

## HIRING RELATED TO AGE

Applying for a job can be an epiphany! The hidden message might be, “we want a younger (hmmm) person in the leadership/administrative position!”

Age and experience are important factors that determine leadership style, and age is one of the most important factors! It is commonly believed that experiential aging is an important contributor when determining behavior displayed by a leader. Numerous complex and contradictory findings on the relationship between leadership ability and age exist.

In 1997, the research found that younger leaders were perceived to be more effective than older leaders. However, about 2003, increased leader age and follower satisfaction were positively related to more senior leaders, and negative satisfaction was associated with younger leaders.

Intelligent administrators/leaders understand that a significant research finding is intended to augment our understanding of a researched topic. There is an awareness that there are exceptions to every research finding. However, significant research findings should cause a pause in our thinking to the point of (at least) increased awareness of the past, present, and intended future job hiring behaviors as leaders.

Significant research finding merely means there is a preponderance of evidence to indicate the research finding's correctness. Combining these external research findings with an organization's nondiscriminatory policies and procedures, applicant information, and an unbiased job description provides a broad-spectrum professional perspective for employment consideration.

Published Significant Research Findings Related to the Leadership Qualities of Older People.

Older people more often than younger people---

1. Experience positive feelings and avoid negative emotions.
2. Have learned to comprehend better and resolve negative events.
3. Predict emotions elicited by future events more correctly
4. Have a high control over their feelings.
5. Exhibit more positive and stable emotions.
6. Show positive feelings and emotions.
7. Exhibit less anger.
8. Have low arousal of negative feelings causing more contentment.
9. Have low arousal of negative feelings related to sadness.
10. Have less anger, a low incident of sadness, and a high state of enthusiasm.
11. Prioritize positive information over negative information.
12. Pay greater attention to positive social cues, which positively affect emotions.
13. Have more experience and, therefore, less dependent on outside information.
14. Analyze a situation to comprehend and resolve challenging events.
15. Use Transformational Leadership (considered “superior leadership” characterized by the “four I’s”---idealized influence, Inspirational motivation, Individual consideration, and Intellectual stimulation.)
16. Have the traits of empathy, collaboration, and emotional intelligence.
17. Exhibit more positive leadership behaviors.

Experientially-aged professional leaders require university/college academic leadership preparation and administrative/leadership ability. The experienced and academically prepared leader supports and promotes highly successful and effective employees. This preparation of experience and education is a predominant happening of successful leadership.

Society expects (in many cases) that successful leadership is associated with masculinity, and females are often associated with caregiving, social work, and educational roles. Regardless--research findings confirm that age is a far more significant consideration in both genders in determining leadership abilities.

The skills of accomplishing a successful administrative/leadership role include "having been there" as an employee. Age, with all its implications, has its unspoken positive place. The administrator/leader who can harness a lifetime of experience on behalf of a leadership role provides an advantage. Life experience prepares a person for leadership. Life teaches lessons that cannot be learned sitting at a desk, and life also teaches from the "school of hard knocks." Life lessons are often painful, but the lessons are not forgotten, and the leadership role success is the product of true grit--Passion and Perseverance.

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