The Knowledge-Oriented Age Diversity Training helps organizations to realize the benefits of age diversity by “speaking to the mind” of age-diverse coworkers

KNOWLEDGE-ORIENTED AGE DIVERSITY TRAINING

Realizing the benefits of age diversity
Agenda

1. Agenda and welcome [~15 mins]
2. Introduction to age diversity [~30 mins]
3. Knowledge, types of knowledge and age diversity [~30 mins]
4. Reflection on one’s own knowledge [~15 mins]
5. Reflection on the knowledge of the colleague [~30 mins]
6. Coffee break [~30 mins]
7. Knowledge integration [~30 mins]
8. Action plan [~30 mins]
9. Reflection and goodbye [~15 mins]
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Demographic change affects the age structure in Switzerland

Age Distribution in Switzerland (%)

- Under 20
- 20 - 60
- 65 and older

... As birth rates are decreasing & life expectancy is increasing
More older workers and higher age diversity in companies 1/2

Age diversity refers to age differences in companies and is particularly relevant nowadays because:

- For the first time, up to four different generations / age groups work together.
- Employees of different ages have different needs and different knowledge.
- New, more independent forms of work require a high degree of cooperation from all employees.
More older workers and higher age diversity in companies 2/2

Higher age diversity leads to new challenges for companies

- Management of different values and needs
- Knowledge management
- Management of prolonged and changed career paths
- Health management
What benefits and challenges are associated with age diversity in companies for you?
Please note two benefits and two challenges and pin them on the pin boards.
Integration: Benefits and challenges of age diversity

Which topic blocks can you identify? Can you cluster them? What does that mean?
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Age diversity can enhance performance through in-depth discussion

Age diversity can have advantages:

- People of different ages have different knowledge, opinions, and perspectives.
- When colleagues of different ages work together, these differences must be discussed and processed.
- This in-depth discussion can lead to better results (e.g. creativity, innovation).

Van Knippenberg et al. (2004): Categorization-Elaboration Model
What does science mean by the term, knowledge?

- **Data**: Discrete and objective facts about events. Raw material for the creation of information.
- **Information**: Data endowed with relevance and purpose. Put into context, added perspective ...
- **Knowledge**: The relevant and objective information that helps in drawing conclusions.
- **Expertise**: Specialized, deep knowledge and understanding in a certain field, which is far above average.” Enriched knowledge through experience, education, and training.
- **Individualized**: Experience, training, education; Personal application, values and perspectives; Understanding, relevance and purpose.
Employees have different types of knowledge

Social knowledge ("know-who")
Knowing of social groups and rules of togetherness
i.e. conflict resolution

Practical knowledge
Knowing how tasks can be done
i.e. operating software / machines

Expert knowledge ("know-what")
Knowing facts that are necessary to do the job
i.e. products, customers

Knowledge about knowledge ("know-why")
Knowing how to create the right conditions
i.e. problem-solving, information gathering

Political knowledge ("know-when")
Knowing about decision-makers & informal power structures
i.e. progressing in the organization
Study finds differences between older and younger

- **Expert knowledge**
  - School knowledge (math, languages, technical understanding)
  - Company-specific knowledge, knowledge of materials

- **Practical knowledge**
  - Search, process and absorb information
  - Working techniques, use of tools / materials

- **Social knowledge**
  - Dealing with diversity
  - Conflict management, importance of integrity

- **Political knowledge**
  - Openness to different opinions
  - Building and maintaining networks

- **Knowledge about knowledge**
  - Learning strategies, knowledge acquisition
  - Stress management, work structure, self-motivation

(Gerpott et al., 2017)
Does this match your experience?

In your view, are any types of knowledge missing?
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9. Reflection and goodbye [~15 mins]
Reflection: What types of knowledge do you have personally?

- Please use the worksheet with the different knowledge categories to reflect upon your own knowledge that is relevant in the work context.
- In doing so, consider what knowledge others at work would request from you.
# Knowledge-Oriented Age Diversity Training

Reflection on your own knowledge

## What work-related knowledge do you have?

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<tr>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Application example / comment</th>
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**Political knowledge (knowing about decision-makers and informal power structures).**

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**Knowledge about knowledge (knowing how to create the right conditions).**

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**Other knowledge**

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**Further comments on your own knowledge:**
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8. Action plan [~30 mins]
9. Reflection and goodbye [~15 mins]
Reflection: What types of knowledge does your colleague have?

- Please use the worksheet with the different knowledge categories to reflect upon the knowledge of your colleague that is relevant in the work context.
- In doing so, consider what knowledge others at work would request from your colleague.
What kind of work-related knowledge does your colleague have?

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**Further comments / thoughts regarding the knowledge of the colleague:**
Break
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9. Reflection and goodbye (~15 mins)
Integration: What knowledge do you have as a dyad?

Use the worksheets you have filled out with the different knowledge types to create a joint knowledge tree.

Knowledge that only colleague 1 has

Knowledge that only colleague 2 has

Knowledge that both have

30 minutes
Knowledge tree: Think about the stem, branches, and leaves
Together with your training partner, please visualize your knowledge in a knowledge tree. Think about the stem, branches, and leaves of your knowledge tree.

This exercise is based on Wilke, H. (2004). *Einführung in das systemische Wissensmanagement* [Introduction to systematic knowledge management]. Heidelberg: Carl-Auer Verlag.
Reflection: How could you optimally use the identified knowledge?

Discuss how you could optimally use the identified knowledge based on the following key questions:

- What tasks could you best do together based on your knowledge?
- In which tasks can you make greater use of the knowledge of your colleague in the future?
- Is there any knowledge that you both don't have but need? Where could you get this knowledge from?
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Integration: Which measures could you use in everyday work?

Please consider measures together that:

1. Foster collaboration
2. Facilitate use of shared knowledge
3. Make knowledge accessible to each other

Write down your ideas on moderation cards and put them on the pin board.
Discussion: Which measures are particularly useful?
Integration: Creation of an action plan

Please create an action plan together that will translate the activities into concrete behavior in the next month.

Use the worksheet for this. **Sign the action plan.** Set up an appointment in 3-4 weeks for joint reflection.
Please create an action plan together that will translate your learnings during the training into concrete behavior in the next month.

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<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Name of the measure</th>
<th>Description of the measure</th>
<th>Date/time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Reflection meeting</td>
<td>Meeting of approximately 30 minutes in the coming 3-4 weeks, during which the agreed measures 1-3 are discussed.</td>
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Participant 1: ______________________________________________________

Participant 2: ______________________________________________________

____________________, ___________ 2020
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Reflection

Knowing, understanding
I have learned / dealt with the fact that ...

Emotions, social relations
I was amazed / pleased / annoyed / touched / that ...

Skills, methods
I can and want to do more / less in the future ...