



# The Age Advantage

Overcoming Age Bias to  
Hire Experienced Talent

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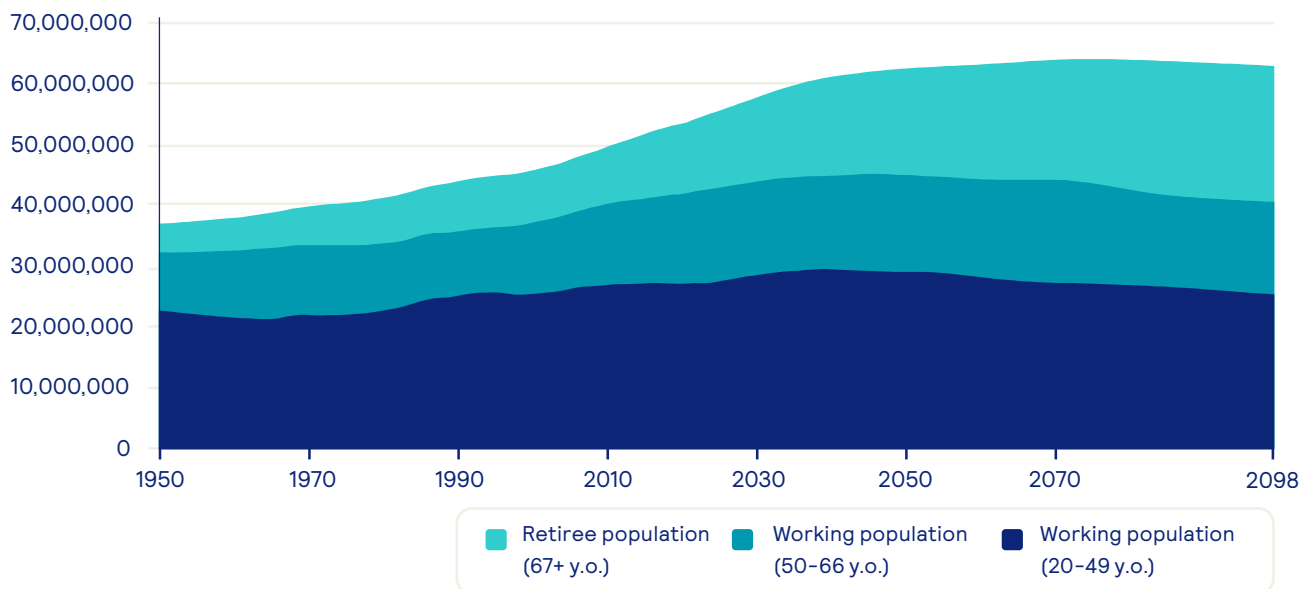
## About

The Stepstone Group and Totaljobs, and Prof. Sarah Vickerstaff



# The challenges older workers face when **looking for a job**

The proportion of retirees increases while the working-age population falls



As of 2024, more than a third (35%) of workers in the UK are aged 50 and over. With longer, healthier lives and evolving workplace policies, many are eager to continue working beyond traditional retirement. Yet, age bias remains a significant barrier for jobseekers and employers alike.

We've partnered with leading age and employment expert Professor Sarah Vickerstaff to explore these barriers and identify solutions. Drawing on insights from 4,000 UK jobseekers and 1,000 HR decision-makers, interviews with workers over 50, and analysis of over 4.5 million job ads, this report reveals how age bias impacts every stage of recruitment and offers practical steps to overcome it, hire experienced talent, and build age-diverse teams.

Our research found that 59% of recruiters admit to making age-based assumptions,

with nearly half (46%) considering candidates over 57 "too old." These biases lead businesses to overlook a highly experienced and skilled talent pool and undermine jobseeker confidence—1 in 3 candidates over 50 worry that their age will hinder their job prospects.

Overcoming age bias isn't just about fairness; it's about unlocking the value that older workers bring to the workforce. Older candidates offer a wealth of expertise, reliability, and fresh perspectives that can help businesses thrive, particularly in industries facing talent shortages.

By embracing the age advantage in recruitment, businesses can futureproof their talent strategies, boost their performance, and foster a more inclusive, forward-looking workplace.

# Key Takeaways

## Obstacles facing older workers

57

is the age when 46% of recruiters admit candidates might be considered "too old"



15%

of candidates over 50 have been rejected from a job because of their age



1 in 3

jobseekers over 50 worry that their age will limit their chances of getting hired

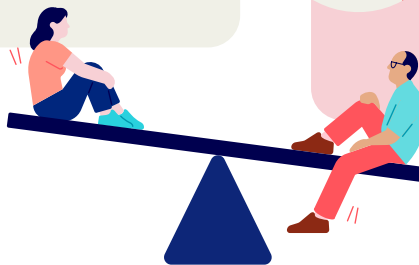


42%

of recruiters feel pressured to hire younger candidates

1 in 4

jobseekers refrain from applying to jobs due to feeling too old



## Age-based assumptions and stereotypes

59%

of recruiters admit to making age-based assumptions

97%

of recruiters prioritise cultural fit when hiring, yet 1 in 2 recruiters rely on age as a factor for determining that fit

