

May 11, 1999

I have been a resident of Blacktown for forty years, and a Labor supporter and taxpayer for over thirty years.

I am writing to you, as I have been unemployed since 18 December 1998. I am dissatisfied and disillusioned with Recruitment/Personnel agencies, and the Job Network organisation, and the services they supposedly provide.

In 1997 I completed TAFE course in Logistics and have applied for positions seeking recent graduates to no avail. I presumed that these qualifications would be an asset, however, they seem to be a liability. It appears that if one in over thirty then one is not considered appropriate for these positions.

I cannot and will not accept that a person of my ability, experience and qualifications is unable to find employment after almost five months. The only conclusion I have arrived at is, I am being discriminated against my age. I am 45 years of age.

I have approximately fifty letters of rejection from those who bothered to reply. I believe I have plenty to offer any prospective employer. I find statements such as "While I/We found your background and experience impressive some candidates had qualifications which more specifically met our client's brief", and, "In the event we do not proceed further with your application no further correspondence will be sent to you," as reprehensible and totally unacceptable.

I have made telephone calls to employers for other positions and have been told I am over qualified?

I have also enquired about undertaking courses ie. Computer, First Aid.. Forklift Licence etc., only to be told that they are only available to "long-term unemployed", if five months is not long-term, what is?

Here are some relevant points that I consider must be raised, and addressed by the committee investigating the difficulties of people over 45 gaining employment;

1. All advertisements must state "age is no barrier".
2. Define "long-term unemployed".
3. All applications must be replied to, and reasons given to unsuccessful applicants, be explained in detail. (This would provide helpful information for future applications).
4. Courses to be made available to all unemployed regardless of age or term of unemployment.
5. The term "over qualified" to be made redundant.
6. The Job Network at present requires jobseekers to register at multiple agencies, as they advertise positions in their own right. Surely, they should be linked as the name network suggests, so that anyone can apply.

Due to legislation regarding compulsory superannuation, the Government and the private sector have an obligation to ensure "mature adults" have equal opportunities regarding their right to work, and the capacity to provide for their families now, and in their later years, come retirement.

Yours Sincerely;

Reginald West
Logistician
Unemployed

RW