

# taen



**Experts in Age  
& Employment**



**European Union**  
**European Social Fund**  
Investing in jobs and skills

**Hana Konopaskova**

# **50+ Works**

***Good Practice Guide on supporting 50+ jobseekers***

**October 2010**

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# 50+ Works

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[www.50plusworks.com](http://www.50plusworks.com)

*good practice guide for providers  
supporting 50+ jobseekers*

# 50+ Works

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10 sections containing:

- Basic text
- Checklists, factsheets
- Case studies
- Useful links

# 50+ Works

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## *Content:*

- Jobseekers Characteristics
- Customer journey
- Confidence and motivation
- Finding work
- Adviser / trainer skills
- Networking and referrals
- Engaging with employers
- Training and skills
- Age and the law
- Finance

+ *Useful Links*

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Welcome to 50+ Works, a good practice guide for providers supporting 50+ jobseekers.

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## About this guide



Our focus is on the 50+ jobseeker because the success rate of back to work support with this age group has not been as good as with other ages.

Of course, this is not always the case. There are success stories where helpful support has made the difference to someone's life.

This is where you come in. It is why your job is so important.

[Acknowledgements](#)

### Disclaimer

This site is for help and information only. It is not meant as an authoritative guide. It is not meant as an authoritative statement of the law, and future changes in the law and other programmes and initiatives could make it less accurate at times. TAEN and DWP take no responsibility for your use of the information. You should always take professional advice on any specific legal or financial matter.

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- [Who are the 50+ jobseekers?](#)
- [50+ jobseeker characteristics](#)
- [How to identify typical barriers](#)**
- [How to help customers overcome barriers](#)

## How to identify typical barriers



This section provides a list of the more common barriers 50+ people face when looking for work. It is not always easy to identify barriers and while some are real, others are perceptions. Being over 50 sometimes makes existing barriers appear worse.

People aged 50+ may be reticent about expressing their feelings. At the same time, they may be reluctant to 'blow their own trumpet'. You will want to be sure you are developing enough understanding to help unlock their potential for employment.

### Typical barriers

- + Lack of self confidence and low self esteem**
- + Wanting to give up**
- + Modern recruitment practices are different from those of past years**
- + Job expectations versus changed labour market requirements**

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### Resources

- [Health conditions and work](#)
- [Case study: Dealing with health barriers](#)
- [TAEN Survey of Jobseekers Aged 50+](#)
- [Age Stereotypes and Evidence of Discrimination](#)
- [Key Facts on Health, Employment and Age](#)

### Useful links

- [Employing older workers](#)
- Health**
- [Health, Work and Wellbeing Initiative](#)
- [Click on the links for information about common physical health conditions](#)
- [Heart Conditions](#)
- [British Heart Foundation](#)
- [Blood Pressure](#)
- [Blood Pressure Association](#)

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## Identifying transferable skills

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- [Contacts and developing a personal network](#)
- [Direct approaches](#)
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- [Ideas for groups and peer sessions](#)
- [Setting up a job club](#)
- [Self-employment](#)



50+ jobseekers sometimes find it hard to work out what skills they have and what they could use them for in a different context. They confine their thoughts about this to very narrow parameters which relate to previous training or job roles.

The key to unlocking these skills is to ask 'trigger' questions and, in feeding back the responses you hear, explore the transferable skills your customers have.

Teasing out skills demands good listening as well as skill in giving feedback.

It is useful to use key competencies as a framework for this as many job descriptions and specifications are based on these.

### **+** Key competencies

This approach is particularly helpful when you are working with someone who has been out of the workplace for some time. The workplace they left has probably changed a great deal and frequently people find matching what they did before to what they might do now very challenging.

It is possible to demonstrate any of these competencies in a work or non-work setting so that

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### Resources

- [Case study: Identifying transferable skills](#)
- [Fairplay for Older Workers Skills Assessment Tool](#)
- [Older Workers Portfolio Pack](#)

### Useful Links

- [Getting that job: making the most of your skills](#)
- [Advice-Resources Life Skills Tool](#)
- [Advice-Resources Skills and Interests Assessment](#)



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People aged 50+ may be reticent about expressing their feelings. At the same time, they may be reluctant to 'blow their own trumpet'. You will want to be sure you are developing enough understanding to help unlock their potential for employment.

### Typical barriers

#### **– Lack of self confidence and low self esteem**

Loss of work can undermine anyone's self confidence. The longer people are out of work, the lower it can sink. Research has shown this to be particularly true for men as work has traditionally played a central role in their lives and identity. However, work is now playing an increasingly important role for many women too.

Being made redundant, even when the job lost has been a chore, can affect a person's ability to put energy into a job search or to think laterally about what skills they could offer or use.

Some people will think they have nothing to offer. They may well also feel bitter about what they perceive as unfair treatment. Focus on any positives your customer tells you about to [boost their self confidence](#) without inflating their aptitudes.

#### **+ Wanting to give up**

#### **+ Modern recruitment practices are different from those of past years**

#### **+ Job expectations versus changed labour market requirements**

#### **+ Fixed views on the jobs they could do and the skills they can offer**

#### **+ Lack of formal qualifications and less access to training**

#### **+ Lack of IT skills**

#### **+ Working life patterns**

Further

[TAEN Survey of Jobseekers Aged 50+](#)

[Age Stereotypes and Evidence of Discrimination](#)

[Key Facts on Health, Employment and Age](#)

### Useful links

[Employing older workers](#)

#### **Health**

[Health, Work and Wellbeing Initiative](#)

Click on the links for information about common physical health conditions

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[British Heart Foundation](#)

[Blood Pressure](#)

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[Arthritis](#)

[Arthritis Care](#)

[Asthma](#)

[Asthma UK](#)

[Diabetes](#)

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Click on the links for information about common mental health conditions.

[Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health](#)

#### **Depression and anxiety**

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[Rethink](#)

[SANE](#)

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## Introduction

There are a number of tools and resources available to support the delivery of support to customers.

This list is not exhaustive but we provide links to those that cover the range of issues you may face as well as those likely to be faced by your customers..

There has been an explosion of online materials and support, especially through job search websites. It would be impossible to list all those in operation, but we feature some that offer specific tools such as, for example, on interviewing skills.

In some cases, there are charges for the use of tools and this is indicated where appropriate. Many are well known but others are not. The listing of tools and other resources does not imply approval by TAEN or the Department for Work and Pensions.

Some tools are generic but others have been developed expressly for use with older workers.

In addition to links to tools and other resources, we also provide links to websites offering information you may find useful in your work.

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Available from

[www.50plusworks.com](http://www.50plusworks.com)

A free of charge resource to improve the support to older jobseekers