56%

of recruiters doubt older candidates' tech skills



## Untapped potential of older workers

# Over half

of UK businesses have not yet implemented strategies to increase age diversity



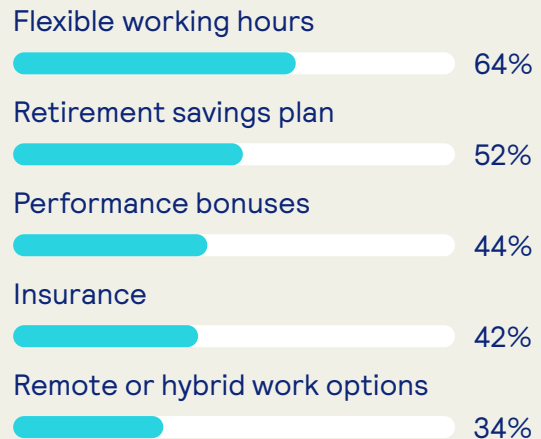
# 3 in 4

full-time employees 55 and over would be open to work beyond the retirement age, adding 300K to 700K workers and £11.9 to £23.5 billion to the UK economy annually

### Top incentives for people over 60 to continue working past retirement

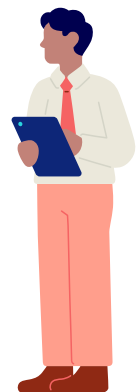


### Most attractive benefits to workers 55 and over



## Top Tips for Employers and Recruiters

- ✓ Include age inclusivity in your DEI strategy
- ✓ Track age diversity in your organisation
- ✓ Champion age diversity and foster an age-inclusive workforce
- ✓ Evaluate `culture add` instead of cultural fit
- ✓ Remove biased language from your job ads



## Expert Spotlight



**Sarah  
Vickerstaff**

**Professor**  
at University of  
Kent

The ageing population is often seen as a societal problem, but this perspective overlooks the opportunities it offers the workforce. Encouraging older individuals to stay, retrain, or return to work offers a powerful solution to recruitment challenges and skills shortages.

As this report reveals, age bias remains widespread, with 59% of recruiters making age-based assumptions. This bias shows up directly, with recruiters labelling candidates over 57 as “too old,” and indirectly, as older jobseekers internalise these views, with 1 in 4 refraining from applying for roles out of fear of rejection. Employers who address these biases stand to gain a competitive advantage by accessing a larger, highly skilled talent pool.

This report not only highlights the barriers but also provides practical steps for overcoming them. Employers who act on these insights can retain valuable skills and create a more inclusive, age-diverse workforce that ultimately benefits both business and society. After all, good work is good for everyone.



**Natalie  
Matalon**

**Chief People  
Officer**  
The Stepstone  
Group

With the highest level of economically inactive people in over a decade, there's a real chance for employers to tap into the wealth of knowledge and skills that older workers offer. However, our research shows unconscious biases are still preventing many businesses from fully accessing this vital talent pool.

Our ageing population means that the workforce is naturally evolving, and those who embrace the experience and diversity of perspective of older workers will be better positioned to support younger workers in their careers and address talent shortages. While it's promising that many employers are already recognising the value of over 50s, accelerating efforts to build more inclusive recruitment practices will unlock even more growth opportunities for business and people.

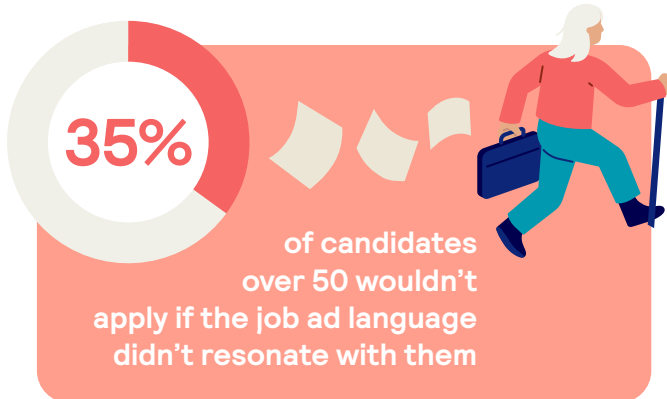
# A jobseeker's journey: navigating age bias across recruitment

## Job Ads: Desire for belonging

Job ads shape a candidate's first impression of a company and their perceived sense of belonging within an organisation. Our research shows that jobseekers, especially those over 60, are more likely to apply for ads that highlight personality traits and soft skills like reliability (69% of those over 60).

Gender also plays a role: 71% of women 55 and over are motivated by ads mentioning traits like approachability, while men in the same age group are less influenced. Similarly, 62% of older women are more likely to apply if listening and communication skills are emphasised, while mentioning these traits has less impact on men.

Conversely, ads that emphasise new technology can discourage all candidates, with 21% less likely to apply—rising to 36% for those over 60. This may reflect a broader issue, as many older candidates opt out of these roles, not necessarily because they lack tech skills, but due to the perception—held by 56% of recruiters—that older workers struggle with technology. This bias, embedded in the language of job ads, could deter qualified candidates from applying and affect their own decision-making about their suitability.



Using inclusive language is crucial for communicating a sense of belonging, as 35% of candidates over 50 won't apply if the job ad language doesn't resonate with them. Words like 'fast-paced' or 'dynamic' may imply a preference for younger candidates, alienating older applicants. Focusing on skills, competencies and transferable experience (and avoiding age-specific language) can help attract a broader talent pool, which we'll explore in greater depth later in this report.



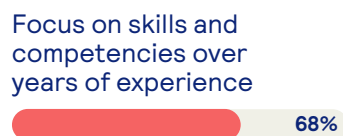
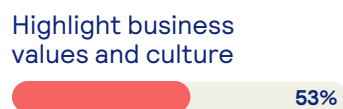
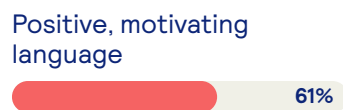
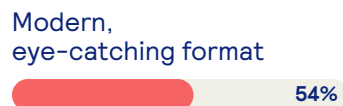
## Writing job ads that resonate with all age groups

When looking at a job ad, jobseekers understandably say the title is the first element that catches their eye, followed by job responsibilities, qualifications and requirements. While younger and older candidates have slightly different preferences, they share some key expectations.

