

females inexperienced in work requiring precise manual dexterity cannot be trained for electrical assembly work. One union reported that washout rates among older females taking such training are twice the rates for trainees in general. Two companies, which employ large groups of females on other precise tasks, reported the same training problem.

c. Older Clerical Females Seem to Be Problem Employees

Employers feel that the mental outlook of older applicants is frequently open to question. Four companies, for example, noted that newly hired, older clerical females seem to be problem employees. These persons too frequently tend to remold existing practices around the experience they have gained elsewhere. They also sometimes assume unwarranted authority on the strength of age status alone. Whatever the specific problem created, such persons, we are told, generate unrest and require more administrative attention than younger clerical females.

d. Older Applicants Do Less Well in Aptitude Tests

Older persons generally do not score as well as younger applicants on pre-employment aptitude tests according to about half of the employers with whom testing was discussed. Some of these employers believe that an applicant's ability to handle these tests is related to the length of time since he last practiced the mental skills required. (Two companies compensate by lowering the minimum acceptable score for older persons.) Most of these employers believe that such difficulties reflect a possible lack of mental flexibility under pressure. Accordingly they have restricted employment opportunities for older applicants in individual cases.

e. Older People Resist Change More Than Younger People

Four companies reported that older clerical personnel already employed tend to resist changes in office methods and that, based on such experience, they were reluctant to employ older applicants for clerical work.

f. Older Applicants Are Too Rigid in Their Expectations

By way of illustration, eight companies commented that older applicants frequently specify conditions of employment that the company either cannot satisfy or is unwilling to satisfy.

By and large, concern over mental flexibility and outlook is focused obviously on older applicants rather than older employees. Older employees do not have to prove