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Layout & Distribution: Pascal Clerc & Valéria Kozakova

# Active Ageing in Employment – Making it a Reality

Alan Walker

## ACTIVE AGEING IN EMPLOYMENT - MAKING IT A REALITY

### CONTENTS

- The Meaning of Active Ageing
- A Strategy for Active Ageing
- Active Ageing Within Organisations

Alan Walker, Lecture for Asian Development Research Forum, Hong Kong, 15-16 September 2005

## ACTIVE AGEING IN EMPLOYMENT - MAKING IT A REALITY

### KEY BENEFITS

- Individual Control over Careers, Health and Well-being
- Optimise Human Resources in Organisations
- Sustaining Social Protection Systems

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## ACTIVE AGEING IN EMPLOYMENT - MAKING IT A REALITY

### KEY ASSUMPTIONS

- Comprehensive Strategy Spanning all Relevant Policy Fields
- Joined-up Policies/Actions
- Partnership Between Citizen and Society
- Flexibility

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ACTIVE AGEING IN EMPLOYMENT  
- MAKING IT A REALITY

SCOPE AND MEANING OF ACTIVE AGEING

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Active ageing is the process of optimising opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age

WHO (2002)

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## PRINCIPLES OF ACTIVE AGEING

- 'Activity' is everything that contributes to well-being
- All older people
- A preventative concept: across the lifecourse
- Intergenerational
- Rights and obligations
- Participative and empowering
- Respect for cultural diversity

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## A STRATEGY FOR ACTIVE AGEING

- Root out ageism
- Remove age barriers
- Develop active age management
- Flexible retirement
- Active civic life
- Combat social exclusion
- Public health across the lifecourse
- Redistribute resources from cure to prevention
- Target the geriatric giants
- Increase social care
- Establish activity programmes in care homes
- Social quality as the goal of social protection systems

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## ACTIVE AGEING WITHIN ORGANISATIONS

### Dimensions of Age Management in Organisations:

- Job recruitment and exit
- Training, development and promotion
- Flexible working practice
- Ergonomics, job design and prevention
- Changing attitudes within organisations

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## Good Practice in Age Management

- Specific measures to combat age barriers or promote the inclusion of ageing workers
- Creating an environment in which each individual is able to achieve his or her potential without being disadvantaged by their age

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## Objectives of Ageing-appropriate Job Design

- Repetitive work routines
- Permanent concentration
- Forced awkward postures
- Night shifts
- Physically-demanding work
- Machine-placed work
- Heat, noise, dust
- Tight deadlines

If workers are required to perform work under these conditions on a permanent basis, they will almost inevitably be confronted with health and performance problems as they grow older.

### Objective:

**Maintaining and promoting good health, motivation and qualification throughout people's working lives**

### Areas of action

- Ergonomic workplace design
- Fostering healthy work processes
- Job enrichment by changing type, content, methods of work, or mixing tasks
- Reducing time pressure
- Introducing flexible working-time models
- Limiting deployment times

Source: ISO

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## Examples of Good Practice

### JOB RECRUITMENT

RAPID (Sweden) recruiting older steel workers to avoid skill shortages.

### TRAINING, DEVELOPMENT, PROMOTION

Keller (Germany) introduced a specially designed IT skills training course for older workers.

### FLEXIBLE WORKING PRACTICES

Fidisco (Belgium) allows older staff to work 2 hours per week less than other staff without loss of earnings and to convert these reduced hours into extra holidays.

### ERGONOMICS

Ruoka-Saariainen Oy (Finland) in collaboration with public and private insurance institutions, has invested in a project aimed at adding one or two years to an employee's working life.

### CHANGING ATTITUDES WITHIN ORGANISATIONS

Volvo Penta (Sweden) has introduced a programme to change company attitudes towards older employees and the attitudes of employees to internal mobility. The company funds personal development programmes.

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## Responding to Work-force Ageing

### Age Management Policies

- Developing (ageing) employees, career planning
- Continuous training plus occupational recycling and promotion
- Flexible employment schedules
- Age-mixed teams
- Job re-design, ergonomics and function identification
- Maintaining and promoting good health and capacity
- Promoting age diversity (avoids recruitment/retirement waves)
- Age awareness/combating age discrimination
- Intergenerational collaboration (eg. tandem training)

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## Active Ageing in Employment

### Career development for the lifecourse

- |           |                             |
|-----------|-----------------------------|
| Phase I   | Recruitment and integration |
| Phase II  | Retaining and developing    |
| Phase III | Supporting flexible exit    |

Based on Buck and Dworschak (2003)

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## Age Management in Practice

### Workers' Work Ability

- Educational qualifications and skills
- Ability to work in teams
- Ability to work autonomously
- Continuing training, lifelong learning
- Flexibility and mobility

### Work Environment

- Age awareness
- Flexible work organisation
- Flexible working time
- Diversity (equal opportunities)
- Career planning, promotion
- Continuing training
- Healthy and safe working conditions

Based on Reday-Mulvey (2005) p.70

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- Conclusion

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