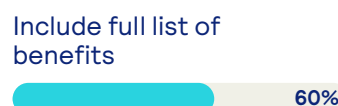
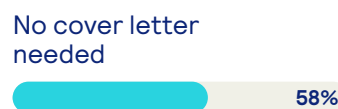
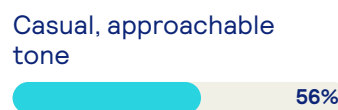
## Job ad elements preferred by candidates above and below 50

Candidates across all age groups agree on one thing: they want a clear, jargon-free job description that feels approachable. Skill-focused, unbiased language encourages applications from a diverse pool of candidates, fostering inclusive workplaces where everyone feels they belong. Most (64%) want to see the exact salary and a full list of benefits upfront. Additionally, 58% of candidates prefer a simple application process, such as submitting just a CV.

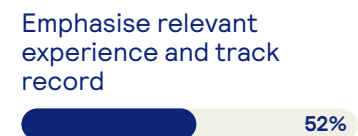
### Preferred by candidates under 50:



### Preferred by all candidates:



### Preferred by candidates over 50:





## Leveraging benefits to win over candidates

Benefits play a crucial role in influencing a candidate's decision to apply. While 60% of jobseekers prefer to see all employee benefits listed in a job ad, certain perks are especially appealing to different age groups, including flexible working hours, performance bonuses and remote or hybrid work options.

For candidates 55 and over, retirement saving plans (52%) and insurance (42%) also rank highly. Flexibility is particularly valued by this age group, with almost two-thirds (64%) prioritising flexible hours compared to just half (49%) of those age 18 to 34.

Women 55 and over are even more drawn to flexible hours (70%) and flexible work location (37%) compared to 59% and 30% of men, respectively. This possibly reflects a greater desire for work-life balance, increased caregiving responsibilities or health considerations.

While many businesses report offering these benefits, our analysis of over 4.5 million job ads reveals they're rarely mentioned. For instance, half (50%) of employers say they provide flexible working hours, but this is highlighted in only 2% of ads. Similarly, flexi-retirement options like part-time work or job sharing, offered by 38% of employers, appear in just 7% of ads.

By clearly showcasing the full range of available benefits, particularly flexible working options, employers can attract a broader talent pool, including older candidates –especially women– who may otherwise feel excluded from more rigid roles.

### The most attractive benefits for candidates of different ages

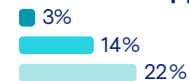
#### Flexible working hours



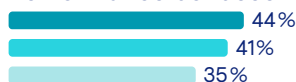
#### Professional development



#### Childcare support



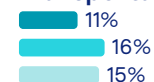
#### Performance bonuses



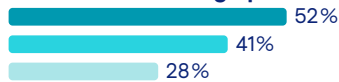
#### Travel allowances



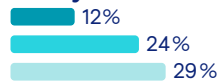
#### Transportation subsidies



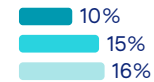
#### Retirement savings plan



#### Family leave



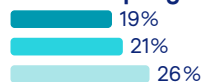
#### Tuition reimbursement



#### Remote or hybrid work options



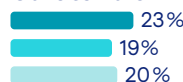
#### Wellness programmes



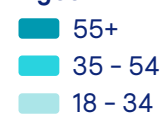
#### Insurance



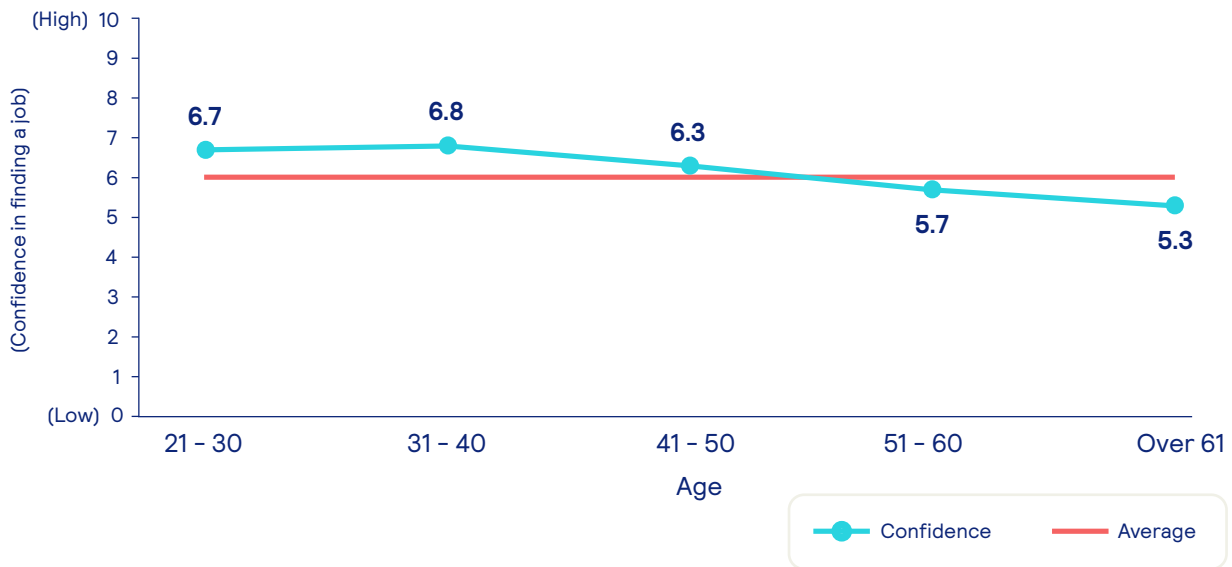
#### Cafeteria or meal subsidies



#### Ages:



# Applications: Empowering older workers to apply



**1 in 4**

jobseekers over 50 refrain from applying to jobs due to feeling old



As candidates pass 50, their confidence in finding roles that match their experience drops from an average of 6.3 to 5.7 out of 10, then down to 5.3 after 60. This decline is closely linked to concerns about age, with 1 in 3 older jobseekers feeling that age limits their job opportunities.

