



Company/Organization Mature Worker Survey Executive Summary

Between June 1 and June 20, 2007, 2674 employers in the 14 county region including Benton, Carroll, Cass, Clinton, Fountain, Fulton, Howard, Miami, Montgomery, Tippecanoe, Tipton, Wabash, Warren, and White counties were surveyed regarding mature and aging workers. Although surveys were mailed directly to employers, Economic Development Officials and Chambers of Commerce helped promote the survey instrument. We received 384 responses which is a 16% response rate.

Demographics of responses:

1. What is your primary job responsibility?			
Owner/CEO		209	54%
Manager/Supervisor		105	27%
Human Resources		57	15%
Other		13	3%
Total		384	100%

The majority of the companies (28%) employed between 1-14, with 90% employing 249 or less, with representation from all 14 counties.

The top three industries represented were the: Manufacturing industry (19%), Retail section (15%) and Construction (11%).

Aging Issues responses:

74% stated that the percentage of their employees in the 65+ range has not increased over the last 5 years and 5% did not know if it had increased.

58% have not projected employee retirement numbers for the next 5-10 years. Therefore, they are not prepared for the baby boomer exodus that will be coming.

Below are the responses to the question regarding advantages of employing older workers:

7. Describe what you believe are the advantages, if any, for employing aging workers. (Please check all that apply)			
More reliable		281	75%
Better work ethic		284	76%
More knowledgeable		160	43%
More willing to work overtime		61	16%
Lower absentee rate		212	56%
Not aware of any specific advantages		46	12%
Other, please specify		12	3%

Responses to the disadvantages of employing aging workers, the top 3 answers were: High health care cost (43%), Low physical stamina (32%), Not aware of any specific disadvantages (31%)

72% of the companies/organizations surveyed are not developing any strategies to deal with the aging workforce. Their supervisors and managers have not been trained in supervising an inter-generational workforce (75%) and of those, 92% are not planning on instituting such training in the future. 63% do not even include the aging worker as part of diversity training for their managers/supervisors.

Types of educational opportunities made available to their workforce:

14. What types of educational opportunities do you make available to your workforce? (Please check all that apply)			
College courses		82	23%
On-line classes		93	26%
Job-specific technical training		200	56%
Seminars		191	54%
Workshops		158	44%
Apprenticeships		33	9%
On-the-job training		286	80%
Other, please specify		17	5%

About half of the employers stated that the aging worker only had a participation rate of 0-19% in the above education opportunities.

70% used aging workers to mentor younger workers, either to impart knowledge and skills or to model good work behaviors. A little more than half reported that there are people working in their company or organization who are retired from other jobs.

The majority of the respondents are not doing any work in the community or with schools to ensure a pipeline of the kind of workers they will need in the future when their current workforce retires. There seems to be a genuine need for a convener to bring businesses and educators to the table to discuss needs.

$\frac{3}{4}$ of the companies do not offer any pre-retirement seminars or individual planning assistance for their aging workers. Of the $\frac{1}{4}$ that do offer such assistance, a little less than half have a participation rate of 0-24%.

Opportunities and barriers facing workers who may wish to stay after their official retirement:

21. What are the opportunities and barriers facing workers who may wish to stay after their official retirement? (Please check all that apply)		
They must retire and be hired back	26	12%
Can only be hired back as consultant	13	6%
They have access to health care benefits	62	28%
Rehires may have a flexible work schedule availability	81	36%
Seasonal relocation available	11	5%
Their pension benefits may be negatively affected	29	13%
They will lose seniority or benefits	29	13%
Other, please specify	56	25%

In previous surveys, the older worker felt it was important to have a flexible work schedule available. As shown above, flexible work schedule availability (36%) was the number 1 opportunity for the older worker.

When asked if there are plentiful and diverse jobs available in the region for aging individuals, 60% agreed that there were jobs available. In a survey of the aging individuals, they felt there were not jobs available. There is a need for communication and a linkage between businesses with jobs and the aging workforce seeking them.

Out of the 384 respondents, 76 are interested in being part of a beta testing group for the training curriculum for best practices relating to mature and aging workers.