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JOB PERFORMANCE OF OLDER WORKERS

It seems appropriate to conclude this report with some mention of older workers' job accomplishment and performance characteristics, as demonstrated in numerous studies.

In a 1964 report to the California Legislature,* several studies of this type, made by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and other authorities, were summarized. A few highlights from the findings of these studies might be repeated here:

- The older worker's attendance is likely to be better than that of younger persons.
- Older workers are less prone to change jobs.
- Even though some older workers may have longer spells of illness, they are apt to be ill or disabled less frequently than younger persons. The aging process alone is not necessarily incapacitating.
- In production jobs, the output of older persons up to age 65 compares favorably with that of younger workers. In office occupations, there were minimal differences in output by age group among 6,000 workers in one study of government and private employment. Workers aged 65 and over generally averaged as high as any of the age groups.
- A 1961 study of Federal mail sorters showed that older persons performed at a steadier rate and with more consistency in quality than those in younger age groups.
- Older workers have a strong desire to work, as evinced by their job stability and their attitude of job responsibility, which many employers have recognized.
- *Learning ability does not decline significantly with age; ability to learn at ages 50 and 60 is about equal to that at ages 16 and 14.*

The following paragraphs are excerpts from a paper presented by Miss Eleanor Fait, State Supervisor of the Older Worker Program for the California Department of Employment, at a national conference on "Manpower Training and the Older Worker," in Washington, D. C., in January, 1966. The meeting was attended by experts on aging from all parts of the nation, and was sponsored by the National Council on Aging in cooperation with the United States De-

* *A Study of the Employment of Older Workers—1964: A Report to the California Legislature, 1965 Session.* State of California, Department of Employment and Citizens' Advisory Committee on Aging, Sacramento, California, January, 1965. Appendix B, Pages 167-171.