

# Hiring Experience



## *A Guide for Employing Mature Workers*



*“Mature workers  
can bring a wealth  
of knowledge  
and experience  
to a work team.  
A diverse work force  
is an advantage  
to any company.”*

*– Steve Armstrong  
Vice President and Regional Manager  
Kelly Services, Inc.*

**I**n today’s dynamic workplace, employers are increasingly turning to mature workers to fill positions. These mid-career and older individuals are part of the fastest-growing age group in America and make up nearly 20 percent of the workforce. They are also valued employees who possess the skills needed to produce and deliver competitive products and services.

This guide outlines the reasons for hiring mature workers, lists Michigan employment sources and provides tips for recruiting, training and working with mature workers.

*Hiring Experience* is funded by  
the Michigan Department of Community Health,  
Office of Services to the Aging



Hiring mature workers makes good business sense for several reasons:

### ***An Aging Population***

America's largest population segment—the baby boomers—is reaching retirement age in the early 21st century, but is not planning to stop working. About 80 percent of boomers believe they will continue to work during retirement. They credit their good health and longer life expectancies for allowing them to stay employed.

These mature workers make up a growing segment of the workforce. By 2005, those 55 and over will account for nearly 20 percent of the workforce.

This demographic shift means that mature workers are readily available and interested in employment.

### ***Shortage of Skilled Workers***

The U.S. economy is generating millions of new jobs, mostly in the services sector, that demand high skill levels. While there are more jobs, there are actually fewer workers from younger age segments that traditionally fill these positions. This shortage calls attention to the need to look beyond conventional hiring procedures and tap into the mid-career and older age worker populations.

### ***Positive Contributions***

Mature workers daily make a difference at their jobs through their experience, qualifications and work ethic. They can rely on their strong skills base and are able to increase their knowledge through training.

Studies have shown that older workers may actually have higher motivation and job satisfaction than their younger peers. They keep work in perspective and have responsible attitudes toward it. Employers have indicated the value of skills developed through life experiences.



**Senior Community Service  
Employment Programs (SCSEP)**

Funded under Title V of the Older Americans Act, SCSEP is a work-training program designed to help economically disadvantaged persons aged 55 and older find jobs. SCSEP participants work in part-time community service positions to gain experience and acquire and enhance skills before moving on to employment in the business sector.

SCSEP offices are located across the state, grouped by the counties they serve:

City of Detroit	(313) 222-5330
Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, St. Clair, Washtenaw counties	(248) 357-2255
Wayne County (excluding City of Detroit)	(734) 722-2830
Hillsdale, Jackson, Lenawee counties	(517) 265-7881
Kalamazoo County	(616) 373-5147
Barry, Calhoun counties	(616) 966-2566
Branch, St. Joseph counties	(517) 279-8009
Berrien, Cass, Van Buren counties	(616) 983-0177
Genesee, Lapeer, Shiawasee counties	(810) 239-7671
Clinton, Eaton, Ingham counties	(517) 887-1440
Bay, Clare, Gladwin, Gratiot, Huron, Isabella, Midland, Saginaw, Sanilac, Tuscola counties	(989) 893-4506

---

Allegan, Ionia, Kent,  
Lake, Mason, Mecosta,  
Montcalm, Newaygo,  
Osceola counties (616) 456-5664

---

Alcona, Alpena, Arenac,  
Cheboygan, Crawford,  
Iosco, Montmorency,  
Ogemaw, Oscoda,  
Otsego, Presque Isle,  
Roscommon counties (989) 356-3474

---

Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix,  
Emmet, Grand Traverse,  
Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee,  
Missaukee, Wexford counties (231) 947-8920

---

Alger, Baraga, Chippewa,  
Delta, Dickinson, Gogebic,  
Houghton, Iron, Keweenaw,  
Luce, Mackinac, Marquette,  
Menominee, Ontonagon,  
Schoolcraft counties (906) 786-4701

---

Muskegon, Oceana,  
Ottawa counties (231) 739-5858

---

**Operation ABLE of Michigan**

Operation ABLE of Michigan provides computer and job training to mature workers (aged 40 and older) in southeastern Michigan. Additional services include career counseling and job search assistance. Mature workers participating in ABLE's program receive about 300 hours of personalized computer and job training. Operation ABLE is located in Southfield and Detroit. For more information, call 1-800-922-HIRE.

Many employers are interested in learning how they can make their jobs more attractive to mature workers. Here are some tips:

### **Recruiting**

- State in job ads that your organization seeks employees with maturity, good judgment and experience.
- Train interviewers to recognize the value of hiring mature workers.
- Communicate benefits such as training designed for mature workers, insurance and vacation time.
- Discuss the availability of flexible scheduling.
- Offer information on the effect that employment might have on Social Security and pension benefits.

### **Training**

- Provide training to meet skill needs and incorporate past experiences.
- Offer a variety of training options including job rotation, internship programs and on-the-job coaching.
- Consult with training organizations that specialize in programs for mature workers.

### **Working with Mature Workers**

- Create alternative work arrangements such as part-time, job-sharing, telecommuting.
- Accommodate physical limitations.
- Communicate with workers to learn what motivates them and incorporate this into your recognition program.



## For More Information

More information about hiring mature workers is available through the following organizations:

### **Michigan Office of Services to the Aging**

A state agency that provides programs and services to Michigan's older persons and their families.

*www.MISeniors.net*

(517) 373-8230

### **Operation ABLE of Michigan**

A nonprofit employment and training agency for mid career and older adults (40 and over).

*www.OperationABLE.org*

1-800-922-4473

### **AARP**

A membership organization for adults 50 and over.

*www.aarp.org*

1-800-424-3410

### **The National Council on the Aging**

The nation's first association of organizations and professionals dedicated to older persons.

*www.ncoa.org*

(202) 479-1200

### **Michigan Department of Career Development**

A state agency committed to the development of Michigan's workforce.

*www.TalentFreeway.org*

(517) 241-4000





Established in 1986, Operation ABLE is an employment and job training agency that annually helps more than 500 individuals obtain work and remain employable throughout their lifetime. For information on how your organization can employ mature workers, contact Operation ABLE.

***Main Office***

17117 W. Nine Mile Road  
Suite 200  
Southfield, MI 48075

**(248) 443-0370**

**Fax: (248) 443-1960**

**1-800-922-4473**

*www.OperationABLE.org*

***Hannan House***

4750 Woodward Avenue  
Room 201  
Detroit, MI 48201

**(313) 832-0922**

**Fax: (313) 832-4925**

*Operation ABLE is an equal  
opportunity employer/program.*

*TTY users: call the Michigan  
Relay Center, 1-800-649-3777.*

*Auxiliary aids and services  
are available upon request to  
individuals with disabilities.*