

Springboard Consultancy  
press release

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**Overlooked older workers have  
much more to offer says survey**

The focus of most personnel departments is still on recruiting and training younger people, often overlooking older workers in the process despite new laws on age discrimination which take effect on Oct 1<sup>st</sup>. Many employers have yet to think through the implications of the age legislation, according to new research just published by the Springboard Consultancy.

Older employees meanwhile were found to be enthusiastic and committed to their work and reported greater self-confidence than they'd had earlier in their working lives, having escaped the pressure to conform. Many are energetic, are embracing change and are willing to share their wealth of experience, the findings show.

“Too often however they are passed over for promotion even though they may have another 20 years’ service to offer. They say the knowledge and experience they have built up over the years is not valued, and that employers and younger colleagues are guilty of ‘writing them off’ because they are over 50 – something that will be specifically outlawed when the new legislation comes into force,” said Liz Willis, the consultancy director who led the research.

Some older workers report their growing resentment at the way the workplace becomes dominated by younger colleagues and the culture they create. Others say that negative stereotypes limit their progress and potential.

“There is an opportunity to constructively help staff to make further, full contribution during their final years at work rather than simply counting down the time to retirement,” said Liz Willis.

“And for employers, the challenge remains to respond in a positive way to the new demographics which show there are now more people aged over 60 in the UK than there are children under 16,” she added. “As diminishing numbers of young people become available to fill vacancies, so it becomes ever more important to draw the full contribution from those who are older.”

Having identified a range of such issues, all age-related, the Springboard Consultancy has just launched a special new training programme, ‘Fresh Steps,’ aimed at helping older staff to turn their attributes and experience into an asset in the workplace. Targeted also at employers, the programme is designed to inject new energy and motivation into a sector of the workforce that has often been overlooked. It will aim to help develop the potential of this sizeable group and to therefore deliver benefit to the bottom line.

The programme will comprise a two-day workshop, followed by a one-day workshop which will be run in-house at employer organisations or at the consultancy's training centre in Devon.

“With the Government green paper on welfare reform outlining the need for, among other things, one million early-retired people to return to work, the most successful organisations of the future are going to be those that harness the experience and potential of all their staff - and that includes the older age group,” she concluded.

## **Ends**

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## **Notes to editors:**

- Legislation outlawing age discrimination is due to come into force on Oct 1st. Among other measures, it will: require a company to justify having a mandatory retirement age below 65; put in place an obligation for employers to consider a request to work beyond retirement age; require employers to give employees at least six months notice of their date of retirement; and remove the upper age limit for unfair dismissal/ redundancy payments.
- The research, known as the ‘Fresh Steps’ survey, was conducted by the Springboard Consultancy and is based upon the responses of around 200 older workers and a cross-section of 14 large employing organisations, in public and private sectors, all in the UK. The resultant ‘Fresh Steps’ training programmes will start running in October, having been successfully piloted earlier this year.
- The consultancy operates in 21 countries across five continents. It is a small, ethically-driven business specialising in personal development at all levels.
- The consultancy was formed in 1988 by Jenny Daisley and Liz Willis who are now its directors.
- Clients include a wide range of blue-chip organisations, from ftse-100 companies to leading universities, government departments and police services as well as a wide variety of other organisations in the public and private sectors.
- The consultancy is based at: Holwell, East Down, Barnstaple, Devon, EX31 4NZ. For further background please see: [www.springboardconsultancy.com](http://www.springboardconsultancy.com)

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