

Theoretical introduction to case study Laguna.

Work Package 2

Authors:
Anita Richert-Kaźmierska, PhD
Gdańsk University of Technology, Poland

1. What does it mean *the age management*?

In the literature we can find different definitions of *age management*. Most of them indicate age management as a sub-discipline of human resources policies, which requires a multi-disciplined approach, drawing from demographics, learning and development, occupational health, work design/ergonomics, career planning etc.

The expression *age management* is a broad, umbrella term potentially embracing many disciplines and specialisms. At its heart it involves a strategic and holistic approach to managing age in which the analysis of demographic risks and the identification of appropriate interventions are considered. A strategy might promote preventative measures over remedial ones. It might also cover both intergenerational and life course perspectives, and may comprise multiple initiatives which address a wide range of issues such as promoting well being, bespoke training and knowledge management.

Ch. Ball, *Age Management At Work: adopting a Strategic Approach*,
<http://www.acas.org.uk>

Age management is considering the employees age as well as age limitations during everyday management, how the work tasks are divided and work atmosphere created so that there will develop a work environment, where every employee feels appreciated without considering their age.

Ilmarinen, J., Lähteenmäki, S., Huuhtanen, P. 2003. *Kyvyistä kiinni Ikäjohtaminen yritysstrategiana*. Talentum. P 7

We can talk about *age management* with respect to some of the practices adopted by employers in relation to age.

Age management provides the managers methodology and tools to optimize the usage of all employees' potential, with taking into account their age specificity. The emphasis in age management is on prevention rather than cure - e.g. prevention of de-skilling of workers and avoidance of work-related health problems.

Age management can take place at different levels: individual, the enterprise or labour market.

At the enterprise level age management refers to managing an age diverse, though increasingly ageing workforce. In the times of society aging, age management is been

coined to describe the raft of interventions and approaches devised for prolonging the decisions of retirement, especially among specialists and experts after sixties.

What is very important, age management focuses on the whole working life, not just on older workers. It seeks to achieve outcomes by applying a life-course perspective. It is long-term, strategically oriented conception. Figure 1 below shows how age management should be implemented throughout the organization. The approach embodies age analysis and monitoring/evaluation as base elements.

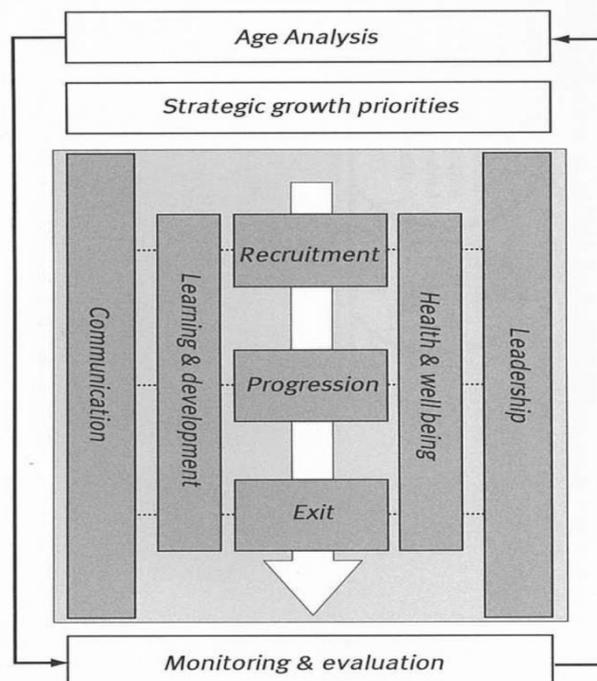


Figure 1. A System of Age Management

Source: Rolland L. (2004), *The Age Chasm: Successfully Managing Age in Your Organisation*, Drake White Paper Volume 2 No 5, Australia.

Age management encompasses the following eight dimensions:

- job recruitment;
- learning, training and lifelong learning;
- career development;
- flexible working time practices;
- health protection and promotion, and workplace design;
- redeployment;
- employment exit and the transition to retirement;
- comprehensive approaches.

