leadership Abstracts*, November 2004, Volume 17, Number 11. <http://civicventures.com/320.html>

Gornick, Mary Ellen, "The Aging Workforce: A Strategic Approach to Determining the Impact on Your Organization," 2004. <http://www.hr.state.tx.us/whatshappening/AgingWorkforce.pdf>

Mulvey, Janemarie and Nyce, Steven, "Strategies to Retain Older Workers," 2004. <http://rider.wharton.upenn.edu/~prc/PRC/WP/WP2004-13.pdf>

Wegman, David H. (Ed.) and McGee, J. (Ed.), *Health and Safety Needs of Older Workers*, 2004.

### **Surveys, Panels, and Forums**

*MetLife Foundation/Civic Ventures New Face of Work Survey*, 2005. <http://www.civicventures.org/survey.html>

Society for Human Resource Management, *Future of the U.S. Labor Pool Survey*, 2005. <http://www.shrm.org/>

U.S. Administration on Aging, Federal Interagency Forum on Aging-Related Statistics, *Older Americans 2004: Key Indicators of Well Being*. <http://www.agingstats.gov/chartbook2004/>

## **Department of Labor Resources**

### Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)

BLS is the principal fact-finding agency for the Federal Government in the broad field of labor economics and statistics. It provides extensive demographic information on wages, earnings and benefits; productivity; safety and health; occupations; employment and unemployment; and industries. <http://www.bls.gov/>

### Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA)

EBSA develops policies and regulations that encourage the growth of employment-based benefits. The agency is committed to educating workers and employers about private retirement plans and private health and welfare plans. <http://www.dol.gov/ebsa/>

### Employment and Training Administration (ETA)

One-Stop Career Centers provide job seekers and workers of all ages with access to programs and services that include career development and guidance, job search assistance, unemployment insurance benefits and financial aid assistance for training and education. They also provide businesses and human resources professionals with access to resumes, opportunities to post job openings, and the ability to locate other employers by industry. <http://www.careeronestop.org>

The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) is specifically targeted to persons 55 years of age or older whose incomes are no more than 125 percent of the federal poverty level. Participants are trained at local non-profit agencies so that they can gain on-the-job experience and prepare to re-enter the workforce. The ultimate goal of the program is to assist participants in obtaining a job that will allow them to be economically self-sufficient. <http://www.doleta.gov/seniors/>

## **Opportunities for Involvement**

2005 White House Conference on Aging. The conference occurs once a decade to make aging policy recommendations to the President and Congress, and to assist the public and private sectors in promoting the dignity, health, independence and economic security of current and future generations of older persons. <http://www.whcoa.gov>

Workforce Innovations Conference. ETA's annual premier national workforce investment conference, attended by business leaders, government officials and workforce development professionals. <http://www.workforceinnovations.org/>

Notes



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Age is an asset. Experience, a benefit.