

# INVESTING IN EXPERIENCE—A CHECKLIST FOR ORGANISATIONS

The *Investing in Experience Statement of Commitment* defines seven guiding principles organisations may follow to demonstrate commitment to good practice in managing workforce age diversity. This checklist provides a list of practical actions to deliver on the commitment.

## 1. KNOW YOUR WORKFORCE AND PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

Knowing the demographics of your workforce and understanding the expectations of mature age workers is essential for managing an age diverse workforce.

### Checklist

- Take specific steps to know and better understand your workforce.
- Look at ways to turn demographic risk into an opportunity for the workplace.
- Identify and understand the needs, skills and knowledge gaps to enable workforce participation.
- Make informed human resource and management decisions to enable age diversity.
- Develop and implement a plan of action to help meet the challenges of the future.
- Partner efforts to better understand the impacts of the ageing population on the workforce.

## 2. RECRUIT THE BEST, REGARDLESS OF AGE

The long-term success of any business depends on the ability to tap into a diverse body of talent, knowledge and skills.

### Checklist

- Adopt age-friendly recruitment practices to widen the applicant pool and find the best person.
- Make sure recruitment policies and procedures, including the use of any external recruitment agencies, support the recruitment of mature age people.
- Actively encourage mature age people to apply.
- Work to better match the supply, skills and ability of older workers to the work demands.

## 3. INVEST IN LIFELONG LEARNING AND ENCOURAGE SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

Investing in training for all workers, regardless of age, and encouraging more experienced workers to consider mentoring those with less experience, brings direct benefits to business, including increased productivity and improved morale.

### Checklist

- Provide appropriate training and development opportunities to workers regardless of age.
- Encourage the transfer of skills, knowledge and experience within the organisation.
- Make sure learning and development strategies, including the use of external providers, support the learning needs of mature age people.

## 4. TAKE ACTION TO RETAIN WORKERS AND SUPPORT WORKERS IN THEIR TRANSITION TO RETIREMENT

Retaining experienced workers who understand the business can reduce recruitment and training costs and allow a strong knowledge base, leading to improved quality and productivity.

### Checklist

- Develop, review or update a staff retention strategy to maximise the contribution of workers.
- Work to minimise limitations on, or disincentives to, participation in the workforce by older people.
- Support flexible work arrangements that improve employment options for older workers.
- Incorporate or maintain retirement transition planning as a standard option for workers.

## 5. BUILD THE CAPACITY OF MANAGERS TO PRACTICE AGE DIVERSITY

Formal policies and procedures should be reviewed and updated to meet legal obligations, and benefit from capabilities, ideas and insights of a diverse workforce, regardless of age. Diversity principles should be integrated with, and underpin all aspects of human resource management.

### Checklist

- Develop, review and update formal policies and procedures, and provide appropriate training to workers to help remove ageism from the workplace.
- Ensure managers have constructive and positive conversations with workers approaching the traditional retirement age to encourage them to make informed career and financial decisions.
- Integrate age management into workforce diversity strategies.

## 6. PROVIDE A SAFE AND HEALTHY WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Management has a legislative responsibility to make sure all reasonable steps are taken to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of workers. Positive age-management practices can significantly extend the working life of valued workers by preventing accident and injury and facilitating health and wellbeing.

### Checklist

- Develop, review and update work health and safety and wellbeing strategies to identify and address sources of risks to the health and safety of older workers in the workplace.
- Target initiatives that support and promote a healthy and productive ageing workforce.

## 7. PROMOTE AND SHARE BETTER PRACTICE

The success of this statement relies on the communication and dissemination of better practice in workplaces throughout Australia.

### Checklist

- Take up opportunities to share experiences, achievements, results and outcomes that support multigenerational workforce management.



INVESTING IN EXPERIENCE:  
WORKING FOR TODAY  
AND TOMORROW

A snapshot



# 1 WHY?

## INVESTING IN EXPERIENCE

Working today is different to working a few decades ago. With longer and healthier lives comes an opportunity for many people to work longer and possibly change career pathways. People are choosing to work if the conditions are right. More people are pursuing roles that better suit their interests, skills or lifestyle.

Leaders and managers need integrated strategies in workforce planning, health and safety and human capital development to shift attitudes and age stereotypes and equip workplaces with high performance work practices that embrace all ages at work.

We currently have four generations at work. Participation and engagement of all workers is essential for dynamic and vibrant workplaces. We have the opportunity to meet these challenges through better work design, lifelong learning, and access to support for career and life planning.

Balancing work and non-work demands will optimise opportunities for health, participation and quality of working life.

We can better target our work health initiatives to help people manage illness, disability and injury. We can support choices that promote ability to work and help people stay at work when their health circumstances change.

