

Why Adage targets mature professionals

Adage™ offers organisations and recruiters an opportunity to target mature age professionals. By choosing **Adage™** as their job board, these organisations and recruiters are able to advertise directly to a qualified pool of mature age professionals.

Adage™ aims to redress past and present discrimination experienced by mature age job seekers in the employment market – as made evident in the research included in this document. Younger demographic groups are well catered for in the recruitment market and do not experience the same set of issues as mature workers. Mature workers are more likely to experience the compounding effect of being out of the workforce resulting in being seen as less employable.

Adage supports recruitment being an inclusive process where all candidates are recruited on merit. When organisations and recruiters use **Adage™** to advertise roles, it indicates that they are actively seeking mature professionals to balance their workforce. **Adage™** cannot guarantee that a mature professional will be the successful applicant, however we exist to provide the best opportunity for every mature professional who registers with us.

Adage™ actively works with organisations – corporate, public service and not-for-profit to:

- increase their workforce diversity by creating positions for mature age workers
- attract mature age candidates
- assist 'retiring' employees to redirect their work participation eg consulting, contracting, volunteering
- promote a positive approach to employing mature professionals

Research on discrimination towards mature age job seekers

The following six summaries of research provide evidence of past and present discrimination experienced by mature job seekers.

1) In the Australian Journal on Ageing, Vol 15, no 4 – *Attitudes of Employees and Employers Towards Older Workers in a Climate of Anti-discrimination*, evidence supports the common perception that problems are experienced by older workers in gaining re-employment.

The study showed the age group preferred by employers in recruiting particular categories of workers. When recruiting managers, only one manager in every eight recruited was over 46 years of age. This same ratio exists for professionals.

2) It is still the case that 1 in 3 Australian's aged 45-64 is not employed. The low aggregate unemployment rate for mature Australian's also masks the fact that older workers without jobs face significant difficulties gaining and re-gaining employment. A wide range of factors have been identified as contributing to the barriers to employment for older workers, including employer attitudes."

"From the perspective of older job seekers, there is evidence to suggest that age is seen as a major impediment to gaining employment. The persistence of age discrimination despite the existence of anti-discrimination legislation in all States and Territories is also backed up by analysis from the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission."

- *Age Can Work, Emeritus Professor Sol Encel & Business Council of Australia, April 2003*

3) "Unemployment is not masked by large numbers of people leaving the labour force under the guise of early retirement, disability or other factor, because of the perception of poor labour market prospects or the likelihood of discrimination (a common saying amongst mature age people is "no one will employ me at my age")"

"Age discrimination issues have been well-documented in the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission report *Age Matters* (1999). The main dimensions of age discrimination involve the targetting of mature age people in downsizing and retrenchment and the systematic discrimination against older people seeking jobs"

- *COTA Response to Employment for Mature Age Workers, 2000*

4) "The Business Council of Australia (BCA), in its employment guide for business on supporting mature-age employees, laid the blame at recruitment consultants' feet for 'ageism'. The BCA argues that while its members might have confidence in their hiring policies' age equality, the same could not be said for the recruitment agencies they used. Predictably recruiters hotly rejected the assertion claiming that they simply do what they're told and follow briefs from their client companies".

- *Fishy memories on ageing workforce crisis, David Hovenden, Human Resources Magazine*

5) "There is clear evidence that age discrimination persists in recruitment notwithstanding the existence of anti-discrimination legislation in all States and Territories. Among older unemployed workers, this is a common message in the context of their inability to regain employment. Often discrimination is implicit and subtle. It can result from the language and placement of advertisements, the screening phase and in the context of interviews"

- *50+ Age Can Work, Business Council of Australia, August 2003*

6) Lower hiring rates among older workers relative to younger ones may simply reflect the fact that they are not searching for a new job as often as younger workers. However, other evidence also suggests that older workers experience considerable difficulties in finding new jobs.

One indicator of the extent to which employers are recruiting older workers is provided by the relative hiring intensity by age. This is calculated as the hiring rate for a specific age group divided by the hiring rate for all employees. Hiring intensity decreases significantly with age.

	15-24 years	25-49	50+
Men	1.79	0.93	0.50
Women	1.84	0.88	0.42
Persons	1.82	0.90	0.46

The hiring rate is calculated as the share of all employees with tenure of less than one year.
Source – OECD estimates derived from ABS, Labour Mobility Survey, Feb 2004

Ageing and Employment Policies Report, OECD, 2005