

Chapter 18

Proposing a Diversity Intelligence Training Framework for Leaders and Managers to Attract, Maintain, and Balance Mature Workers

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ABSTRACT

The workforce is becoming more diverse with the increasing number of mature workers delaying retirement and working beyond the legal retirement age. Retaining mature workers in organizations can be challenging. Training leaders and managers in diversity intelligence (DQ) has the potential to lead to better and more effective supervision of diverse employees. Competent and skilled managers and leaders who are trained in DQ will be more able to help in the attracting, retaining, and balancing mature workers. The chapter proposes using the three learning processes of enactive, iconic, and symbolic from Bruner's discovery learning theory to teach leaders and managers DQ. The learning outcome is that managers will become mentors and coaches who are equipped to use goal-oriented and transformative processes to supervise the independent, motivated, and proactive adult workers.

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INTRODUCTION

Researchers indicated that diverse and multicultural intellectual human capital assets within organizations are more effective at producing higher performance (Nelson, 2014, Chen, Liu, & Portnoy 2012, Moon, 2013 & Bogilovic & Skerlavaj, 2016). One diverse characteristic is that of workers over the age of 40 who are considered to be mature workers in many workplaces. These workers are protected from workplace discrimination by the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) of 1967 (US Department of Labor, n.d. a). There has been a significant increase in the number of workers who have chosen to remain in the workplace beyond traditional retirement ages in the workplace. Brandon (2018) purported that full retirement age will continue to increase to about 67 years of age for workers born in 1960 and later. Increased life expectancy, financial necessity, and improved health of older Americans are all factors that are contributing to retirement-aged people delaying their retirement (Orszag, 2018). Pew research and the U.S Bureau of Labor Statistic both reported that some employees are uncertain about retirement and expressed delaying retirement until after age 65. Statistics from these two organizations confirmed employment of 65 and older employees has increased significantly over the past 30 years (Pew Charitable Trust, 2018, Toossi & Torpey, 2017).

As workplaces become more diverse, especially with older adults deciding to retire later or to work through retirement, leaders must become more adept at leading diverse employees. Having the knowledge and the understanding on how to lead diverse employees (Hughes, 2016, 2018c) and manage diverse intellectual human capital assets is important in keeping an organization's competitive advantage. According to Wiig (1993), knowledge management is fundamentally the management of corporate knowledge and intellectual assets that can improve a range of organizational performance characteristics and add value by enabling an enterprise to act intelligently. Since the early 1990s knowledge management has been a critical factor for organizations looking to increase their productivity and effectiveness (DeLong & Fahey, 2000; Drucker, 1999; Zack, 1999; Inkpen, 1996). According to Koulopoulos and Frappaolo (2000), knowledge management is a critical business strategy, which enables an organization to leverage its most precious resources, collective know-how, talent and experiences to accelerate the rate at which it handles new market challenges and opportunities. Inkpen (1996) propounded that organizations' failure to create and manage knowledge as a critical asset may account for their declining performance.

Using Diversity Intelligence (DQ) to Train Leaders and Managers of Mature Workers

The workplace has become a very diverse environment, and leaders and managers are called upon to direct and supervise employees from various backgrounds and cultures. Yet, many leaders and managers are ill-informed of diversity intelligence (DQ) (Hughes, 2016; Hughes & Brown, 2018) and how to effectively manage and supervise a diverse workforce. DQ covers all protected class groups and categories in the American workplace. Age is a protected classification for all workers aged 40 and over. Although workers who reach the age of 40 are in a protected class, it does not automatically signify that they are mature workers. Mature means different things to different individuals. In the context of this chapter, we are going to define a mature worker as any worker at 40 years of age and older. We are simply acknowledging their age as a stage at which maturity should begin if it is not already present and hopefully continue if it is the beginning. We are also acknowledging that these protected class workers

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