Table 1. Examples of intervention removing “age barriers” in some of age management dimensions

<p>recruitment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — increasing maximum age limit — elimination/absence of particular age barrier — positive discrimination — support of self-help group to promote their own employment — training programmes to promote recruitment policies — employment exchange/job centre for older workers
<p>training, development and promotion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — development of training and educational programmes, in particular for older/ageing workers — existing training and educational programmes opened to older/ageing workers — creation of learning environment and workplace mentorship for older workers — career development — evaluation of performance — promotion of age-specific policy in work organisations
<p>flexible working practice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — job rotation — promotion of age-specific policy in work organisations — flexible working hours/age related working time — age related leave — demotion (without change in wage level) — part-time jobs — flexible retirement/early exit scheme — gradual retirement scheme/part-time “early exit” — self regulation of pace
<p>ergonomics, job design and prevention</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — ergonomic measures/improvement work conditions/ workload — organisation of tasks — mix of young and older workers — age related health and/or wealth control — older workers excluded from shift labour
<p>changing attitudes within organisations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — research related to ageing and performance — programmes to change attitudes and opinions towards older workers

Source: http://taen.org.uk/uploads/resources/Defining_Age_Management.pdf (10.11.2013).

2. What are the benefits of age management implementation and older workers' employing?

More and more employers become aware of advantages and benefits of age diversity in the company and potential of older workers. A workforce with a balance of youth and maturity is regarded as being best able to respond to the rapidly changing circumstances associated with globalization. By restricting recruitment to so called 'prime age' workers, many organizations have prevented themselves from maximizing their human resources potential.

In the analysis of Singapore National Employers Federation we can find the conclusions, that with proper management of a multi-generation workforce, the following benefits can be gained:ⁱ

- increase in employer branding,
- increase customer satisfaction,
- increase in innovation, productivity and efficiency,
- increase in an organisation's adaptability,
- increase in employee motivation and job satisfaction,
- increase in talent attraction and retention,
- increase talent pool selection.

Older workers have greater (than younger ones) experience, they also have previous experience of working in recession, they are more loyal and committed. Among strengths of older workers employers point: stronger work ethic, lower costs, reduced absence, better mentoring, leading and coaching, better problem solving abilities, fewer mistakes, stronger skills base.

3. How to convince older workers to stay professionally active while they achieve the statutory retirement age?

One of the main problem, that managers will probably have to face in the future is the competence gap: the lack of professionals, experts with high experience who could share with their knowledge with young employees.

There are several reasons why people decide to retire. They change according to criteria like gender, age, family situation and country specificity. Nevertheless, there can be identified several, so-called "common" reasons. Those are: achieving statutory retirement age, poor health, willingness to do other things (need to have more free time), need to take care about other family members and involuntary job loss.

J. Ilmarinen (the most known specialists – researcher and practitioner – in age management issues) proposes the methodology of employees’ work ability analyze. The holistic image of work ability consists of both the resources of the individual and factors related to work and working and the environment outside of work. Among internal there are: health, competences, values, motivation and attitudes. External incentives Ilmarinen divides into four groups: work environment (company level), family situation, close community (values, expectations, behaviors) and macro-environment (society, culture, legislation, education policy, social and health policy) – see Figure 2.

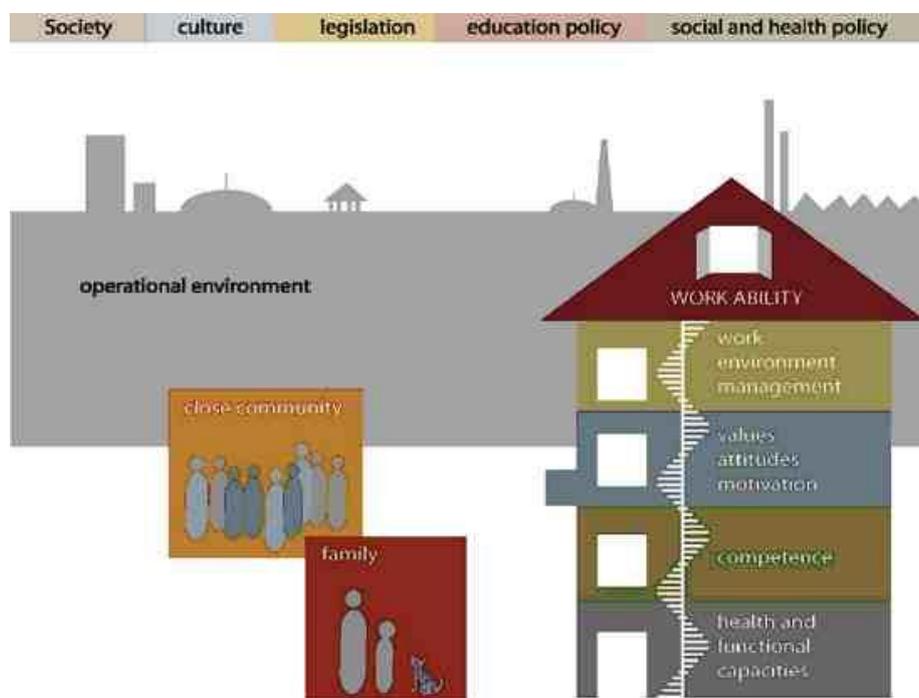


Figure 2. Holistic house of work ability model

Source: http://www.ttl.fi/en/health/wai/multidimensional_work_ability_model/pages/default.aspx

