Managing The Older Worker

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Cappelli, Peter; Novelli, Bill;

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Your organization needs older workers more than ever: They transfer knowledge between generations, transmit your company's values to new hires, make excellent mentors for younger employees, and provide a "just in time" workforce for special projects.

Yet more of these workers are reporting to people younger than they are. This presents unfamiliar challenges that--if ignored--can prevent you from attracting, retaining, and engaging older employees.

In Managing the Older Worker, Peter Cappelli and William Novelli explain how companies and younger managers can maximize the value provided by older workers. The key? Recognize that boomers' needs differ from younger generations - and adapt your management practices accordingly. For instance:

·   Lead with mission: As employees age, they become more altruistic. Emphasize the positive impact of older workers' efforts on the world around them.

·   Forge social connections: Many older employees keep working to maintain social relationships. Offer tasks that require interaction with others.

·   Provide different benefits: Tailor benefits--such as elder-care insurance programs or discount medication--to older workers' interests.

Drawing on research in management, psychology, and other disciplines, Managing the Older Worker reveals who your older workers are, what they want, and how to manage them for maximum value.

Peter Cappelli is Professor of Management at the Wharton School and Director of Wharton's Center for Human Resources. He authored Talent on Demand and The New Deal at Work. Bill Novelli is the former CEO of AARP, a membership organization of 36 million people age fifty and older. He is the author of 50+: Igniting a Revolution to Reinvent America.

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