

Mature Age

Workforce Resource 2015



A framework of recommendations for the management and retention of mature talent in local government

FOCUS AREA 3.2

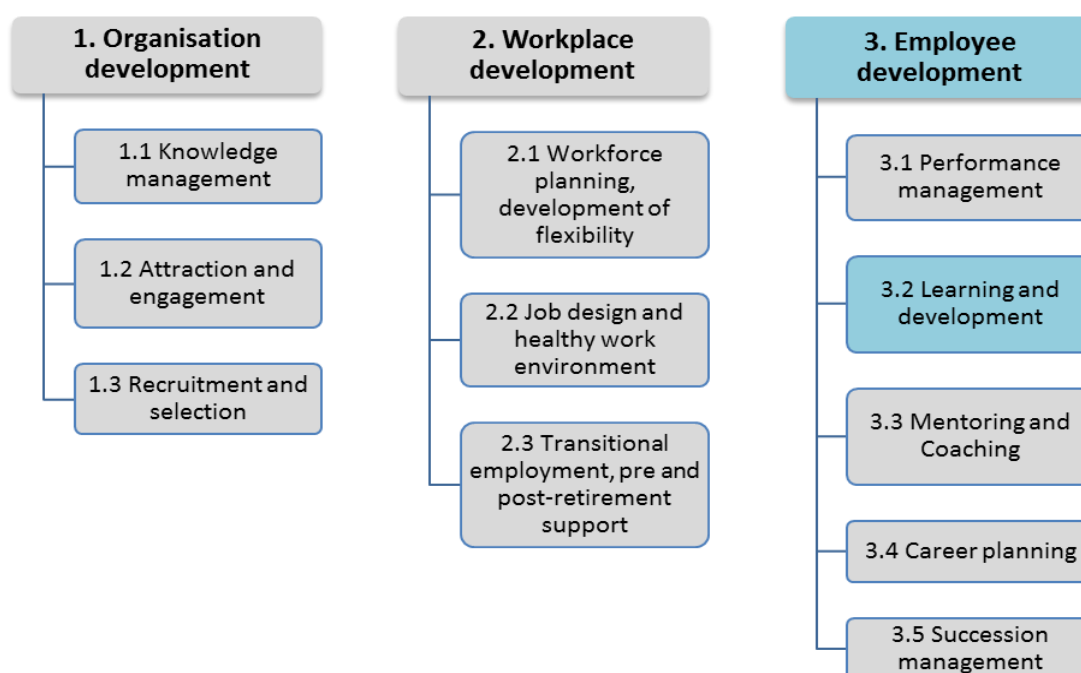
LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Toolkit is designed to be used by the Human Resources or Organisation Development (HR/OD) and leadership teams as they enhance their organisation's culture.

Suggested actions and strategies to help the mature age workforce may apply to the broader workforce as well and could contribute to fairer and more equitable work conditions and opportunities for all staff. Each organisation will already have in place human resource management policies and activities. It is not the intention of this toolkit to conflict with existing policies or actions. Rather, it can add value to the operations of the organisation by being used as stand-alone or integrated actions and initiatives.

Development initiatives are presented in a very broad way, with a set of actions identified as recommendations. Templates are not used in the Toolkit so that HR/OD practitioners can interpret recommendations in the most appropriate way that is aligned to existing initiatives.

There are many intended linkages and connections between the Focus Areas, which is an important factor as an aligned HR/OD strategy is developed and applied. The intention of the Toolkit is that work will be adapted and modified within each council organisation. Recommendations are not in any way intended to be prescriptive.



This Focus Area 3.2 of **Learning and Development** provides recommendations for how your learning and development platform can be aligned with the other cultural development initiatives associated with the mature aged workforce.

1. OVERVIEW – the need for change

The purpose of this Focus Area is to guide the investment in targeted learning and development activities that will maximise productivity, increase skill capacity and contribute to increased retention opportunities.

This Focus Area has been developed specifically to address the learning styles and needs of mature age workers. However, it is acknowledged that many of these principles and processes have application to the broader workforce and where applicable should be applied to existing learning and development procedures to ensure that an equitable and productive model of learning and training is available for all staff.

