

Career development at all ages

Getting started guide



 Centre for Ageing Better

Age-friendly Employer Pledge



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Career development at all ages

Career (and learning) development is a crucial part of job satisfaction for all ages. We don't stop looking for opportunities to further our career (and learn) when we hit 50. Remember, a 55-year-old still has 11 years before they reach state pension age.

Yet workers aged over 50 are less likely than any other age group to receive training. Learning and development needn't be restricted to just 'training'. Opportunities to encourage learning and growth across teams will also lead to more motivated and productive employees.



Where to start?

1

Create job-shadowing opportunities.

Development doesn't have to mean a course. Create opportunities for older workers to shadow colleagues in different roles with different skills, to build confidence and make change seem more achievable. This could involve a mutual exchange between a younger and older colleague.

2

Know your data. If your data shows low training take-up among 50+ workers, ask them why: do they need more encouragement, do they not believe development opportunities are for older workers, or does your current personal development offer just not work for them?

You could also...



Conduct mid-life reviews. Through seminars, small groups, 1:1s etc, mid-life reviews give people a chance to reflect on their future aspirations for their career, finances and health. For more in-depth information on mid-life support for employees, download [Mid-life support: insights for employers](#).



Support your line managers. Are your managers regularly having conversations with their direct reports about personal development? If there is any age difference, how have you supported the manager to feel confident about having this conversation with the older member of staff?



Normalise the conversation. Make 'development' a natural and accepted part of the culture so everyone feels empowered to take up and/or seek opportunities to develop. Ensure this message is being clearly communicated from the top down. Challenge the stereotype that mid-life and older workers do not want development opportunities.

You can find out more information on the Age-friendly Employer Action Framework [here](#).





Did you know?

- Workers aged over 50 are less likely than any other age group to receive on-the-job training.
- 45% of people managers say they lack the confidence to help their direct reports learn the skills they need.

69%

of businesses hadn't offered their employees any formal training over the last 12 months.

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Success stories

Isle of Wight Council

The Isle of Wight Council actively encourages apprenticeships from people of all ages and is proud that nearly one-in-five of its apprentices are aged 50 and over – that's about the same proportion as those who are aged 16–24.

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“We've worked hard to create career paths for all the roles we need to fill, from social workers to carers to teachers. You can start in an admin role, for example, and then progress to being a care worker.” Sharon Betts, Director of Corporate Services at the Isle of Wight Council, which supports the Age-friendly Employer Pledge.

Read the full story [here](#).

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44%

of over-55s had not had access to any support through an employer, compared with 40% of 45–54-year-olds, and 28% of 35–44-year olds.



Have you signed up to the
Age-friendly Employer Pledge?
Show you recognise the value
of older workers.

