



Australian Government
Department of Employment
and Workplace Relations

Mature Age Workers: Busting Myths



Busting Myths

Benefit of employing mature age workers

Research suggests mature age workers:

- › bring a wealth of work and life experience
- › have a stronger work ethic, and are more reliable, loyal and mature
- › are likely to mentor younger staff, building their confidence and technical skills
- › generally stay with their employer for longer than younger people, resulting in retention of corporate knowledge.

Benefit to the economy

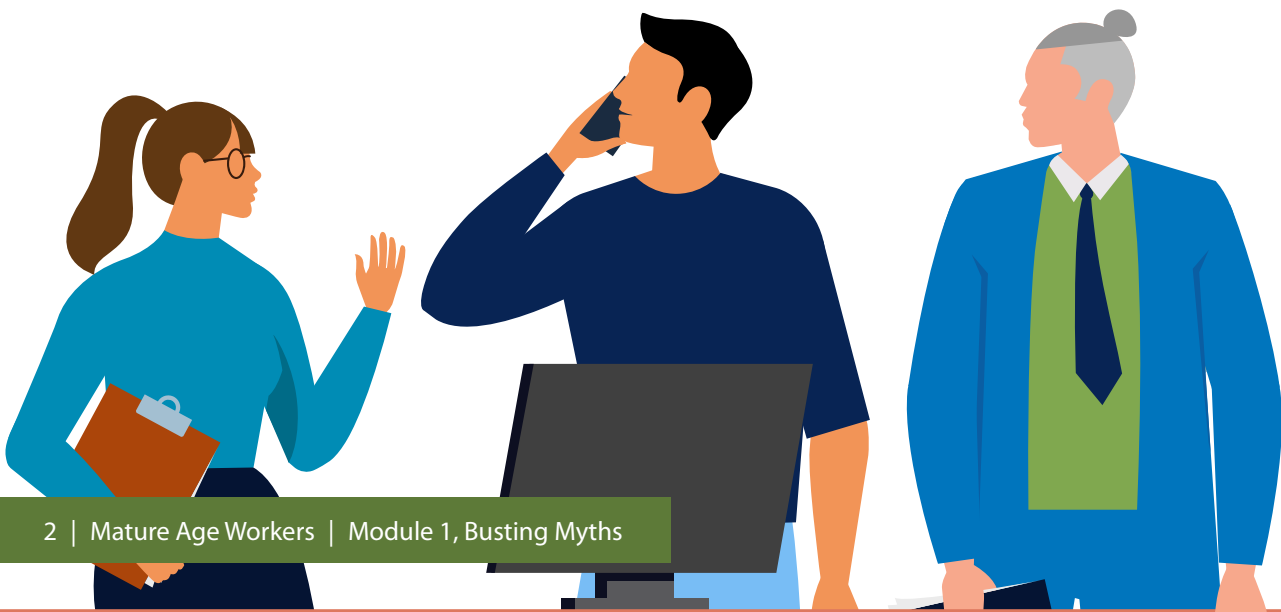
A report by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development estimated that building multigenerational workforces and giving mature age employees greater opportunities to work could raise Gross Domestic Product per capita by 19% over the next 3 decades.

Benefit of multigenerational workforces

- › Diversity in experience, skills, capability and mindset enhances team performance.
- › Increased team and organisational resilience. Ongoing transferring and retention of corporate knowledge and know how.
- › Increased organisational productivity.
- › Stronger talent pipeline.

Useful Resources

- › Ageing Better UK – [Dodderly but dear? Examining age-related stereotypes](#)
- › Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) – [Myths and facts around older workers](#)
- › Australian Human Resource Institute (AHRI) – [Employing Older Workers Report 2021](#)
- › Centre of Excellence in Population Ageing Research – [Legal Protections for Mature Workers](#)
- › OECD – [Promoting an Age-Inclusive Workforce: Living, Learning and Earning Longer](#)



Separating myths from facts

Businesses can unintentionally contribute to bias or discriminate against mature age workers by subscribing to commonly held myths and stereotypes. **It is important to separate the myths from the facts.**

MYTHS

FACT

Mature age workers skills are outdated, especially when it comes to technology.

Mature age people are the fastest growing users of information technology. Additionally, research shows that appropriate training and a supportive environment can greatly assist anyone to learn new skills, including mature age people.

Mature age workers have reduced capacity to learn.

Mature age workers are generally keen to learn, upskill or reskill, especially when offered meaningful training opportunities that relate to lifelong learning.

Mature age workers will cost the business more for their experience.

Mature age workers can save costs to your organisation. They also bring creative/innovative solutions to problems, cutting red tape and changing processes.

There is no long term benefit to employing and developing mature age workers.

The knowledge, skills and insights earned through a lengthy career are invaluable to employers. Employing mature age workers opens opportunities for the mentoring of younger staff and passing on a wealth of corporate knowledge, resulting in significant benefit to the organisation.

Mature age workers are more likely to take days off due to illness or to care for others.

According to the ABS, mature age workers are less likely to take days off due to illness or to care for others and are less likely to experience work related injuries than young workers.

Mature age workers are less productive than younger workers.

A study by Australian Health Management found mature age workers are, on average, more productive than younger workers. They were also found to enhance team performance with experience and help younger workers become more resilient.