Age Discrimination:
What Every Manager Needs to Know

Use this guide to reinforce the concepts covered in the Quick Take and help make the learning stick. You can use the Possible Answers as prompts to stimulate or expand the discussion.

1. **What are some examples of statements that might be perceived as age-related "code words"?**

   POSSIBLE ANSWERS:
   Code words suggesting a preference for younger workers:
   • "We want to project a fresher image"
   • "We need people who grew up with Internet"
   • "This job has long hours; you'll need a lot of stamina"
   • "We are recruiting recent college graduates"

   Code words suggesting bias against older workers:
   • "You can't teach an old dog new tricks"
   • "He's overqualified for this position"
   • "She won't be able to keep up with the new technology"
   • "He's resistant to change"

2. **What are some mistaken assumptions that might lead to unconscious bias against older workers?**

   POSSIBLE ANSWERS:
   • "Older people have trouble with technology"
   • "Older workers are more likely to be injured on the job"
   • "Someone who's approaching retirement age won't be as ambitious as a younger worker"
   • "Older workers have physical impairments (poor eyesight, hard of hearing, etc.) that make them less efficient"
   • "They're grumpy"
   • "They'll resent working for a supervisor who's much younger than them"

3. **What are some situations where unintentional age discrimination is likely to occur?**

   POSSIBLE ANSWERS:
   • Hiring for entry-level jobs or those requiring minimal experience.
   • You have to make a layoff and choose a 63-year-old worker because she will be eligible for Social Security benefits
   • Physically demanding jobs where you are concerned that an older worker won't be able to keep up

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