

## Volunteer activities which can build work-place/professional skills to aid in getting work after age 55 years of age.

Discussion host:

Linda Simpson

Member, Age Friendly London Network

Age friendly city and employment
Age friendly city global movement through WHO, London one of first cities to take it on 55 years of age and beyond group needs assistance
Good to get involved for volunteering, makes a candidate more marketable for job opportunities
Looking at barriers for employment in context of London, age was common barrier that came up
Interviewed people at center of organization, found ageism is rampant, employers can be ageist causes barriers
Employers would rather just hire someone with existing skills rather than having someone develop those soft skills concurrently
Concerned about older adults who want to have a job, but cannot manage financially school to develop those new skills
Especially in London, problem with that education may not guarantee a job after
Poverty amongst older women is growing
Perception that older individuals do not need to work does not match the statistics, some do need to work financially
Perception that older individuals cannot last longer a longer duration of time, younger individuals concerned with burnout too
Looking at how employment and volunteerism in London are frequently "dead-end" events
How volunteerism in London are dead-end events where non for profit organizations need volunteers but they are one time events.
Volunteerism in London doesn't lead to future networking and doesn't help the individual to gain employment.
These volunteer opportunities are one-off, do not make later contacts and continue this to use network to grow and get employment
Especially for older worker, barriers around ageism.
Specifically, study found that some employment counsellors say to do these volunteer positions for a certain amount of time but...
...it does not always work in leading to employment
Volunteering for different reasons -may gain skills depending on who is volunteering
Volunteering does not always have to lead to employment, objectives may vary
Volunteering should be a pathway to employment.
Volunteering needs to be a pathway to employment
Age-friendly network where someone can tackle various tasks and volunteer at different places.

Age-Friendly network's concept developed by the WHO.
Age-friendly network in London associated with the city gives chances to older individuals to get active, and be supported to prosper
Found that adults 55+ were being left behind and volunteerism as a means of employment.
We need to study the statistics, how many people that volunteer get employment opportunities?
Volunteering usually does not lead employment. A common strategy used by employment agencies to get a job.
For many immigrants, volunteering does not lead to employment. Very common for elderly people as well.
Volunteering could lead to good networking, but usually not. Volunteering commonly promoted to specific groups to market themselves
Hard work may be a barrier for elderly people to find employment.
Elderly people are untapped when employers are looking for employment.
Older individuals un-tapped, but huge potential as a resource
Older individuals may not be able to continue with the physical demands for longer hours that younger individuals are required to do
Elderly employees in constant battle with the employer being unable to do the tasks required.
...problem that with age comes a reduced capacity for physical demands on the job, ageism feeds into this
No employer in London is age-friendly.
Some states in the US have agefriendly employers where you follow certain policies and accomadations and can actively recruit older workers.
Agefriendly employers can be a benefit for the business. Depends on the skill if it is beneficial for the business.
Lowe's is an age-friendly employer who support and hire older workers.
For example, Lowe's in the US is age designated company, have a program to assist with employing older individuals with existing skills
Veteran-friendly employers are also present.
How to frame a story to bring to employers as older adults to be able to be hired.
Incentives should be considered to hire older individuals
Incentives by the government to hire more older adults would be beneficial such as grants for young adults.
Employment agency (government funded) that has expertise to connect older workers to jobs but only in St. Thomas, no longer in London
There used to be an employment centre for older adults used to exist in London, but no longer exists. Closest program like it is in St.Thoma
Services need to help everyone so there are few specialized programs.
Many people don't find employment centres helpful.
Number of employment services in London, but funds have to go to many different groups and certain groups may be neglected because of this

Government should be more flexible for employment centres to help less people in more time to provide more skills.
The only outcomes that count are employment, not the quality of the job or length of time that someone is employed.
London is not doing well for unemployment and those who are not looking for a job.
Workforce Planning Board, London is not really doing well in terms of people not working or not even looking for work
Many people can be discouraged by London's unemployment number figures.
...in that number we have people who are not employed, but want to work, and within 5 months they get discouraged and begin to stop looking
Longer you are unemployed, the less you try looking for a job. A cycle of losing EI, welfare, short term jobs.
Many people getting jobs that don't provide relevant skills to move up and move out.
...stop looking because they can't find a job other than low-paying positions that don't offer the opportunity to advance
Reality of feeling stuck in unemployment.
People not enjoying their careers who go to look elsewhere for different positions struggle to find other opportunities
Challenge is providing full-time unemployment.
Jobs currently are very low-paying in London and are short-term.
Martin consolidated a job website.
Martin's website provides information about transit to work, where to live close to work, finding a job, etc.
Question we should ask ourselves: how can we make older employees better prepared for the technological age?
Preparing older people about technology. Employers should also change their attitudes.
Agencies are doing the best to prepare their clients for the job market.
Agencies trying their best to get their clients ready, employers must see the whole story and value older employees as valuable
Employment agencies should be able to help people who have some skills and work experience and to be able to have success in the future.
Employers want to be able to hire a degree, and agencies want to help others from with skills from the past and prior work experience
Older workers who are not all the same
We group together older individuals, but they're not the same
Earning less as an older adult who has been unemployment and back on entry-level jobs.
Seniors at particular risk, over the course of many years of work at a company where their salaries become larger...
...then they lose their jobs and are back at entry level positions
2008 recession is used as a justification for employers to create low quality jobs.

