

Managing an ageing workforce

The ageing and shrinking workforce calls for new approaches to managing businesses. As labour shortages continue the challenge will be to recruit, retain and retrain our older workers. Answering these questions will help you assess what you should consider when managing your workforce.

Strategy/Tactic	Yes	No	Unsure
Do you put work and life balance on the agenda? - Stimulate discussions at regular staff meetings about strategies that can be adopted			
Do you provide access to information and services? - Assist staff to become aware of all their conditions of service and leave entitlements and eligibility, such as parental and special leave, leave without pay, variable working hours			
Do you take a fresh look at work arrangements? - Schedule work meetings at times which accommodate those staff working flexibly			
Do you think about other ways the work can be done? - Consider whether positions are full-time, or whether the work can be done on a part-time basis, job share, part-year to accommodate peaks and troughs; job redesign			
Do you make the best use of existing conditions of service?			
Do you take family responsibilities into account in workplace change?			
Do you monitor the workplace for changes in trends – absenteeism; turnover; workers compensation?			
Do you provide learning and development opportunities to staff ? Which may include: - coaching and mentoring other staff - work shadowing opportunities - relieving opportunities, including job rotation, higher duties and special projects - variety of job assignments including action learning projects - encourage mature-age workers to role model their learning and development experiences and knowledge to other staff			
Do you provide flexible or phased retirement options? A range of flexible retirement options may be available including: - Part-time work - Part-year employment - Job sharing - Special leave (including purchased leave) - Flexible use of long service leave - Voluntarily working at a lower classification level - Working from home (telecommuting)			
Do you develop ways to ensure transfer of valuable knowledge and skills of older workers? - develop specific systems and processes for capturing knowledge and passing knowledge from experienced workers to other employees - use job re-design to create roles that value and reward formalised knowledge and skills transfer - encouraging job sharing between employees who may be staying and those who are intending to leave the agency - actively encouraging coaching, work shadowing and mentoring			