Negative ageist stereotypes reinforce these worries, with 27% of candidates over 50 feeling “old” compared to their peers. Concerningly, recruiters acknowledge this, with 46% admitting candidates over 57 are often considered “too old.”

This mindset has a real impact—many candidates internalise these biases,

with a quarter of candidates over 50 holding back from applying for jobs due to their age. To counter implications of their age, some candidates (22%) even change or omit their age from their CV, with 49% doing so to avoid being stereotyped.

“When you’re younger, you tend to pad out your CV, but when you’re older you strip out a lot.”

– Brendon, 53, Hertfordshire

For women 55 and over, the fear of being stereotyped rises significantly to 64%, (compared to 42% for men). This disparity illustrates how women often encounter a dual challenge of gender and age bias as they navigate the job market. They often feel the need to hide their age to push back against stereotypes that suggest their worth declines as they get older, something that isn’t as heavily scrutinised for men.

## Internalised ageism

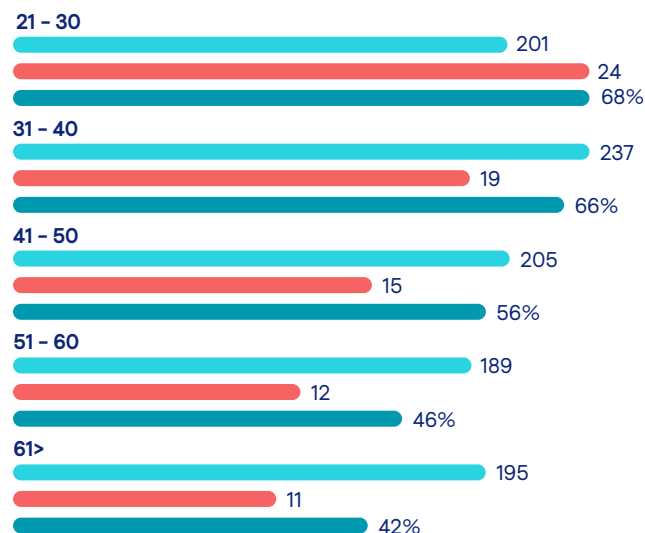


**Sarah Vickerstaff**  
Professor  
at University of Kent

The hesitation that many older candidates experience when applying for jobs often reflects internalised ageism, where stereotypes affect their self-perception. Even if they consciously reject these stereotypes, situations that draw attention to their age can lead to self-exclusion or reduced performance—known as stereotype threat. Overall, such stereotypes can shape how individuals understand their feelings and behaviours. As a result, internalised bias often causes older candidates to opt out of roles they are well-qualified for, which limits their opportunities and narrows the talent pool for employers.

That’s why, older candidates tend to submit fewer applications but see a similar success rate, as they more acutely focus on roles that align with their skills. They spend around the same time (3 hours) applying and go through fewer interviews before landing a job. While this may sound positive, it underscores their perception of limited opportunities.

## The application process across different age groups



- Median time in minutes spent on one application across age groups
- Median number of job applications before finding current position
- Confidence in using AI tools to create CVs and cover letters

*\* This is the self-assessed time from reading the job ad, preparing the documents, and submitting the application*

Additionally, many older candidates lack confidence in using modern tools (even if they have the skills). While 60% of candidates feel comfortable using AI tools to create CVs and cover letters, this drops to 46% for those over 50 and 42% for those over 60. Internalised ageist stereotypes—particularly regarding technology—contribute to their hesitation to apply for roles that stress tech proficiency.

To break these barriers, employers should emphasise skills and potential rather than making assumptions about tech abilities. Providing training opportunities can help young and old candidates build confidence in using modern tools, as our research shows all workers—regardless of age— are eager to learn and keep their skills current.

## Candidate selection: The limitations of ‘cultural fit’

Ageist stereotypes come into play when evaluating candidates too, with 59% recruiters admitting to making age-based assumptions.

Recruiters often favour younger candidates for roles requiring adaptability to new technologies (50%), proficiency in the latest tools (49%), and a fresh perspective (39%). Conversely, older candidates are typically preferred for their extensive experience (48%), reliability (34%), and strong organisational skills (27%).

These biases limit opportunities for both age groups and reinforce stereotypes that hinder individual contributions. Employers can combat this by utilising recruiting technologies, such as automated CV screening, to ensure age does not influence candidate shortlisting.



**“Even when a headhunter calls with a ‘perfect’ role, I can almost guarantee the age of the recruiter affects the outcome. I’ve had experiences where younger recruiters didn’t understand the role being offered. Sometimes, they’ll pitch a job that supposedly matches my experience, but it doesn’t because they haven’t understood my background.”**

- Shankar, 59, Bedfordshire

## Recruiters prefer younger candidates overall

Seeking candidates who can quickly adapt to new learning environments and technologies.



Proficiency in the latest technology and software is essential.



