Chapter 2

Improving the Employability of Mature Workers: Career Learning

Yuanlu Niu

https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7884-4578
University of Arkansas, USA

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this chapter is to explore how organizations and higher education institutions can help mature workers maintain and improve their employability in the dynamic labor market. This chapter addresses the issues regarding career learning for mature workers and provides a guide for policymakers and human resource development (HRD) professionals for handling these issues. Several recommendations were generated for policy makers and HRD professionals: 1) the new trends manifested in local, regional, national, and global labor markets should be understood; 2) a more strategic policy to grow the availability and quality of jobs in aging labor markets should be developed; 3) mature workers’ specific needs and interests should be recognized; 4) an age diverse environment should be developed in the workplace; 5) training and development programs to enhance transformational leadership behaviors should be provided to managers; and 6) longer-term personal development plans for mature workers should be established.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-7998-2277-6.ch002

Copyright © 2020, IGI Global. Copying or distributing in print or electronic forms without written permission of IGI Global is prohibited.
INTRODUCTION

Unprecedented population aging and dynamic labor markets have become global trends (Beard et al., 2011; Bloom et al., 2014; Krekanova, 2017; United Nations, 2017). One solution to addressing the issues related to population aging is to prolong mature workers’ employment longevity (D’Addio et al. 2010; Szinovacz et al., 2014). The investments for maintaining mature workers’ employment can benefit all generations and generational transitions (Krekanova, 2017). For example, it can decrease the rising number of older dependents and contribute to tax revenue of the society, which helps the younger workers carry the costs of social security benefits for children, elderly, poor, and people with disabilities (Krekanova, 2017; Zaidi et al., 2006). In addition, the earning power of mature workers influences the education quality for the next generation, as well as the life quality for younger and elder dependents (McClure & Krekanova, 2016).

To maintain older workers, traditional policy approaches were implemented such as eliminating the mandatory retirement age and increasing the age of eligibility for retirement benefits (Krekanova, 2017). However, these interventions provide neither enough support nor diverse and viable employment prospects to retain aging professionals and sustain the economic productivity of older workers (Krekanova, 2017).

To prolong the working lives of mature workers, good employment opportunities and good work environments should be available in the job market, and mature workers should have the right skills for the jobs (Krekanova, 2017). In addition, previous studies show that mature workers who engage in career learning are more likely to continue to be professionally successful (Findsen & Formosa, 2011; Rutledge, Sass, et al., 2015). Therefore, it is important to support mature workers’ engagement in career learning activities so that they can keep up with occupational shifts and skill changes; additionally, such preparation will help them maintain and increase their employability (Krekanova, 2017).

The purpose of this chapter is to explore how organizations and higher education institutions can help mature workers maintain and improve their employability in the dynamic labor market. This chapter addresses the issues regarding education and professional training for mature workers and provides a guide for policy makers and human resource development (HRD) professionals for handling these issues.
Interview with Theresa Cox, President of Native Nations Procurement Systems, Inc.
www.igi-global.com/chapter/interview-with-theresa-cox-president-of-native-nations Procurement-systems-inc/106122?camid=4v1a

An Investigation of ISO 26000 and Social Responsibility Practices Applied in IT Companies
www.igi-global.com/article/an-investigation-of-iso-26000-and-social-responsibility-practices-applied-in-it-companies/128309?camid=4v1a