



Connecting Across Generations: *Managing Bias In An Age Diverse Workplace*

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During a Communication Training...



A MEMORABLE
COFFEE *BREAK*

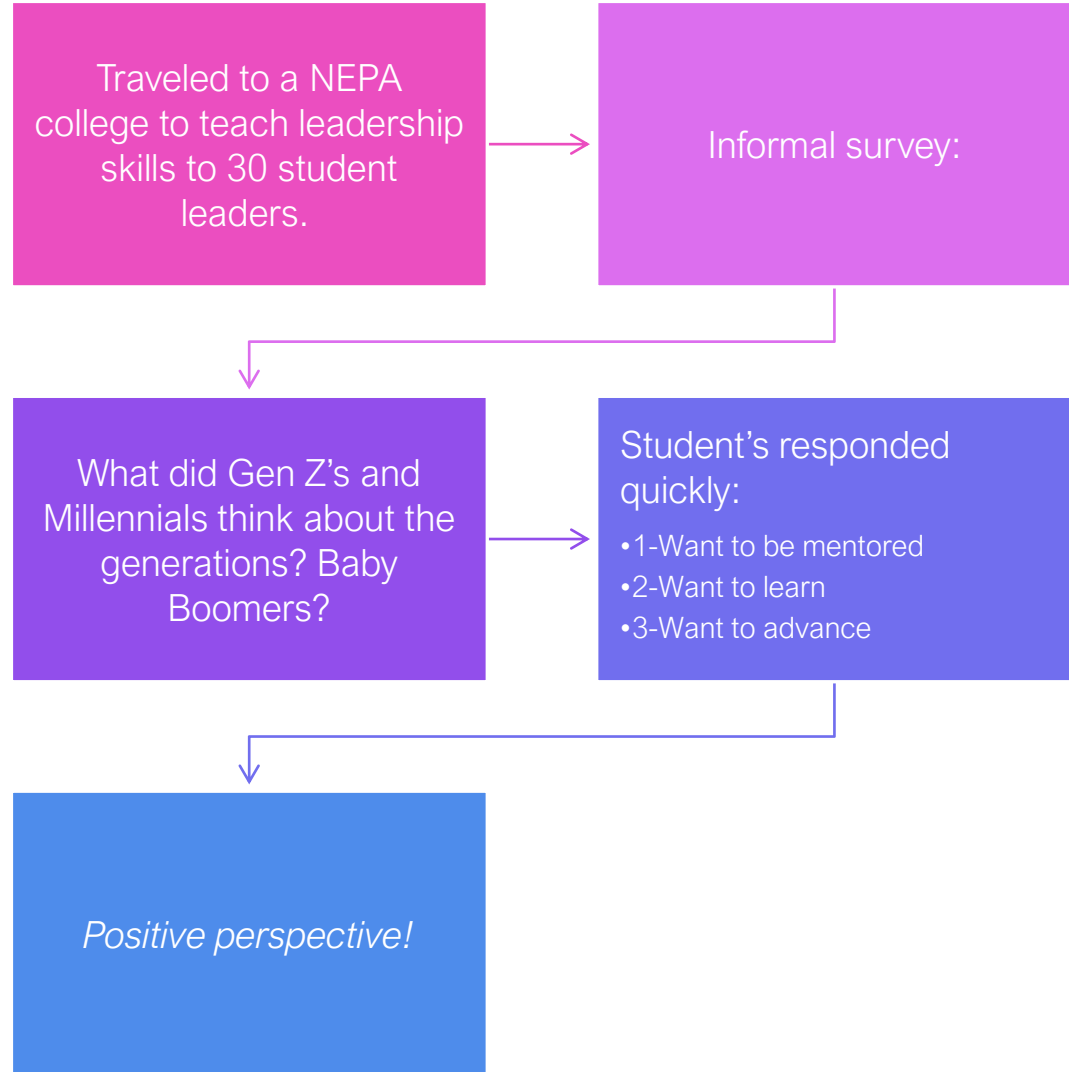


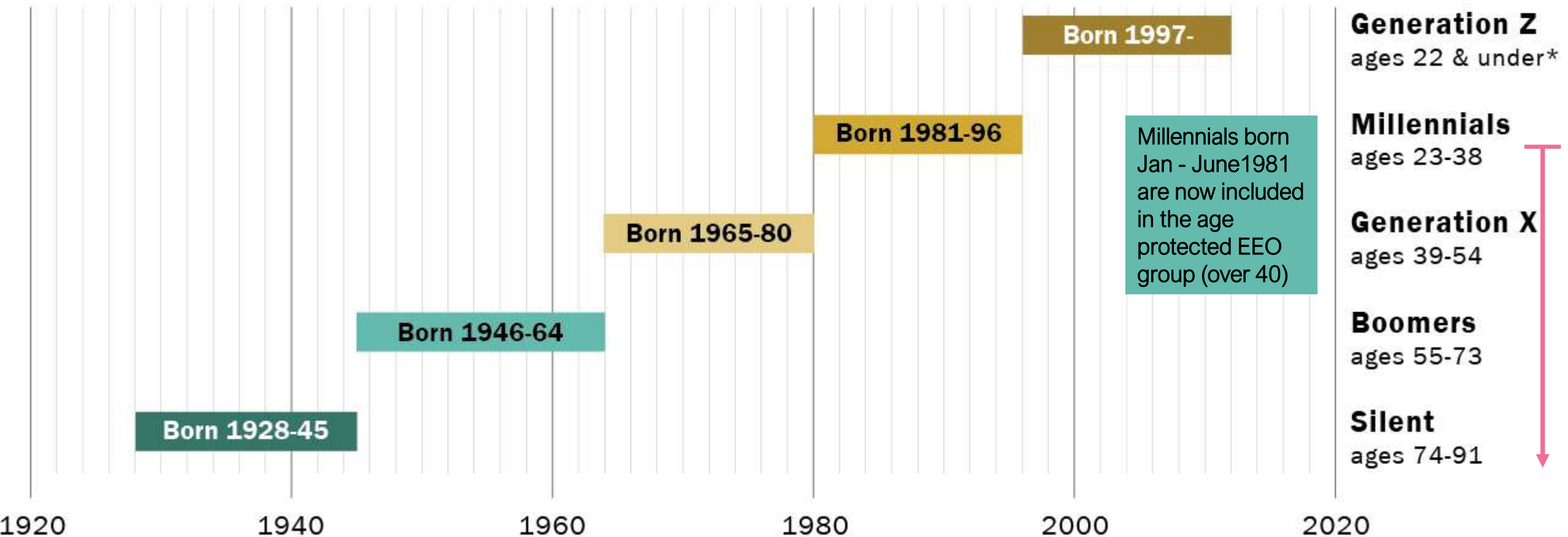
A FRUSTRATED BOOMER REMARKED



“YOU KNOW *THOSE* MILLENNIALS...”

Later That Same Day





Who we are?

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Generational Motivators and Preferences

Traditionalists, The Greatest Generation/Veterans

- Loyal employees
- Key events: World War II, Great Depression
- Value, impact

Baby Boomers

- Goal-oriented, promotions
- Expertise valued
- Face to face communication

Generation X

- Work independently
- Advancement on competence, not rank, age, seniority
- Email and short messages

Generation Y or Millennials


- Training, mentoring, feedback, teamwork, social impact
- Respond to recognition and flexible schedules
- Regular, informal communication: company chat, social networks, text or email

Generation Z


- Social rewards, mentorship and meaningful work that impacts
- Key events: COVID Pandemic
- Most tech-savvy, at work, face to face communication

*Key facts
about our
multi-
generational
workforce:*

Over 50 population will be staying in the workforce longer than ever before with a majority of baby boomers still in the workforce.



Millennial generation will account for the largest percentage of workers in the workplace. In 2020, Millennials comprise 50 percent of the American workforce. By 2025, 75 percent of the global workforce.



Generation Z is moving in. Youngest generation, graduating high school and college, and steadily entering the workplace. Projected that Gen Z comprised 36 percent of the workforce in 2020.

What is Age Discrimination/Age Bias?

Treating an applicant or employee less favorably because of his or her age.

“The Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) forbids age discrimination against people who are age 40 or older. It does not protect workers under the age of 40, although some states have laws that protect younger workers from age discrimination. It is not illegal for an employer or other covered entity to favor an older worker over a younger one, even if both workers are age 40 or older.”

<https://www.eeoc.gov/age-discrimination>

Question for Jim:

What laws protect older workers? What are some of the basic provisions our audience should be aware of?

OVERVIEW: AGE BIAS IN THE WORKPLACE

AARP WORKPLACE SURVEY 2018:

- Nearly 2 out of 3 workers ages 45 and older have seen or experienced age discrimination on the job.
- Among the 61 percent of respondents who reported age bias, 91 percent said they believe that such discrimination is common.

