

# Older Jobseekers Survey 2008 - 2009



Chris Ball  
Chief Executive

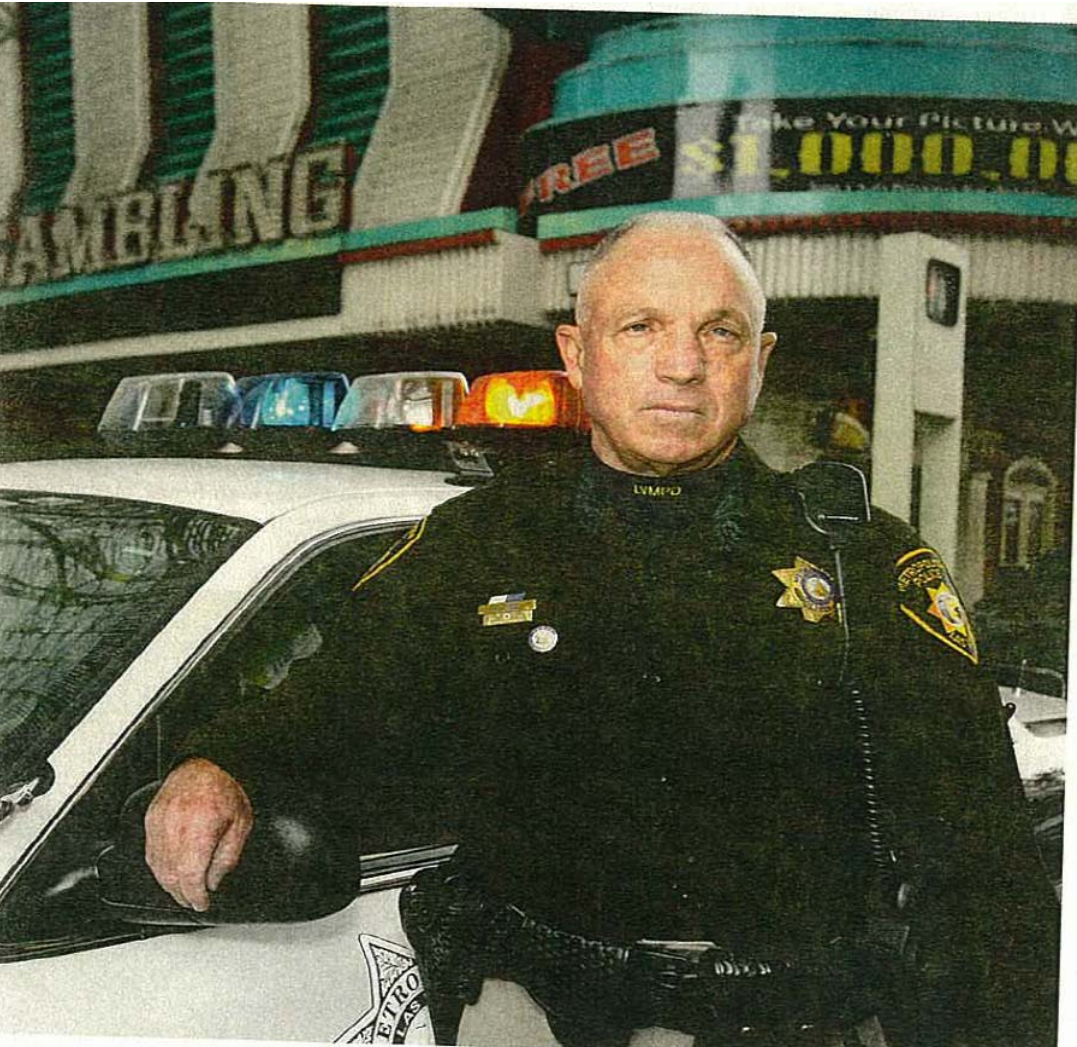
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# Some issues facing older job seekers

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- Lack of recent job seeking experience and modern selection methods (online applications, interviews, assessment centres, psychometric tests, CVs, role plays, etc)
- Qualifications, training – recent/relevant?
- Experience – how relevant to sector/role?
- Discrimination in various forms.

# Nick Page – rookie cop at 63



Pilot for 37 years for United Airlines

Retired – company bankrupt – no pension

Applied for police training – passed physical and psychological tests – accepted at police college

Training 23 weeks – now a cop in Las Vegas.

“I can be a cop for as long as I want provided I can do the job. Its been three years now and I love it.”

# Misconception 1: *Older workers cost more*

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- **Fact:** Median gross annual earnings for full-time employees aged 50+ was £22,599 compared with £25,709 for 40-49 year olds and £24,908 for 30-39 year olds.

Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings

# Misconception 2: *Cognitive abilities of older workers decline*

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- **Fact:** “Some skills and abilities, such as vocabulary and writing speed, do not peak until age 40 or 50.”
- **Fact:** Verbal skills peak at 60, and reasoning skills in the late 40s.
- **Fact:** “Not significantly impaired in the age ranges spanning working life.”

# Misconception 3: *Older workers find it harder to learn*

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- **Fact:** “... success rate of older workers on training courses is as good as that of younger adults in gaining skills, reaching performance standards or attaining qualifications.”

(*The Economic Contribution of Older People*, P Meadows, Age Concern, 2004)

# Misconception 4: *Physiological change impairs ability to work*

- **Fact:** “Physical strength, stamina and eyesight show some decline with age, but the average decline is a few percentage points over the last 15 years of working life.”

*(Simon Pickvance, University of Sheffield,)*



# Misconception 5: *Older people are ill more often*

- **Fact** - Sickness absence is highest in the 16-24 year old age group (3.2%) and stays constant between age 35 to state pension age (2.8%). It is lowest amongst workers over state pension age. (*Labour Market Trends, April 2005*)
- **Fact** – “Younger workers are more prone to short-term absences while older workers have fewer but longer periods off.

(*Office for National Statistics, 2002*)

# TAEN 50+ Jobseekers Survey

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- TAEN and labour market for mid-life and older workers
- Capturing experience – attitudes towards working later are changing but why?
- More 50+ people working but does this mean less suffering?
- First survey Jan – Sept 08
- Second survey Oct 08 - May09

# How old are you?

	<b>Jan 2008 to Sept 2008</b>	<b>Oct 2008 to May 2009</b>	<b>Jan 2008 to May 2009</b>
<b>50-59</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>70%</b>
<b>60-64</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>65 and over</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Number responding</b>	<b>369</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>765</b>

# Gender of respondents

	Jan 2008 to Sept 2008	Oct 2008 to May 2009	Jan 2008 to May 2009
Male	54%	63%	58%
Female	46%	37%	42%
Total	100%	100%	100%
Number responding	370	398	765

# Qualifications of respondents

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<b>Survey period</b>	<b>Survey 1</b>	<b>Survey 2</b>
No formal qualifications	17%	17%
5 GCSEs or equivalent	18%	16%
A levels or equivalent	10%	14%
Degree or equivalent	32%	31%
Professional qualification	23%	23%
Total	100%	100%
Number responding	366	400

# How long looking for work?

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<b>Survey period</b>	<b>Survey 1</b>	<b>Survey 2</b>
Up to 3 months	39%	32%
3 – 6 months	16%	22%
6 – 12 months	15%	23%
More than a year	15%	13%
More than 2 years	15%	10%
Total	100%	100%
Number responding	361	395

# How do you feel about getting job?

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<b>Survey period</b>	<b>Survey 1</b>	<b>Survey 2</b>
Looking but not that bothered	5%	3%
Keen but not worried	21%	16%
Worried about not working	44%	42%
Desperate to get a job	30%	39%
Total	100%	100%
Number responding	366	399%

# Comment

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- *“We lost a good two thirds final salary pension scheme in 2001-2002. We are in our late fifties and currently have no spare income to save. I have no job. My husband earns half of what he used to. We are getting used to living differently and worried how we will live in retirement.”*  
(Woman aged 50-59)

# Reasons for leaving previous job

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<b>Survey period</b>	<b>Survey 1</b>	<b>Survey2</b>
Redundancy	32%	47 %
Reached employer's retirement age	6%	5 %
Accepted offer to retire early	7%	4 %
Personal circumstances	16%	11 %
Health	8%	7 %
Other	31%	27 %
Total	100%	100 %
Number responding	360	400

# Comments

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“I ran my own shop/post office. The post office shut. Custom vanished.”  
(Man 50-59)

“My partner is the main wage earner – had to relocate with her.” (Man 50-59)

“I was made redundant because my employer outsourced the job to Bombay.” (Man 50-59)

“Loss of freelance opportunities through relocation move and re-marriage” (Woman aged over 65)

# Factors most contributing to work search difficulty

Survey period	Survey 1	Survey 2
An aspect of health	14%	7%
Skills not matching those required	27%	24%
Experience not matching that required	25%	21%
Qualifications not matching those required	19%	18%
Need to work part time or flexibly	19%	10%
Seen as too experienced or over-qualified	42%	48%
Seen as too old by employers	63%	72%
Other	17%	18%
Numbers responding	361	395

# Comments

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- “Convolutated recruitment processes – box ticking, not looking at the whole process.” (Woman 50-59)
- “When a vacancy occurs an employer will have a picture of the sort of person they want to fill it. The over 40s will have difficulty here; the over 50s will find it almost impossible to fit the picture.” (Woman 50-59)
- “I think the issue is that neither my employer nor myself invested time and effort to ensure that my skills and experience were relevant to current IT technology and processes. Both of us focused too much on getting the immediate job done. So I was made redundant and now I can’t find work.” (Man 50-59)