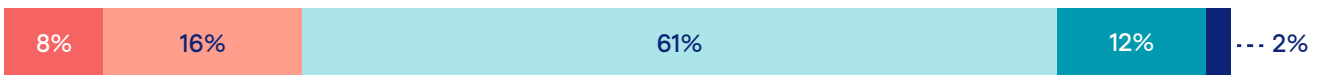
We need team members who can quickly adapt to changing environments.



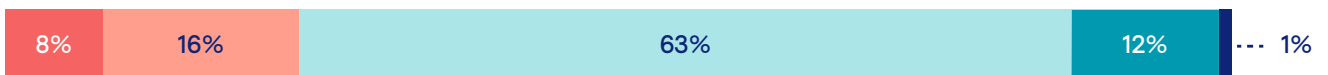
We seek innovative thinkers who can bring fresh ideas to the table.



We appreciate highly productive individuals who consistently meet and exceed goals.



We value positive and proactive attitudes in our team members.



Attention to detail and careful execution are highly valued.



Strong organisational skills and attention to detail are essential.



Reliability and dependability are key traits we look for in our employees.



Ideal candidates have a wealth of experience in their respective fields.



# Almost Half

of recruiters consider  
age an important factor  
to assess cultural fit



Nearly all (97%) recruiters believe that candidates must show cultural fit, but this unawareness spot fuels age bias—with 47% considering age when assessing cultural fit. As a result, 23% candidates over 50 have been rejected for not fitting the workplace culture.

We also found that over 1 in 3 (35%) businesses have a workforce primarily between the ages of 35 and 44, dropping to between 25 and 34 for medium and large businesses (20%).

## Cultural fit vs. 'Cultural add'

Hiring for cultural fit often leads to hiring workers with similar experiences, backgrounds, strengths and weaknesses. Although a candidate who 'fits in' might seem like a safer choice, this approach can limit inclusion efforts and stifles growth and innovation in an ever-changing global business environment. In contrast, hiring for 'cultural add' helps reduce affinity bias by focusing on competencies and bringing in new perspectives and skills that drive progress and new ideas.

By focusing on 'cultural add' and fostering age-inclusive workplaces, employers can leverage unique strengths across generations, breaking down age-related assumptions. Organisations that champion age diversity should highlight this commitment in their branding to attract candidates of all ages.

**“I sense that some businesses will reject me because of my age, without question. I’ve even had meetings with a particular company and reached out to the CEO, but I feel like the term ‘fit’ is often used as a polite**

**way of saying I’m too old. I’m more sensitive to this now because of my age and experience, but there’s no doubt that age can be a driver, a motivator, and a barrier.”**

- Liam, 59, Bedfordshire

## Interviews: A preference for younger candidates

Interviews are often the first time a recruiter and candidate truly see each other and have a real conversation. This face-to-face interaction involves more than just words—it's where body language, appearance, and assumptions come into play—and bring more biases to the surface.

We found that older workers' perceived struggle with technology surfaces in job interviews as well, with 26% of candidates over 50 saying they were assumed to be bad at adapting to new technologies due to their age.

**1 in 4**

applicants over 60  
received inappropriate  
age-related questions



Older candidates face more than just doubts about their tech skills. A quarter of those over 60 have been asked inappropriate questions about their age, like when they plan to retire. Furthermore, over a fifth (22%) have been asked about their health or physical abilities, adding to feelings of discouragement and low confidence.

**“I went for a job interview some years ago and the younger man kept talking about how he liked the younger members more, as they work more overtime.”**

– Deena, 62, Manchester

**3 in 4**

candidates over 50  
think younger recruiters  
prefer younger candidates



Faced with such experiences, 75% of candidates over 50 think younger recruiters prefer younger candidates and nearly a third (31%) of older candidates feel that the workplace culture favours younger applicants.

**“The interviewer started talking about the average age of the department I would be working in; implying they were young.”**

– Lisa, 51, East Sussex

That's why having an age-diverse hiring panel is crucial to creating a fair and inclusive recruitment process. This can help counter age-related biases, put older candidates at ease and ensure that candidates are assessed based on their skills and experience, rather than outdated stereotypes.

## Offers: Age-related stereotypes impacting hiring decisions

The final stage in the recruitment process reveals a clear bias too—70% of younger recruiters are more likely to hire younger candidates, compared to 55% of older recruiters.

The preference shifts depending on the role's seniority. For senior positions, recruiters tend to favour older candidates with more experience (75%) over younger ones with less (66%). But for junior roles, recruiters often prefer a recent graduate (73%) over an older candidate who's completed a career change program (57%), even when both show the same level of motivation. This bias can unfairly hold back older candidates who are just as eager and capable of thriving in a new career.

Age bias in hiring isn't always down to the recruiters—over two-fifths (42%) feel pressured by a department to choose younger candidates over older ones. This pressure is even greater in certain industries—57% in Accountancy, Banking, Finance & Insurance, and 60% in IT & Professional Services say they're asked to hire younger candidates. In contrast, Education and the Public Sector seem less affected, with 30% of recruiters reporting similar instructions. Consequently, age bias limits opportunities for older workers, regardless of their qualifications or experience.



# Two-fifths

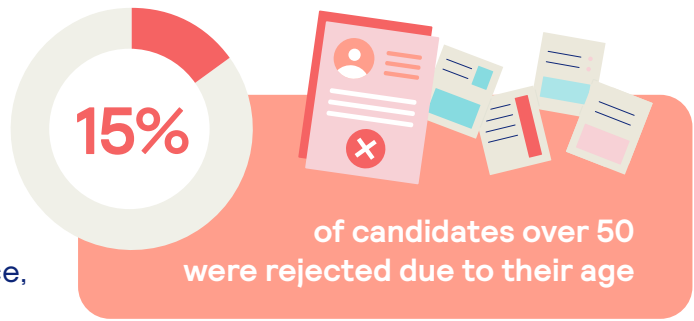
of recruiters feel pressured to hire younger candidates

**I retrained to work in IT, but the training organisation didn't give me the same chances to find a job through the work experience that they did with younger candidates. They got work experience that would lead to a job offer, I got work experience with no job offer possibilities."**

– Amir, 53, London



Despite legal implications, 15% of candidates over the age of 50 report they were turned down from a job due to their age. Such challenging experiences alienate older workers from the workforce, costing businesses and individuals alike.



