

# Ageism: Key Takeaways

## Productive Aging

Productive aging highlights how individuals can continue to contribute meaningfully to their work, organizations, and communities as they grow older.<sup>1</sup>

Tends to <i>Worsen</i> with Age	Little or No Consistent Relationship with Age	Tends to <i>Improve</i> with Age
Chronic conditions (e.g., arthritis, diabetes, etc.)	Creativity	Job & life satisfaction
Slips, trips, and falls	Job performance	Diversity of knowledge & experience (wisdom)
Return to work following injury/illness	Absenteeism	Presenteeism
Rate of fatal or severe workplace injuries	Prevalence of back pain	Productive work behaviors
Outdated job skills		Rate of non-fatal workplace injuries

## A Better Management Approach

As people move through different stages of life and work, their needs, values, and motivations evolve. A thoughtful, age-inclusive approach to management can help organizations support workers at every stage of their careers.

1. Take a lifespan perspective.
2. Formally include age in diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging initiatives.
3. Review policies, practices, and programs to ensure they are age inclusive.
4. Promote an age-inclusive workplace.



## Age-Inclusive Ergonomics

### Address Physical Changes

- Postural changes
- Lower extremity muscle strength
- Upper extremity coordination

### Address Sensory Changes

- Visual function
- Hearing function
- Reaction time
- Sensory fatigue

### Address Cognitive Changes

- Memory changes
- Complex problem-solving tasks
- Higher emotional intelligence and expertise

### PHYSICAL

Adjustable Workstations  
Reduced Repetitive Strain



### COGNITIVE

User-Friendly Technology  
Simplified Work Processes



### FLEXIBILITY

Flexible Scheduling  
Health Promotion



## Source

<sup>1</sup> Robert N. Butler. 1985. Productive aging: Enhancing vitality in later life. New York: Springer Publishing.

<sup>2</sup> Based on review conducted by: Grosch, J.W., Hecker, S., Scott, K., & Scholl, J. C. (2019). Productive aging and work (pp. 229 – 246). In H. Hudson, J.A.S. Nigam, S.L. Sauter, L.C. Chosewood, A.L. Schill, & J. Howard (Eds.). Total Worker Health: Integrated Prevention Strategies in Occupational Safety and Health, American Psychological Association: Washington, D.C

<sup>3</sup> Boehm et al. (2014). Spotlight on age-diversity climate: The impact of age—inclusive HR practices on firm-level outcomes. Personnel Psychology. <https://doi.org/10.1111/peps.12047>