AGE BIAS IN THE WORKPLACE

US Workers are Aging!

Recent Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Data:

Additional Data Points:

- In recent years, workers age 65 and older are staying in or re-entering the workforce in greater numbers.
- People are working longer today than their parents and grandparents – why?
 - Current generations of older workers are generally healthier with longer life expectancies.
 - Eligibility for full Social Security benefits starts at later ages.
 - Demise of traditional pensions has shifted responsibility to employees for retirement income.
 - About half of private sector workers age 25-64 don't have an employer-sponsored plan of any type.



AGE BIAS IN THE WORKPLACE

US Workers are Aging!

Recent Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Data (cont.):

The most dramatic changes in the age of the labor force occurred in the last 25 years:

- The share of workers 55 and older in the workforce doubled.
- Workers 65 and older are staying in or re-entering the workforce in greater numbers.
- BLS estimates:
 - Workers 65 to 74 and 75 and older are expected to increase the fastest through 2024.
 - The age 65+ cohort is projected to grow 75 percent by 2050.
 - Workers 25 to 54 are only expected to grow 2 percent over this same period.
 - Women 55 and older are projected to make up over 25 percent of the women's labor force by 2024 – almost double their share from 2000.
 - Twice as many women over 55 will be in the labor force as women in the 16-24 cohort by 2024.

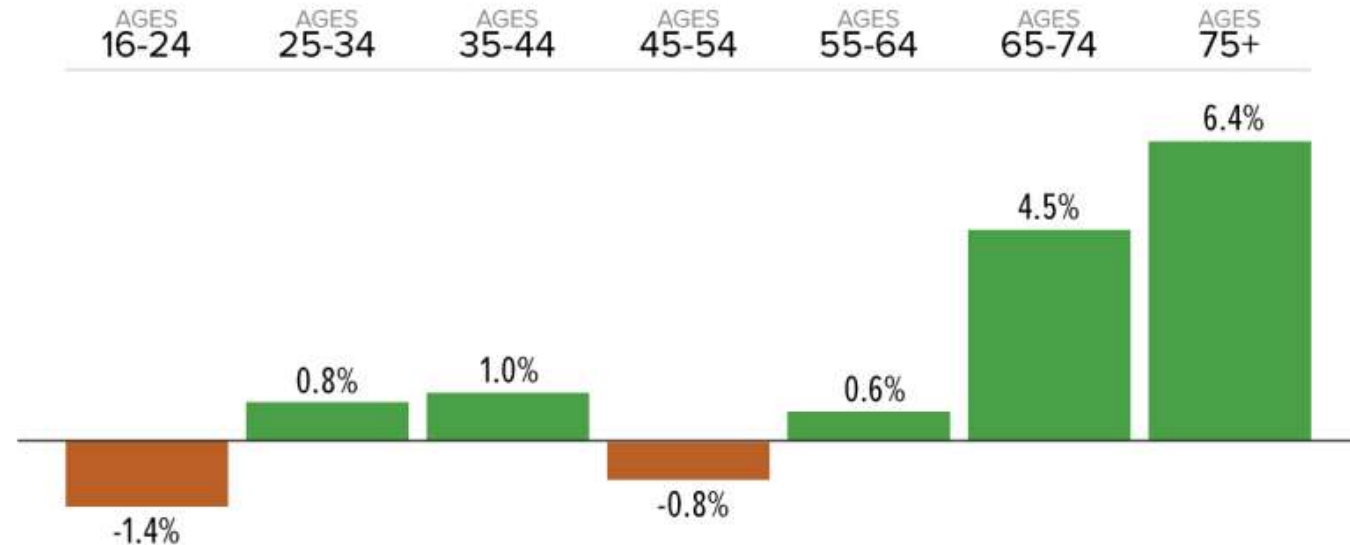


AGE BIAS IN THE WORKPLACE

US Workers are Aging!

Annual Growth Rate in Labor Force by Age

2014-2024 Predictions



Source: BLS



AGE BIAS IN THE WORKPLACE

Aging Workforce.... So What's My Point?

- Based on BLS data, a reasonable conclusion is that the available population of workers is aging, as the rate of growth in the younger worker population is dwarfed by the growth rate of older workers.
- Yet, according to a recent EEOC study....
 - Today's older workers still confront unfounded and outdated assumptions about age and ability and age discrimination persists.
 - Despite decades of research finding that age does not predict ability or performance, employers often fall back on precisely the ageist stereotypes the ADEA was enacted to prohibit.
 - After 50 years of a federal law the purpose of which is to promote the employment of older workers based on ability, age discrimination remains too common and too accepted.