Benefits

- Increased productivity and skill capability that aligns to the workforce and business priorities of council;
- Improved return on investment through targeted, meaningful and results-driven training and development;
- Improved employer-employee relationships through increased involvement in the planning and process of learning that is relevant, timely and contributes to extending the working life of mature age workers;
- Increased focus on the individual’s needs through learning and career development plans;
- Opportunities to create new skill capacity with workers who are likely to retire in the near future;
- An equitable and fair model of learning and development that provides access to all staff, irrespective of age.

Learning and development should be seen as fundamental to the strategic development of a workforce governed by appropriate procedures and accountability frameworks. These are designed to ensure that all staff members, including mature age workers, have the opportunity to maximise their potential and contribute productively and efficiently to the future of the organisation. This Focus Area outlines the critical strategies and actions required to:

- Ensure the learning and development of the mature age workforce is relevant, timely and customised to meet individual needs;
- Deliver a return on investment through the increased retention of a highly skilled and flexible workforce that is skilled, capable and motivated to contribute to the council’s objectives.

2. DEFINITIONS

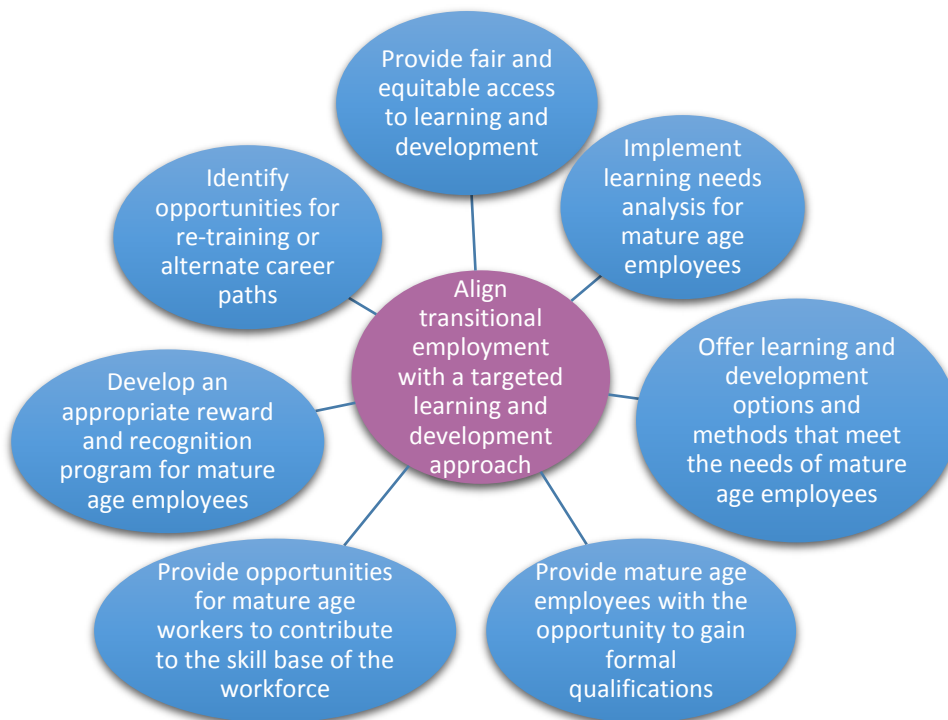
| | |
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| Career development | The life-long process of managing progress in learning and work |
| Customised training | Learning that is developed or altered to meet the individual profile needs of learners |

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| Learning Needs Analysis | An assessment of learning and development needs that defines the gap between current and desired performance capability |
| Learning plan | A documented record of the specific learning and development activities an individual will undertake over the course of their employment (including transitional employment, if and where relevant) |
| Learning style | An individual’s unique approach and preferences for learning |
| Mentoring | A learning initiative based on a professional relationship in which an experienced employee (mentor) assists a less experienced employee (mentee) in developing skills and knowledge for professional and personal growth |
| Multi-generational workforce | A workforce characterised by age diversity, differences in competency levels and experience and preference for learning and work patterns |

3. ACTIONS to address in this Focus Area include:

Following are key actions for a learning and development model designed for a future multi-generational workforce (including mature aged workers) that needs to be flexible, innovative, customised, timely and relevant if it is to deliver benefits to individuals and the organisation as a whole.

