

problems associated with relationships between human beings rather than matters of profit and loss.

a. Inherent Status of Age Conflicts With Actual Status of Work

In many circumstances, age is accepted by society as a positive status element: the older a person becomes, the more respected he should be. This can create problems for the older applicant. For example, eight companies indicated that they are extremely reluctant to hire older persons into young work groups unless the newcomer is to occupy a supervisory position. These companies have found that frictions develop when an older person joins such a group as an equal. Although the respondents did not say so, we believe these frictions result from the imbalance between the accepted status of age and the actual status of work, and that people of widely differing age are not always comfortable working as equals.

b. Older Workers Assume Leadership Without Authority

A closely related problem that appears to stem from the same cause was noted by nine of the companies. Older persons in these companies have at times created tensions by attempting without authority to assume senior or lead responsibilities over their work groups. Most of these persons have been females and these companies consequently do not hire older females for functions performed largely by younger persons.

c. Young Managements Prefer Young Employees

Another manifestation of the age and status concept was noted primarily in small organizations directed by younger persons. Eight companies indicated a preference for younger employees and applicants for all or specific functions, because "we are a young company--we want young people around" or "that manager is young and wants young people working for him". From these comments, it would appear that young managers prefer to have younger persons as subordinates, particularly in organizations which are so small as to require frequent contact between management and worker.

d. Employers' Concern Over Reduced Pension Benefits Inhibits Hiring of the Older Worker

Another social consideration that affects the status of the older applicant is his eligibility for pension benefits. Employers are concerned about the standard of living