Positively, 54% of UK employers have already implemented processes to reduce age bias in recruitment. Candidates want employers to take action and while employers are taking steps, there is still room for more. For example, 66% of candidates think AI can help detect against ageist language in job ads, but only 32% of businesses have implemented this.

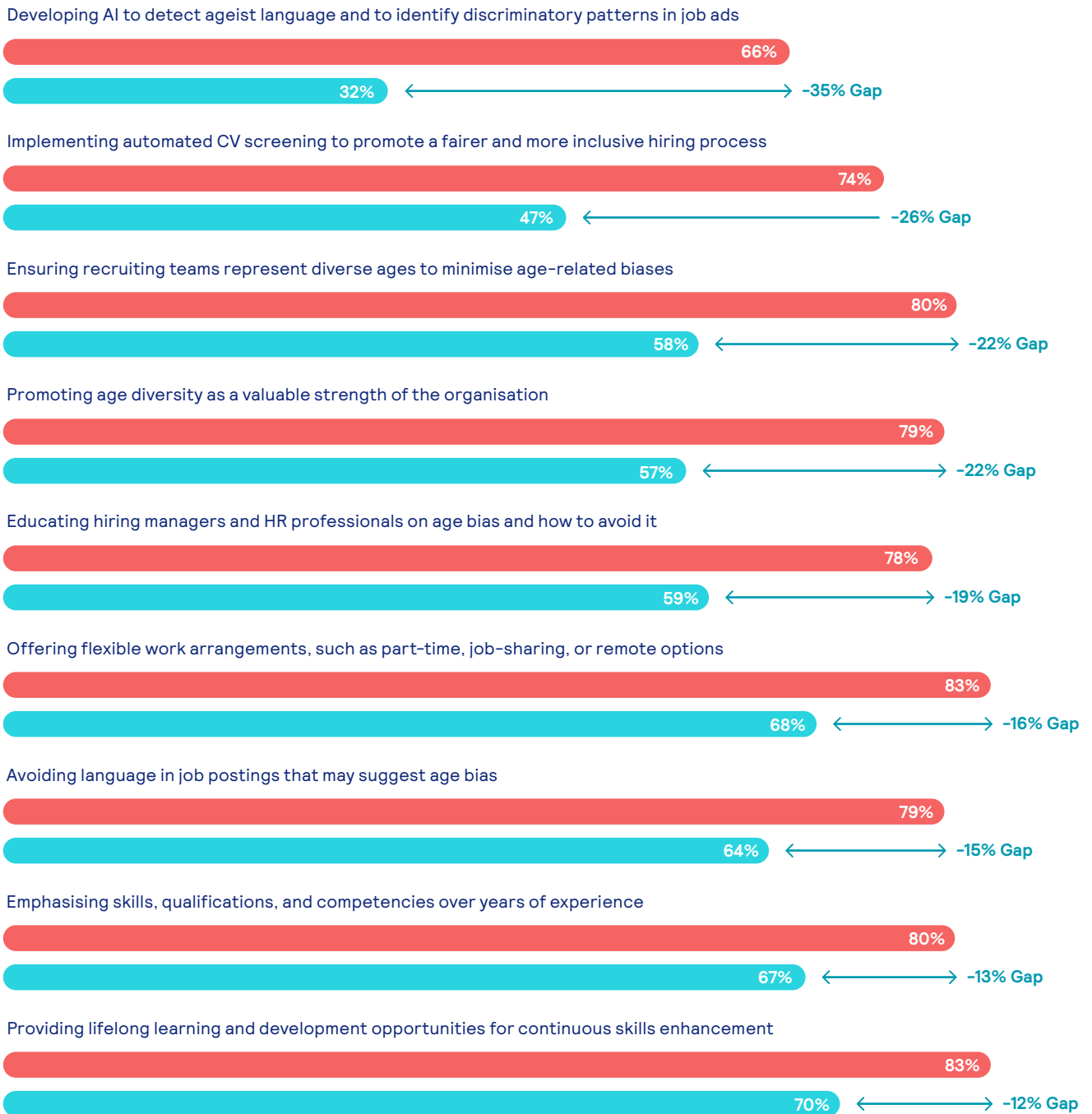
Lifelong learning is the top-rated action to reduce age bias according to both candidates and employers. Employers can offer training on new technologies to support all employees, while mentoring programs can help leverage the expertise of more experienced staff.