Work ability is of high relevance for each worker and for his or her organization. It may be understood as “how good is the worker at present, in the near future, and how able is he/she to do his/her work with respect to the work demands, health and mental resources”. We can say, that work ability is the result of the interaction of the worker and his or her work. Work ability may also be described as the balance of the workers’ resources and the work demands.

The concept of work ability and its measurement is becoming the basis for workplace intervention design. It helps to predict retirement due to disability, mortality and quality of life, relates to sickness absence and productivity. Most importantly, for enterprises, work ability is an indicator of the productivity of its own current and future human resources.

To make it easier to use the work ability concept, Finnish Institute of Occupational Health have worked out the *Work Ability Index (WAI)*. It is an instrument used in clinical occupational health and research to assess work ability during health examinations and workplace surveys. The index is determined on the basis of the answers to a series of questions which take into consideration the demands of work, the worker's health status and resources. The worker completes the questionnaire before the interview with an occupational health professional who rates the responses according to the instructions. WAI is a summary measure of seven items (range 7–49):

- Current work ability compared with the lifetime best (range 0–10)
- Work ability in relation to the demands of the job (range 2–10)
- Number of current diseases diagnosed by a physician (range 1–7)
- Estimated work impairment due to diseases (range 1–6)
- Sick leave during the past year (12 months) (range 1–5)
- Own prognosis of work ability 2 years from now (range 1–7)
- Mental resources (range 1–4)

The score depicts the worker's own concept of his/her work ability (see table 2).

Table 2. Level of work ability

Score	Work ability
7-27	poor restore work ability
28-36	moderate improve work ability
37-43	good support work ability
44-49	excellent maintain work ability

Source: Tuomi K, Ilmarinen J, Jahkola A, Katajarinne L, Tulkki A. *Work Ability Index*, Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, Helsinki 1998.

The main reason for assessing work ability is to identify what type of actions is needed to prevent its decline.

Table 3. Different functions the *work ability index* may have in an enterprise

Individual workers	Work groups	Enterprises
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — monitoring work ability — benchmarking — identifying need for action at early stage — creating awareness for future work and health — verifying the effect of intervention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — monitoring work ability — benchmarking work groups — identifying need for further assessment — identifying need for preventive action — verifying the effect of intervention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — monitoring work ability — benchmarking companies — identifying risk exposure, risk groups, trends — identifying need for prevention at early stage — verifying the effect of intervention — raising the awareness for work ability — providing data for discussion of work place health promotion and “work and age”

Source: http://www.arbeitsfaehigkeit.uniwuppertal.de/picture/upload/file/Concept_and_Assessment.pdf (12.11.2013).

References

Age management and it's dimensions

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2. Ball Ch., *Managing the Ageing Workforce: an introductory guide to age management for HR professionals*, TAEN – The Age and Employment Network, London 2007, http://www.esfage.eu/sites/esfage/files/attachments/TAEN_Guide_to_Age_Management_Sept_07.pdf

Age management's benefits and strengths of older workers

1. *Age management toolkit*, Singapore National Employers Federation Responsible Employers, Sustainable Business, Singapur 2013, <http://age-mgt.sg/web/ImgCont/337/AgeManagementToolkit.pdf>

Strengths of older workers in Poland

1. Richert-Kaźmierska A., *Strengths and weaknesses of older workers in Poland*, Gdańsk 2013 (annex to the introduction)

Older people as key persons in the companies, with great potential, extremely innovative

Watch the documentary movie prepared as a result of the project Best Agers - Using the knowledge and experience of professionals in their primes to foster business and skills development in the Baltic Sea Region <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iGIVs2DO1HU>

Methods of analyzing the work ability of employees in different age

1. Gould R., Ilmarinen J., Järvisalo J., Koskinen S. (ed.), *Dimensions of Work Ability. Results of the Health 2000 Survey*, Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, Helsinki 2008, http://www.etk.fi/fi/gateway/PTARGS_0_2712_459_440_3034_43/http%3B/content.etk.fi%3B7087/publishedcontent/publish/etkfi/fi/julkaisut/tutkimusjulkaisut/erillisjulkaisut/dimensions_of_work_ability_7.pdf

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