Recession in 2008 had issue with greater shorter-term employment with no benefits
Employers have power to make profit and create low quality jobs and trying to make the best margin.
However, people not earning a decent wage is how recession is created.
How we get into a recession, cycle of people with lower pay
Problem is competition between employers leading to less jobs.
Lots of things taken for granted but companies keep cutting entry level positions instead of cutting down wages from the top.
Corporations looking at making profit, "greedy" intentions, cuts affect workers
Some people can get a job through volunteering. However, ageism is real.
Problem is not the jobs, but the employers who have the underlying assumptions of ageism.
Problem is not job, we have a lot of jobs. Why do we have a large pool of people not working then? Look at the quality of the jobs
What's needed most are the soft skills but employers are not looking to train soft skills.
Soft skills are what are needed most, what employers want most but won't pay for it (are expected for or already have this)
Return on investment-older adults' perspective on education
Sometimes all you need is one course to develop skills rather than an entire degree, return on investment
Some support that workers could use is training they could use in their jobs and takes into account their prior training with skills
Who is responsible for this training? The government, the employer? Some combination of both?
Training that meets the needs of older adults and what they did in the past are something that they need. However, who's responsible for it
Ideas of how to implement changes to change minds of employers?
Changing the minds of the employer rather than getting older adults getting ready for the workforce.
Working towards designation of employers as age friendly
Across countries, pension age is going up and international pressure is going up as well.
Why would politicians want to incentivize this policy? Pension costs are going up, affecting economy, when pension system ...
The rising pension age is more reason to hire older adults.
...was developed, life expectancy was shorter, now seniors live longer and it's not feasible
Solution may be in a while re-work if the system, some people have 40 hour work weeks and some have nothing
Reducing work days and work hours may not be as effective for those who are paid minimum wage.
Redistributing wealth and redesigning the work system is a problem to be solved.
Redistribution may take time but it is occurring and in progress in Sweden.
How do we change these growing inequities? Rather than focusing on wealth and tangible items, redistribute the wealth

Housing prices going up due to rising income, so when income stabilizes hopefully housing prices can stabilize as well.
Part of rising housing costs is the increasing income, redistribution of income may work but would take time
With globalization and automation are decreasing jobs. Decreasing fertility rates leading to decreasing teacher employment.
Increasingly, lower paying jobs are requiring higher education
Employers looking for increasing qualifications for low-paying jobs.
We have a lot of jobs available, but we are just not having people filling these positions
There are many jobs that are unfilled currently that employers are not filling them.
Must make over 55 individuals attractive to employers
Big assumption is that older adults are happily retired.
Having a database, holding job fairs specifically for older adults.
Important to have employers put in the work to acknowledge older workers
More important to have specifically targeted job postings for older adults.
Older workers need something a little more exclusive, maybe involve agencies too
We make different groups separate from one another, but sometimes they may face similar challenges
The problem is splitting off people in categories such as older, younger, immigrant, and people with disabilities but they face same issues.
Is volunteering for older adults for engagement or wanting a pathway to employment?
In age-friendly network in London, employment is very often coupled with volunteerism
Volunteerism is coupled with employment is because the anecdotal evidence is marginal, being that a really good volunteer position...
...that make it possible to develop new skills that build on what you already bring to the table, optimum volunteer position
...but in this case, you may likely be looking for a job
Optimal volunteer position for older adults would be heightened possibilities of getting a job or new skills
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Research on volunteering for immigrants does not lead to employment. It's just free labour.
Employers just use these volunteer positions to get free labour
Organizations cycling through volunteers after their term of free labour
Volunteers for data entry at hospitals who actually should be paid.
Job developers work with employers to create job opportunities.
Job developers work with employers to connect them with those looking for the position
Hope is overtime, it will lead to the development of new positions
Job developers work to hopefully create new jobs and match people looking for employment.
Employment agencies may need work in how they function, employment agencies also need people working for them too

The clients that use employment centres who need to use services or those who are on EI.

Some people may need the basic help that employment agencies provide, however, but if you don't need this basic assistance it may not help

Looking at risks for unemployment  
-age was a major concern in the city  
-both thought age was a barrier  
-some tried to volunteer

Found that employers are agists and hiring people in the same market area can be more expensive.  
Ageism was a barrier

Skills in a sector being a barrier such as upgrading, but employers would like to hire people who already had the skills.

As you get older, the more reluctant you get to get education.  
Concerned about older adults who cannot afford education.

Older adults more reluctant to get education that is not guaranyeed as a job.

Older adults cannot last long working days like younger adults and face burn-out.