# “Employers put too much emphasis on qualifications rather than on skills and experience”

Survey period	Survey 1	Survey 2
Agree	60%	64%
Neither agree nor disagree	33%	28%
Disagree	7%	8%
Total	100%	100%
Number responding	366	399

# “You have the right skills for today’s labour market”

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<b>Survey period</b>	<b>Survey 1</b>	<b>Survey 2</b>
Agree	67%	74%
Neither agree nor disagree	24%	19%
Disagree	9%	7%
Total	100%	100%
Number responding	369	399

# Comments

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- “I am frustrated that my skills, knowledge and successful experience are not being utilised.” (Woman 50-59)
- “It does not make sense that all the skills and experience of my age group are being wasted.” (Woman 50-59)
- “When people with skills reach the age of 55 the opportunities diminish considerably. I have been told this in an off the record discussion with recruiters. This is happening more and more.” (Man 60-64)

# “You have every opportunity to upgrade your skills to fit the needs of today’s employers”

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<b>Survey period</b>	<b>Survey 1</b>	<b>Survey 2</b>
Agree	42%	40%
Neither agree nor disagree	25%	26%
Disagree	33%	35%
Total	100%	100%
Number responding	367	399

# Comment

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- “I have been out of the workplace for a a long time. I believe I need to retrain and start afresh but I have no money to do this and need to find alternative sources of funding.” (Man 60-64)
- “Companies are reluctant to train older workers and government schemes are available only to those who are in receipt of out of work benefits...” (Woman 50-59)

# “You know where to go for advice and assistance in seeking work”

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<b>Survey period</b>	<b>Survey 1</b>	<b>Survey 2</b>
Agree	38%	44%
Neither agree/disagree	28%	22%
Disagree	34%	34%
Total	100%	100%
Number responding	364	399

# “Have you sought assistance in finding work?”

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<b>Survey period</b>	<b>Survey 1</b>	<b>Survey 2</b>
Yes	85%	89%
No	15%	11%
Total	100%	100%
Number responding	366	396

# Where sought advice?

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<b>Survey period</b>	<b>Survey 1</b>	<b>Survey 2</b>
Jobcentre Plus	62%	67%
Private employment agency	52%	70%
Friends and personal contacts	46%	58%
A professional body	14%	17%
Other	21%	20%

# How would you rate the quality of assistance you were given?

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<b>Response</b>	<b>Survey 1</b>	<b>Survey 2</b>
Good or excellent	15%	12%
OK	39%	36%
Not very good or poor	46%	53%
Total	100%	100%
Number responding	322	356

# Comments

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- “The Jobcentre virtually told me to go away when I was made redundant at 61 and came to them for help in finding employment.” (Man 50-59)
- “Jobcentre Plus, New Deal 50+ and the government provision for mature professionals are totally unfit for purpose. There are no practical measures in place whatsoever. Private sector employment agencies don’t answer either. They have no interest in helping older job seekers.” (Man 60-64)

# “I am aware that there is now legislation covering age discrimination in employment”

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<b>Survey period</b>	<b>Survey 1</b>	<b>Survey 2</b>
Agree	89%	89%
Not sure	9%	7%
Disagree	2%	4%
Total	100%	100%
Number responding	367	387

# “I understand roughly what the legislation says and the rights it gives me”

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<b>Survey period</b>	<b>Survey 1</b>	<b>Survey 2</b>
Agree	63%	57%
Not sure	34%	37%
Disagree	3%	6%
Total	100%	100%
Number responding	364	396

# “Age discrimination legislation has helped older people find work”

<b>Survey period</b>	<b>Survey 1</b>	<b>Survey 2</b>
Agree	13%	10
Neither agree/ disagree	56%	45
Disagree	31%	45
Total	100%	100
Number responding	364	396

# “I have never experienced age discrimination in the workplace”

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<b>Survey period</b>	<b>Survey 1</b>	<b>Survey 2</b>
Agree	28%	28%
Not sure	34%	31%
Disagree	38%	41%
Total	100%	100%
Number responding	362	391

# “I have never experienced age discrimination in seeking employment”

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<b>Survey period</b>	<b>Survey 1</b>	<b>Survey 2</b>
Agree	10%	7%
Not sure	40%	38%
Disagree	50%	55%
Total	100%	100%
Number responding	364	396

# Comments

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- “Much of recruiting is done via websites or agencies. Therefore discrimination cannot be proved.... I have even reported an agency to the Recruitment and Employment Confederation – absolutely useless!” (Woman 60-64)
- “The new age law is toothless as long as the default retirement age is 65.” (Man 50-59)
- “The age discrimination law only works for people in jobs – not those seeking jobs.” (Man 50-59)
- “The new legislation is an academic concept only. Employers run rings round it.” (Man 50-59)