

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

50% of older workers experience age discrimination when job hunting

Employers reluctant to consider people 50+, Retired Worker survey reveals

Toronto, ON (February 8, 2005) - Retired Worker (www.retiredworker.ca), the first employment website designed specifically for retired people who want to work on a part-time or temporary basis, has just released the results of their annual comprehensive survey of older workers. It finds that most job-seekers aged 50 and over believe that employers practice age discrimination, and 50% have experienced it personally.

"The results are quite startling," says Sarah Welstead, Managing Director and co-founder of Retired Worker. "We all know that age discrimination continues to be a very real problem facing job-seekers who are aged 50 and over, but the fact that 50% of respondents have experienced it personally indicates that the problem is much more pervasive than most people realize."

Additionally, 64% of respondents said that on at least one occasion, age discrimination was a primary or contributing reason for being turned down for a position. Less than 32% thought that companies value older workers as employees and many report being turned down because employers simply assumed (without asking) that they didn't know how to use a computer or wouldn't be able to 'keep up' in a dynamic environment.

"The problem is insidious," says Welstead. "Age discrimination is so ingrained that it is often tacitly accepted. Companies who wouldn't dream of discriminating on the basis of race, religion or sex think nothing of discriminating on the basis of age – and don't expect to get in trouble for it."

Some of the worst offenders, according to the survey: Retail stores, provincial government offices, and government-related organizations like Canada Post.

"When companies aren't receptive to hiring older workers, they're forgetting that they're alienating a huge group of potential customers as well," remarks Welstead. "More than 80% of respondents say that they are more likely to

buy products from companies they perceive to be receptive to older workers. Given that more than 65% of the disposable income in Canada is held by people aged 50+, alienating this group simply doesn't make good business sense."

But the news isn't all bad: 65% of respondents think that employers are at least somewhat more likely to consider older workers than they were 5 years ago, with companies like Tim Horton's, Wal-Mart, Home Depot, McDonalds and TD/Canada Trust cited most often as being willing to hire older workers.

According to Welstead, this has a lot to do with changing demographics: "The population is aging, and society as a whole is beginning to recognize that today's 60-year-old doesn't look like a gray-haired, doddering 'senior citizen' any more. In fact, 60 is the new 45 in many ways."

And companies are going to find that they *need* to hire older workers: According to Statistics Canada, by 2011 there will be more people retiring out of the workforce than younger workers entering it, and older workers will be needed to fill the gap.

Survey details

- Survey was conducted online by Retired Worker between Dec 1 2004 and Jan 30 2005
- There were 683 participants
- Respondents were 51% male, 49% female
- 82% of respondents were aged 50-74 years old

About Retired Worker:

Retired Worker is the first employment website in North America for retired people who want to work on a part-time, temporary or casual basis. Launched in Toronto in October 2003, Retired Worker now has 11,000+ registered job-seekers across Canada and several thousand in the US. For more information, visit www.retiredworker.ca.

Media requiring more information or an interview, please contact:

Sarah Welstead
Managing Partner, Retired Worker
416.809.7829
sarah@retiredworker.ca