

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT FOR OLDER ADULTS

Understanding Participant Challenges



Tip Sheet No. 4, July 2024

Older Worker Challenges

Older adults sometimes face co-occurring challenges when preparing to re-enter the workforce, such as unfamiliar technologies, education settings, and negative self-perceptions. These challenges can, however, offer growth opportunities.

Technology Strategies & Practice Tips

Technology	Make technology available for older adults to practice with; dedicate spaces and allocate time for older adults to use technology
Technology Trends	Inform older adults about new features and trends in technology usage; encourage adoption and support integrating new technology into work responsibilities
Tip Sheets	Create practical tip sheets offering guidance on use of technology; obtain older adults feedback to increase tip sheet usefulness
Spaces	Cultivate and promote technology spaces that are welcoming, open, and support efficiency and productivity

Understanding and Addressing Participant Challenges

- Leads to programmatic changes and enhancements, targeted towards participant interests
- Informs strategies to increase participant engagement and satisfaction
- Leads to positive participant experiences and increased confidence

Project Background

AmeriCorps Seniors funded a three-year research project of seven workforce development programs focused on older adults. These tip sheets reflect topics of interest to program staff, community partners and older workers. For more information on the project at <https://mainecenteronaging.umaine.edu/workforceresearch/>

Educational Environment Strategies & Practice Tips

Training	Provide e-learning support and training for online platforms and review platform navigation during class
Resource Guides	Identify and compile resources addressing educational and emotional support
Support from Facilitators	Support diverse learning styles and educational backgrounds by providing training, material, and or guidelines to all facilitators
Educational Material	Ensure that written material is accessible (e.g., text size), supports all educational backgrounds and is available in digital and paper versions. For presentations, consider audio needs of the each learner, including volume and pace

Negative Self Perceptions Strategies & Tips

Reframing	Reframe: “I am too old to learn this” → “I was not taught this when I was young”
Motivate	Offer encouragement and acknowledge skills, accomplishments, expertise
Observe	Take note of self-deprecating behavior and offer support and resources



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Funder acknowledgement: This material is based upon work funded by the Office of Research and Evaluation at AmeriCorps under Grant No. 22REAME001 through the National Service and Civic Engagement research grant competition. Opinions or points of view expressed in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official position of, or a position that is endorsed by, AmeriCorps.