

HIRING “DINOBABIES”

Many (too many) employers will not admit a bias regarding the age when determining employment decisions. Some currently published articles have referred to the older generation as “dinobabies” as an ongoing and future perpetuating business endeavor of bias that resists change. Is the language (dinobabies) used to describe the older generation with the most experience a joking reference? No-- this negative hiring attitude related to the hiring or retention of the older generation is often expressed candidly—verbally and in writing. Pursuing the young instead of retaining the senior employee is often stated as an effort to “accelerate change.” And, so it is—the felt need for perpetual change (intended or unintended) occurs in the employment/hiring world as an outcome of entropy—meaning everything changes in the universe with time.

There has been a “push” lately in helping the older experienced worker (so-called “dinobabies” in several articles) looking for employment to rewrite their resume’s to meet better the existing differentiating computerized algorithms many companies now use to screen applicants. The right phrases and buzzwords seem to matter as hiring information resulting in positive hiring outcomes belong to algorithms and not personal intuition related to the human administrative ability to discern a potentially successful employee.

Reports now show that one-third of job seekers 55 years of age and older are unemployed for a long term. The long-term ruminating of the unemployed has asked this question: How can a seasoned “dinobaby” make a positive difference in the real world of inexperienced youthful employees? Guess what--A lifetime of employment experience can provide the inexperienced employee with support, methods of success, and a friendly reminder of the requirements of longevity success tactics.

Large companies are now emphasizing that “dinobabies” are best utilized by putting their successful information to work by being “master-teachers” and supportive mentors to new incoming employees, rather than being or feeling thwarted because of their age. There seems to be plenty of incoming young and energetic new potential employees. However, where do you often find a working lifetime of successfully learned behaviors that have led to a successful organization and recognized knowledge and requirements of accrediting bodies? Only with the older experienced and successful employees regarding organizational standards is proof of past success. Think twice (if you have a choice) about throwing the “baby out with the bathwater.”

However, never underestimate the ability of youth. The younger worker can bring energy, enthusiasm, and new energized strength to an organization—even though they lack related work experience. If a business desires to attract a younger population, then hiring young employees helps. Due to the lack of work history, the young often are “a clean slate” for teaching work standards. With a youthful learning mindset, learning is often easier than older employment choices. Wages for employment might be less due to the lack of related work experience. As for developing or effectively using computer technical skills, the young usually have valuable experience. Through their youthful physical and mental strength, they can bring new ideas and energy to a possibly stagnant organization.

Conclusion: Careful leadership guidance from the chronological and experienced older employee can combine the good from the past with the creative possibilities of the future. The older and experienced employee has learned a “bag of means and ways” to help a younger employee successfully integrate into a work situation.

Nothing replaces experience in life to teach and meet principles of success. Making age-related choices for employment considers the potential employee contributions, customer needs, accreditors/auditors standards, or licensing requirements. It is---an intellectual leadership challenge!

Carolyn Taylor, Ed.D, M.N. R.N.

leadershippoweronline.com