With the challenges of an ageing society impending, promoting employment of mature persons is one of the possible ways to help unleash potential labour supply. According to a recent survey, a considerable proportion of early retirees aged between 50 and 64 indicated that, given suitable employment opportunities, they would like to rejoin the work force. Indeed, many of those in this age group are still very energetic. Through the adoption of friendly employment practices, employers could create a working environment conducive to the employment of mature persons, thereby attracting more mature persons to remain in or return to employment.

**Value the knowledge, experience and skills of mature persons**

**Provide flexible work arrangements, suitable equipment, outfit and rest breaks**

**Offer mature persons with training and retraining opportunities**

**Are people at retirement age still capable of work?**

Some may have false impression on the capability of mature persons as they are often misperceived to possess poorer health, less vigor or lower education levels which would unduly affect their performance and productivity at work. In fact, with life expectancy, health and educational attainment improving, and coupled with less physically demanding jobs nowadays, more mature persons would be able to stay longer in the labour force. Indeed, we should cherish and value mature persons for their wealth of life experiences and wisdom.
Friendly employment practices for mature persons

Friendly employment practices are good people management measures adopted by employers to cater for the employment needs of mature persons.

What specific measures should be adopted by employers for attracting mature persons to remain in employment?

Employers may offer different modes of employment for mature persons having regard to the individual circumstances of their enterprises, such as extending the working life of their employees for them to continue to stay in employment. Employers may also adopt more flexible work arrangements with a view to establishing working conditions and environment suitable for attracting mature persons to continue in employment or return to the job market.

Support employment of mature persons

To help mature persons realize their full potential at work, employers should arrange suitable work duties and procedures taking into consideration the ability, strength and physical condition of individuals. More friendly employment practices include:

Offer

flexible work arrangements or modes of employment, such as flexitime and job sharing, so that mature employees can achieve a balance between work and life.

Recognize

the knowledge, experiences and skills of mature employees by offering reasonable remunerations and opportunities so that they can shine and feel valued at work.

Provide

training and retraining opportunities for mature employees to acquire new knowledge to cope with the advancement of society, technologies and industries.

Learn

about the physical conditions of mature employees and make appropriate adjustments to their working tools and rest time, such as arranging rest breaks according to individual needs, providing assistive tools and equipment like better lighting, adjustable magnifying glasses and font-size adjustable computer screens, etc.
What are the benefits for employers in hiring mature persons?

**Merits of mature employees:**

- Possess wealth of work experiences and knowledge
- Display good work ethics and positive work attitude
- Tactful in handling interpersonal relationships, having well-established network with customers and work partners
- Help train the new and young counterparts, hence reducing corporate training costs and enhance knowledge management efficiency
- Make good use of their communication skills and personal experience to earn the trust of elderly customers, facilitate enterprises to develop the “silver-hair” market
- Loyal, reliable and lower turnover, help to alleviate manpower shortage problem

**How could mature persons benefit from employment and will it bring any advantages to the society?**

By staying in or re-joining the job market, mature persons would be able to enjoy income security, preserve vitality and maintain social connection. It also helps improve productivity, thereby bringing benefits to Hong Kong society as a whole.

What are the important points to note for employers intending to take on mature persons or to extend employees’ retirement age?

**Extending employees’ retirement age**

- Examine if there are any statutory age limits on employees in related posts or industries.
- Examine whether retirement age is a condition specified in the employment contract. If employers intend to introduce retirement age as a condition in the employment contract or extend the prescribed retirement age of existing employees, they may need to consult their employees on such changes.
- For employers to avoid causing disputes and conflicts arising from unilateral changes in the employment conditions, employees being affected must be fully consulted and changes should only be implemented after employees’ consent has been obtained.
- Employers must inform such changes to the employees in a manner intelligible to them.
- Where there is any written amendment to employment conditions, employers must provide the employees with a copy of the written amendment immediately after the amendment is reduced to writing or validated.
- If the amendment is not made in writing, upon receipt of a written request from the employees, employers must provide to the employees a notice in writing containing information of such changes in the employment terms.

For more information on the Employment Ordinance, please contact the enquiry hotline: **2717 1771** (handled by “1823”)
As stipulated by the Mandatory Provident Fund Schemes Ordinance, employers should enrol employees who are at least 18 but under 65 years of age into an MPF scheme and make regular mandatory contributions for them.

While making mandatory contributions is no longer necessary when an employee remains in employment on reaching the age of 65, both the employer and employee may choose to make voluntary contributions to enhance the retirement protection of the employee. Arrangements on voluntary contributions, such as contribution amount and conditions for withdrawal, are not governed by law but subject to the governing rules of individual MPF schemes. Employers may contact their trustees for details.

In addition, employers should remind mature workers to assess their risk tolerance level before choosing funds, and to review their fund portfolio regularly.

For more information on MPF, please contact the Mandatory Provident Fund Schemes Authority:

2918 0102
www.mpfa.org.hk

Employees are the most valuable assets of enterprises. Here are the experiences shared by enterprises that are taking the lead in hiring mature persons:

A renowned theme park
During recruitment, we mainly consider our business development and manpower needs, as well as job-seekers’ individual abilities and working attitude. We firmly believe that mature persons are able to effectively apply their rich work experiences to their present jobs.

A local retail bank
Commitment and support of the management is of paramount importance in implementing the employment programme of senior employees. But the seniors are so reliable and full of positive energy that it is absolutely worth the investment in the long term.

A food production and packaging enterprise
Mature persons are excellent trouble-shooters. With the ‘Lion Rock’ spirit, they are dedicated to their work. Just by providing training and making corresponding work arrangements, companies can make a positive difference to mature persons’ livelihood and well-being.

Enquiry
For enquiry on this pamphlet, please contact the Workplace Consultation Promotion Division of the Labour Department

2121 8690
www.labour.gov.hk

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