**“On two occasions I was one of two candidates being considered for the role. On both occasions, I was told by the recruiter that the role was given to the other candidate as it was felt their younger age meant they could be more easily ‘moulded’ into the role.”**

– Stephen, 58, Tyne and Wear



# Actions candidates find effective vs. businesses implement against age bias



● Candidates rating measure as effective    ● Company implementation

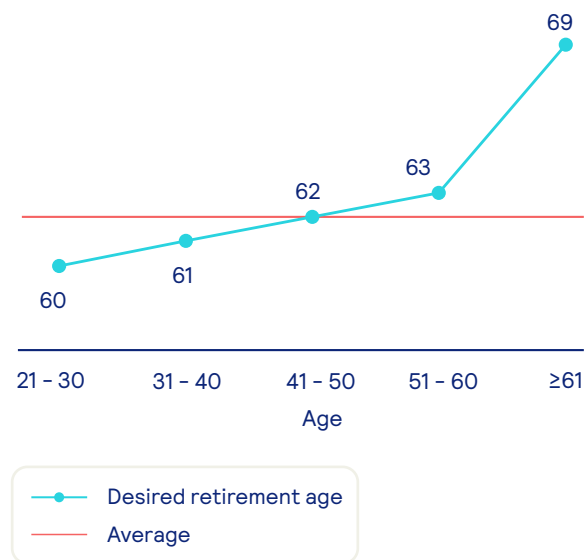
Beyond training, employers should focus on skills-based hiring and avoid biased language in job ads. Highlighting flexibility—like part-time roles or remote work

options—can also make positions more appealing to a diverse range of candidates. Read our Recommendations section for more actionable steps.

# Retirement: Retaining skilled workers

While hiring may conclude at the offer stage, age diversity continues to matter well beyond that point.

## Desired retirement age increases with age



The ideal retirement age tends to rise as individuals get older, likely because workers can better assess their long-term needs as their careers progress. Those over 60 express the highest desire to extend their working lives, citing financial security (58%), a sense of purpose (46%), enjoyment (43%), pension growth (43%), and intellectual stimulation (41%) as key motivators.

In fact, three-quarters of those aged over 60 are willing to work up to 4 years past retirement. They value meaningful work and show strong loyalty to their current employers, with 55% less likely to consider other job offers—easing concerns about sudden retirements.

## Motivating workers over 60 to stay in the workforce

### Top incentives for talent over 60 to continue working past retirement



To keep this talent engaged, employers should offer flexible work options. Workers over 60 prefer staying in their professional field, ideally working around 23 hours a week. However, 1 in 5 struggle to find roles that meet their flexibility needs. Providing part-time roles, flexible hours, flexi-retirement, and financial incentives can significantly improve retention.

## The economic value of retaining older workers

Retaining older workers is not only beneficial for businesses but also for the economy. Our estimates indicate that if all those willing to (37%) or open to (69%) work beyond retirement remained in the workforce, it could add between 300,000 and 700,000 full-time equivalents annually from 2030 to 2035 in England and Wales, equating to an economic value of £11.9 to £23.5 billion in annual economic output.

## Case Study: The BT Group

The multinational telecommunications company BT Group has been a staple of the UK's communications history. With such a legacy, BT Group know connection is key to serving their customers.

Head of Volume Recruitment, Matthew Howe, explains how they achieved better customer satisfaction by increasing age diversity in their contact centres.

“Although BT Group has a multigenerational workforce, we noticed that most new hires in our contact centres and retail stores were predominantly younger workers. Since we aim for our teams to reflect our customer base and the communities we serve, we focused on increasing the age diversity of our contact centres and stores.

We changed our recruitment marketing to better attract people across all age ranges, extending our messaging to people looking to return to work or change careers. We then developed pre-skilling events designed to help remove any barriers to entry.

On the first day of our pre-skilling events, we introduce EE and the contact centre or retail environment, followed by a day of training. Those who attend both days are guaranteed an interview, and we've seen significant improvements in interview attendance and success rates.

Thanks to this engagement, those joining us through these reskilling programmes are achieving excellent performance outcomes, with improvements in first call resolutions, net promoter scores, reduced absences, and lower attrition. Every person's driver is different, but we're striving to understand that and support our people to give the best service to our customers.”

**BT Group**



# Recommendations

## Removing age bias from the hiring process

Addressing age bias presents a significant opportunity for businesses, especially those grappling with skills shortages. With 55% of employers yet to implement strategies for increasing age diversity, there's a wealth of talent waiting to be tapped. Here are actionable steps to create an age-inclusive hiring process:

### Craft inclusive job ads

#### Focus on skills and competencies:

Use neutral language and avoid terms like "dynamic" or "fast-paced." Highlight specific skills and deliverables.

**Leverage AI for bias detection:** Two-thirds of candidates believe AI can help identify age bias in job ads, while 79% feel that removing biased language can lessen age discrimination.

**Automate CV screening:** Ensure applicants are evaluated based on skills and experience, excluding age from consideration.

**Detail comprehensive benefits:** 60% of candidates want to see a full list of benefits in job ads, including flexible working options and performance bonuses.

## Enhance flexibility and benefits

**Offer flexible work options:** 1 in 5 candidates over 50 can't find roles offering the flexibility they need, and they seek roles that offer flexible hours, part-time working, job sharing, flexi-retirement.

**Highlight financial incentives:** 40% of workers of all ages find performance bonuses attractive in a job ad, rising to 44% for those over 50.

**Tailor benefit packages:** Design benefit packages that reflect the priorities of different target groups, offering options like flexible work, retirement saving plans, and targeted health benefits for older workers in particular.

## Invest in equal training opportunities

**Commit to lifelong learning:** 83% of candidates say ongoing development helps reduce age bias. Leverage older workers' commitment to lifelong learning by providing them with training for new skills.

**Ensure access to tech training:** Support older workers by offering tech training and leveraging existing programs such as onboarding to set them up for success.

## Develop age-inclusive hiring practices

### Build age-diverse hiring teams:

80% of candidates believe this can reduce bias, as a diverse hiring panel is less likely to act on individual unconscious biases.

**Train managers on age bias:** Age bias shows up in each stage of recruitment, so equip your hiring managers to recognise unconscious age bias to provide equal opportunities.