AGE BIAS IN THE WORKPLACE

Aging Workforce.... So What's My Point?

Consequently....

- A reasonable assumption may be that if age bias persists as it has for the past several decades, and the available population of younger workers is disproportionately lower, employers may find that the pool of “desirable” talent may not meet future hiring demands.



Question for Jim:

If an employer knows they need to fill a position for at least 5 years, would it be legally permissible to rule out a 63 year old applicant?

AGE BIAS IN THE WORKPLACE

Potential Liability

- The EEOC's age discrimination statistics are divided into several categories, including charges, conciliations, settlements and litigation.
- Charge statistics include resolution recovery amounts, which for 2020 averaged just over \$30,000 per resolution.
- Settlement agreement and litigation verdict amounts tend to be much higher and may include non-monetary conditions, stipulating organizational and/or procedural changes.
 - Example: Jet Propulsion Labs, a California based R&D center laid off older workers in an effort to create an environment comprised of younger employees.
 - \$10 million settlement
 - 3 year consent decree to prevent other workplace discrimination
 - Company agreed to higher an EEO monitor, diversity director and layoff coordinator



HARD FACTS: AGE BIAS IN THE WORKPLACE

33% of people believe their age is putting their job at risk.

58% of workers in their fifties or older have noticed age discrimination first hand.

Of the people who experience age bias, 95% see it as a common occurrence in the workplace.

Employees aged 50+ are known as being the most engaged in the workplace, the most experienced.

Over the past 25 years, the percent of workers aged 55+ has doubled and rising. Retirement delayed/redefined.

Age Bias: GenZ and Millennials

Glassdoor released a [2019 diversity and inclusion survey](#) in the U.S., UK, France, and Germany that found:

Younger employees (52% of ages 18-34) more likely than older employees (39% of ages 55+) to have witnessed/experienced ageism.

Examples: Dismiss ideas, "Kids," Less Experience

Benefits of an age diverse workforce:



INCREASED
PRODUCTIVITY



CREATIVE PROBLEM
SOLVING



IMPROVED
RECRUITMENT/RETENTION



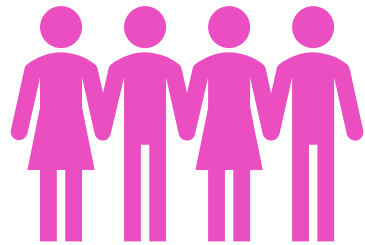
BUSINESS GROWTH

The Diversity
Employers
Need to
Remember:
Age Diversity

“When we mix the different strengths and perspectives of younger and older workers, we gain the benefits of diversity of thought. That has been proven to result in better decision making, problem solving and innovation.”

-Stephanie Johnson, Forbes Contributor

Managing Generational Challenges

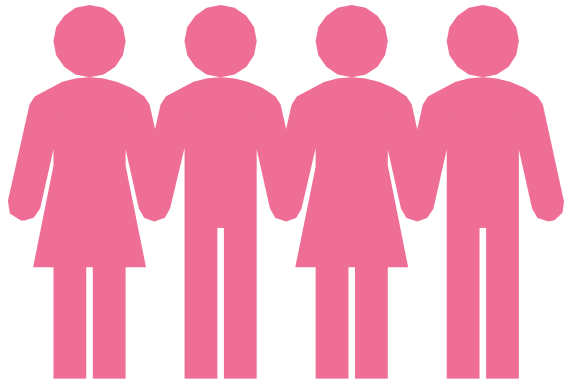


Stereotypes



Communication

Stereotypes



- Baby Boomers don't know how to use technology.
- Gen X workers just want to get ahead.
- Millennials are self-centered.
- Gen Z workers don't have interpersonal skills.

Appreciating vs. Stereotyping Generational Differences

- It is generally acceptable to acknowledge and appreciate that different generational groups are likely to have different norms, habits and tendencies in the aggregate.
- However, stereotyping may develop when the norms of the group are applied to individuals.
 - Writing off a mid-50's age Boomer as not understanding or using social media/ new technology
 - Presuming that a mid-30's millennial won't want a job or a project that requires structure and detail.

Communication Credibility and Stereotyping

- One generation may stop reading longer communications after a couple of sentences, or skip to the end.
- Another generation may become frustrated with shorter, more cryptic communications.
- Either generation may form an opinion of the writer/sender, based on spelling errors, missed punctuation, or on the other hand, being too wordy, and not getting to the point quickly enough.
- Stereotyping is a common outcome from these communication disconnects.

