

employ-ease PTY LTD

House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Workplace Relations into issues specific to workers over 45 seeking employment.

Service needs of older job seekers.

- The number one complaint we hear from mature job seekers is that the process of accessing employment services leads to a lessening of self worth. Services should predominately be one-on-one with a focus on privacy - the primary goal of any service should be to not exacerbate the issues. Services need to be acutely aware of client dignity.
- Services should be flexible and be able to be tailored to individual needs. There is in my opinion no "one-size-fits-all" solution. Important issues to address include social isolation, self-esteem and motivation, skills transference, advocacy to employers, career guidance, updating of skills and self-marketing.
- The general nature of mature age attitudes to rapid change suggests that services need to focus on transition issues (i.e. establishing realistic employment goals) and education as to the current labour market situation. In my experience mature age job seekers cope with change more easily if they are in possession of the relevant up-to-date facts - imposition of employment agency/consultant placement goals generally meets with resistance and denial.
- Mature job seekers are faced with negative feedback on their employability from the media, employers, some service providers and the general population on a daily basis. Community education as to the value of an age-balanced workforce and the value of experience and maturity in the workplace needs to be addressed as a priority. A significant number of our clients have commented on the failure of "The Year of the Older Person" to address vocational issues. Expo's on retirement options and funeral choices, which have figured prominently, do not address the needs of those seeking to re-enter the workforce.
- Much of Employ-Ease success in assisting mature age job seekers back to work is attributable to our strategy of targeting small businesses, with an identified skills need, and attempting to educate the employment decision maker within the company about the value of mature employees. We focus on the reliability, maturity, high skill levels and stability of our candidates.

Daryl Neilson
Director.
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