**Adopt skills-based hiring:** Evaluate candidates based on skills, qualifications, and cultural contributions rather than age-based assumptions.

**Consider 'cultural add':** Focus on what a candidate can add to the company culture; choosing people who reflect your organisation's values, not the average age.

**Create an interview guide:** Create clear interview instructions that outline what candidates can expect, how to prepare and invite any accessibility or reasonable requirements for the interview. This supports candidates who may be less familiar or 'out of practice' with the interview process.

## Integrate and monitor age diversity goals


**Include age diversity in DEI strategies:** 59% businesses include age diversity as part of their DEI (diversity, equality and inclusion) strategy and 57% promote age diversity as a strength of their organisation. Shout about being an age-inclusive employer, creating a sense of belonging for workers of all ages.

**Track age diversity in your organisation:** Regularly measure and identify gaps in hiring, promotion and retention.

## Showcase your commitment to age inclusivity

**Highlight age-inclusivity in your Employee Value Proposition:** Let candidates know that you are an age-inclusive employer by highlighting it in job ads and your company page.

**Lead by example:** Encourage senior leaders to publicly advocate for age-diverse hiring and celebrate the contributions of older workers.



## Drive change and opportunity

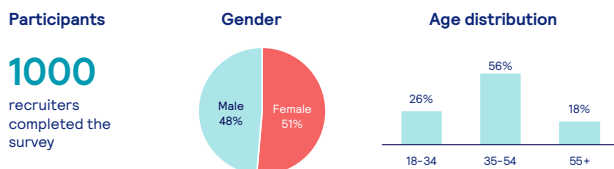
Tackling age bias isn't just the right thing to do—it's a real opportunity for businesses. With many organisations facing skills shortages, embracing age diversity brings in a wealth of experience. By focusing on skills-based hiring, offering flexible work options, and ensuring job ads appeal to all ages, businesses can expand their talent pool and future-proof themselves for a changing workforce.

# About the research

Our research explores how age influences job searches, employment prospects, and decisions to work beyond the retirement age. We interviewed jobseekers over 50 to better understand their challenges across the hiring process. While age and location have been retained in the quotes, names have been changed to preserve anonymity. Additionally, an online survey by Opinium Research gathered insights from 4,000 UK workers between July 24th and August 1st, 2024, with data reflecting the UK workforce's age, gender, and regional distribution. Another survey of 1,000 recruiters was conducted between July 31st and August 9th, 2024. Additionally, we analysed over 4.5 million job adverts for the prevalence (%) of keywords looking at benefits provided by employers over a three-month period from June to August 2024.

We also extrapolated the potential economic output of older workers between 2030 and 2035, using England and Wales' Census data for population numbers and calculating the additional number of workers and full-time equivalent working hours of women and men 55 and over who would be willing to (35%) and open to (69%) work after retirement. We factored in the additional hours women and men would be working, and the median salaries they would be earning. This analysis is a projection and does not account for alternative retirement models, inflation, salary increases, or other relevant factors, and variations may occur depending on the industry or occupational group.

## Demographics of surveyed **recruiters**

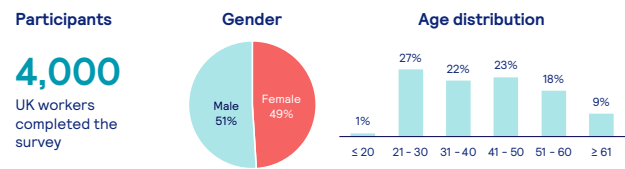


Industry	Percentage	Recruited positions	Percentage
Education	14%	Human resources	30%
Healthcare	14%	Customer service	30%
IT	14%	IT & technology	28%
Human resources	10%	Administrative & secretarial	28%
Construction	8%	Finance, accounting & insurance	21%
Administration	8%	Sales & distribution	20%

Company size	Percentage
1-49	19%
50-249	24%
250-999	31%
1,000 or more	26%

## Demographics of surveyed **candidates**



Professional field	Percentage	Position	Percentage
Administrative & secretarial	13%	Upper management	9%
IT & technology	12%	Middle/lower management	25%
Education & social services	11%	Professional/qualified employee	25%
Customer service	11%	Skilled worker	15%
Finance, accounting, & insurance	9%	Unskilled worker	21%
		Self-employed/freelancer	5%

Education	Percentage	Education	Percentage
GCSE, Standard Grades	16%	Other Masters Degree	13%
A Level, Highers	17%	Doctoral Degree	3%
Certificate of Higher Education	6%	Professional qualifications	2%
Diploma of Higher Education	6%	No formal qualifications	1%
Undergraduate Degree	31%		
Postgraduate Cert or Dip	5%		

## About The Stepstone Group

Formed in 1995, The Stepstone Group is one of the world's leading online recruitment companies.

Operating in more than 30 countries, with almost 4,000 employees worldwide, we help companies hire the right talent through a customer-centric approach to sales, operations, client management and technical solutions.

## About Totaljobs – part of The Stepstone Group

Totaljobs is part of The Stepstone Group, working with businesses across the UK.

At Totaljobs, we believe that there is a right job for everyone. Our platforms are used by all-sized businesses across all industries. We leverage our data, platform and technology to perfectly match talent and companies, resulting in fair and equitable hires.

## About Prof. Sarah Vickerstaff

Sarah Vickerstaff is a Professor Emerita of Work and Employment at the University of Kent. She's an internationally recognised sociologist and researcher with a focus on paid work in later life. In the last 20 years, Prof. Vickerstaff's research on older workers and retirement has been funded by research councils, charities and the UK Government. She is Fellow of the Gerontological Society of America (GSA).