Reflection: Generational Stereotypes

Have you or someone you know experienced an age-based stereotype?

Reflection: If you experienced it yourself, how have you overcome this?

Overcoming Generational Stereotypes

Aware of our own stereotypes:

Check-in with ourselves to be sure not making negative assumptions about any generation.

Practice this self-check. Self-awareness creates positive change.

Individualize:

Seek deeper connection by getting to know people for who they are.

Know the individual.

Use generational styles as a *guide*, not a “box”.

Question for Jim:

If left unaddressed, how can different communication styles between generations cause potential liability for employers?

Communication

According to a recent survey:

84% of Millennial's and

77% of boomers said

Open Communication

was a top priority in the workplace.

www.15five.com

Reflection: Communication

Think about communication challenges within your multi-generational workforce.

Millennials prefer tweets and texts. Traditionalists and baby boomers comfortable with phone calls and face to face.

How can you bring differing generations' views of communication into focus and what adjustments, if any, would you make?

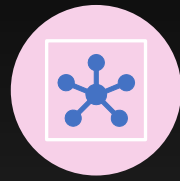
Bridging the Communication Divide: Key Tips



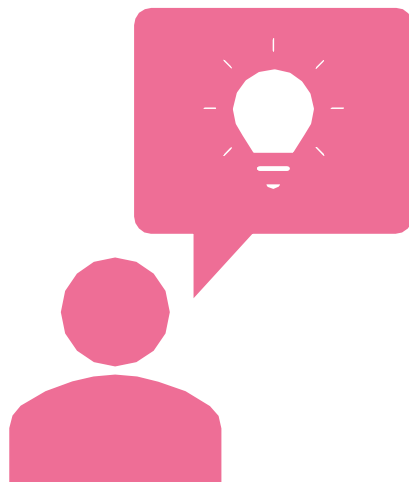
Know Your
Audience/Generation



Find Commonalities



Connect Beyond
Words



By focusing on overcoming stereotypes, understanding communication styles and providing access to training, you can reduce age biases in the workplace.

Best Practices for Managing Multigenerational Teams

- ***Communicate training opportunities for all ages.***
Encourage trainings and upskilling benefits, including tuition reimbursement and job shadowing.
- ***Recognize strengths,*** unique mix of skills and experience each team member brings rather than on title or seniority.
- ***Understand differences in communication styles.***
Example: Some prefer text and chat to email; others prefer phone or in-person contact. When in doubt, ***ask.***
- ***Create opportunities for age diverse groups to collaborate.*** Research shows mixed-age groups outperform less age-diverse groups.
- ***Co-mentoring*** program increases engagement and retention, and provides the opportunity to learn from each other's expertise, regardless of age.

Action Step

Gratitude Note:

Thank someone, from a different generation, that has impacted your business or career.

Resources:

<https://www.eeoc.gov/age-discrimination>

<https://www.aarp.org/work/working-at-50-plus/info-2018/age-discrimination-common-at-work.html>

<https://www.aarp.org/work/job-search/employer-pledge-companies/>

**More than 700 companies now participate in AARP's [Employer Pledge Program](https://www.aarp.org/work/job-search/employer-pledge-companies/), in which they commit to recruit people from all age groups and consider all applicants equally: <https://www.aarp.org/work/job-search/employer-pledge-companies/>*

<https://www-forbes-com.cdn.ampproject.org/c/s/www.forbes.com/sites/nextavenue/2020/07/19/the-diversity-employers-need-to-remember-age-diversity/amp/>

<https://builtin.com/diversity-inclusion/ageism-in-the-workplace>

AGE BIAS IN THE WORKPLACE

Key Take-Aways – Liability & Compliance

- Avoid stereotyping – e.g., making unfounded assumptions about older workers based on perception only.
- Avoid more obvious age-biased language in job postings.
- Don't assume that a younger pool of applicants will be waiting for your job posting – remember the BLS' aging demographic projections.
- Data shows that age discrimination claims are on the rise – older workers may not be so passive when adversely impacted by employment decisions.
- Remember that mixed-motive claims under the ADEA may be forthcoming – try to remain current re POWADA (Protecting Older Workers Against Discrimination Act).
- Make sure your EEO statement and related documents are up to date.
- Consider implementing annual mandatory discrimination prevention training.



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Thank You!