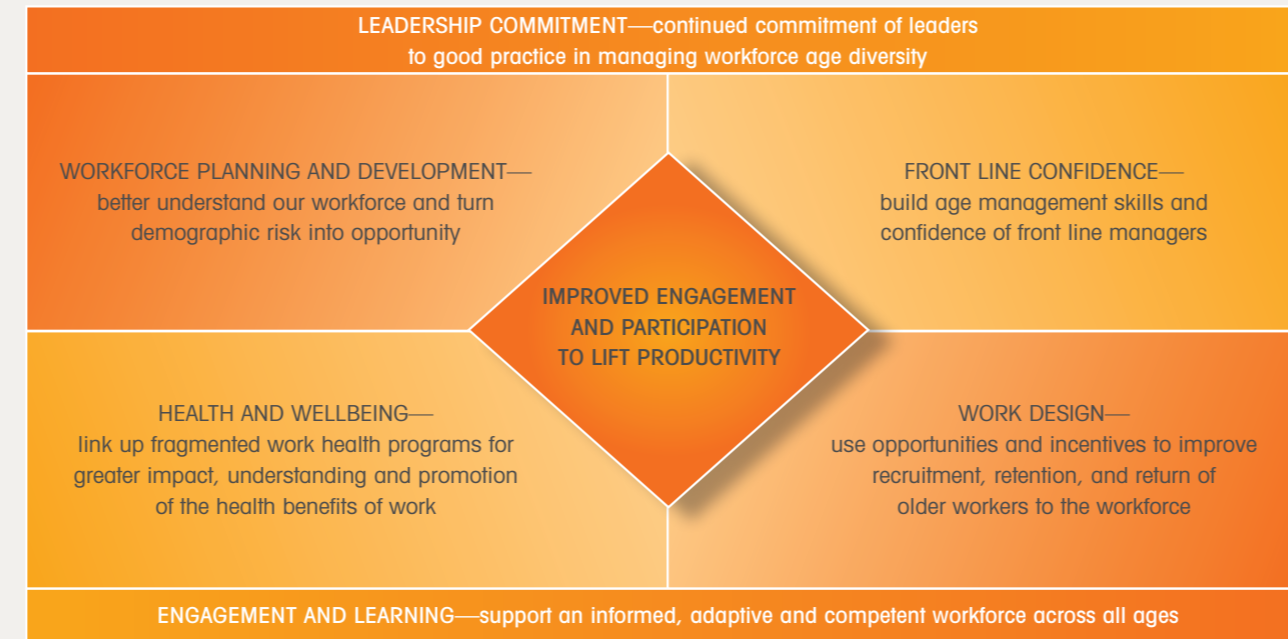
The *Investing in Experience* guide can help us promote and support our workforce today and tomorrow, and meet our commitment to foster workplaces where the diverse skills, abilities and cultural perspectives of individuals are respected.

The development of the guide has been a collaborative effort across the APS and is a key initiative from the APS 200 Project: Work Ability and Ageing in the Australian Public Service (APS).

# 2 WHAT?

## FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

The Work Ability and Ageing Framework for Action, endorsed by the APS Secretaries Board in 2012, will help organisations improve workforce participation, increase productivity and tackle the barriers to a longer productive work life.



Reinforced by leadership commitment, engagement and learning, the four main elements of the Framework for Action are the priority areas where opportunities for change can occur.

- > Workforce planning and development—Understanding the demographic profile of the agency's workers, and recognising that the tension between work and life differs with age, is essential to attracting, engaging and retaining a multigenerational workforce.
- > Frontline confidence—Building the capability and confidence of managers to better manage older workers, and better match workers with opportunities.
- > Work design—Good work design, that is fit for purpose, will facilitate recruitment, retention and return of older workers to the APS and minimise obstacles in their path.
- > Health and wellbeing—The relationship between health and work is critical to get right. Organisations play a huge role in keeping people in employment healthy and productive.

# 3 HOW?

## INVESTING IN EXPERIENCE: WORKING FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW

Participation and engagement are key success factors for a high-performing workforce—at any age, skill or ability, and commitment is essential from all workers.

The *Investing in Experience* guide is designed for senior leaders, human resource practitioners and front line managers to help them build age management understanding and capability.

The guide provides relevant information, checklists, fact sheets and other resources on possible actions to address workforce risks and opportunities. It is based on workers—from recruiting to developing, supporting and transitioning them through life's work stages.

For the complete *Investing in Experience* guide visit: [www.comcare.gov.au](http://www.comcare.gov.au)

### STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO INVESTING IN EXPERIENCE

The principles outlined in this statement demonstrate leadership commitment to managing workforce age diversity.

To deliver on the commitment we will:

- 1 Know our workforce and plan for the future
- 2 Recruit the best, regardless of age
- 3 Invest in lifelong learning and encourage skills and knowledge transfer
- 4 Be proactive in retaining workers and supporting workers to transition to retirement
- 5 Build the capacity of managers to practice age diversity
- 6 Provide a safe and healthy working environment
- 7 Promote and share better practice