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## **Ageist stereotypes remain strong**

Age-based prejudice is 'alive and well' despite the reality of an ageing workforce, new research suggests.

Recruiter Adage asked 124 employers 'to put political correctness aside' and give an 'honest view' of workers over 45. The result shows EO policies have a way to go - with baby boomers seen as 'expensive', 'difficult to manage' and a 'liability' to an organisation's future.

Sixty nine per cent of employers believed mature workers cost an organisation more; 84% believed they had significant technological limitations; 63% believed they were a poor cultural fit in an organization; 36% believed they were not open to new training; and 27% that they were less productive.

Prof Louise Rolland of Swinburne Uni's Business Work and Ageing (BWA) unit said such attitudes represent 'oversimplified opinions and prejudiced attitudes' in relation to memory, productivity, cultural fit and technological ability.

'Left unchecked, these stereotypes impact significantly an organisation's willingness and readiness to address the major demographic changes that are taking place in the Australian workforce as the growth in the over 45 labour force far outstrips the under 45 cohort,' she said.