This Focus Area addresses the following:



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| <p>Align transitional employment with a targeted learning and development approach</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Offer a comprehensive, timely and flexible learning system designed to enhance individual performance for the purpose of improving organisational efficiency ▪ Increase transitional employment opportunities for mature age employees by aligning targeted training and development opportunities that increase skills and flexibility of employment |
| <p>Provide fair and equitable access to learning and development</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish processes that provide fair and equitable access to training and development opportunities to support transitional employment and retention outcomes |
| <p>Implement learning needs analysis for mature age employees</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complete a thorough training needs and skills assessment to determine current and future skill requirements and training and development needs of mature age workers |
| <p>Offer learning and development options and methods that meet the needs of mature age employees</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review all learning and development programs, methods and practices for mature age employees undertaking transitional employment to increase the relevance and suitability, timing, availability and flexibility of training and development activities ▪ Establish a range of Information and support programs and make them available to reduce barriers and increase participation in training and development activities by mature age workers |
| <p>Provide mature age employees with the opportunity to gain formal qualifications</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase the opportunity to gain qualifications through flexible practices, including recognition of current competencies, new opportunities and recognition of prior learning processes |
| <p>Provide opportunities for mature age workers to contribute to the skill base of the workforce</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify mature age employees who have the skills, experience and/or qualifications to actively contribute to the training and development of older and younger workers through facilitating training, and as mentors |
| <p>Develop an appropriate reward and recognition program for mature age employees</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reward and recognise mature age employees who have up-skilled to meet job requirements, diversified into new job roles and those who have contributed back to the organisation through the application of training to improve personal, team and organisational skill capability and work processes and practices |

Identify opportunities for re-training or alternate career paths

- Analyse risk to the safety, health and well-being of mature age workers and/or where the physical requirements of the job cannot be supported, options for re-training or alternative career paths can be discussed

4. WHO CAN CONTRIBUTE TO CHANGING THE CULTURE?

The success of learning and development initiatives for mature age workers undertaking transitional employment is a shared responsibility.

Managers

- Ensure the implementation of learning and development initiatives is consistent with the overarching guidelines for the age management strategy and other complementary policies associated with the effective management of the mature age workforce;
- Contribute to the identification of key skill sets required to meet future business objectives as per the strategic objectives of the organisation;
- Offer a learning needs evaluation for each mature age employee in their area of responsibility;
- Negotiate an individual learning and development plan for mature age workers that demonstrates benefits to the employee and the organisation;
- Provide all mature age employees with the opportunity for equitable access to learning and development opportunities as outlined in their learning plan;
- Develop opportunities for work-based learning and other flexible learning options;
- Identify mature age employees interested in and sufficiently skilled to mentor and/or coach other staff;
- Monitor and review learning and development plans and negotiate changes where appropriate.

Employees

- Actively participate in the learning needs analysis by contributing the relevant information on current and future skill requirements;
- Actively contribute to developing a learning and development plan in conjunction with the delegated manager;
- Participate in scheduled learning and continuous work-based learning opportunities in accordance with the objectives agreed within the learning plan;
- Contribute to strengthening the workforce capacity through involvement in mentoring, coaching or training other employees with the information or skills learnt;
- Maximise learning opportunities by providing regular feedback on the progress of the learning plan and the value of it;
- Participate in monitoring and review processes as identified within the learning plan, and make adjustments where necessary.

Mature age workers

- Undertake a thorough needs and skills assessment to determine current and future skill requirements and development opportunities;

- Have a negotiated learning and development plan designed to fit each individual skill profile and interests, based on the findings of the training needs analysis and career development plan;
- Contribute to employability through participating in agreed learning and development activities;
- Have increased opportunities to have knowledge and skills assessed under recognition of current competencies and recognition of prior learning processes;
- Take part in regular learning plan reviews as part of on-going performance reviews;
- Where agreed, utilise skills to actively contribute to the learning and development of older and younger workers through offering training or acting as mentors or coaches as part of career path opportunities.