

many of the latter are in need of additional counseling and may be unaware of the assistance available to them. This situation should be corrected since it is presumably easier to guide an individual applicant into a more fruitful search than it is to alter the economic and social realities against which employers evaluate the older person.

b. **Emphasize Training Programs to Broaden Existing Skills**

Smaller employers appear to prefer the older applicant much more frequently than large organizations. At the same time, smaller companies require a greater breadth of skill from each employee because there are fewer people available in the company to exercise all the variations of skill required. Older applicants can capitalize on this favorable situation (or offer a full range of skill in other situations) only to the extent that they have not become overspecialized in their basic skill during prior employment. Consequently, it would appear that programs enabling older applicants to expand their specialized talents into more general capabilities in the same fields and also to bring themselves up to date on changing technology, would improve their potential value to employers.

c. **De-Emphasize Training Programs Designed to Impart New Skills to Inexperienced Older Persons**

Inability of the inexperienced person to gain the training necessary to become a skilled operator is a major problem for older applicants. Generally, this inability is a direct reflection of union or union-employer age limitations on apprentice programs. However, it is also true that union and employer respondents alike voiced doubt as to whether a person over 45 without related experience could assimilate the training necessary to become skilled, even though an apprenticeship was not required to achieve skilled status.

In view of these doubts, it is suggested that training inexperienced older persons in completely unfamiliar skills should be de-emphasized or deferred until more is learned about the teaching of older workers and the older worker's ability to absorb training.

10. **Study Areas Recommended**

a. **Determine the Adequacy of Present Teaching Methods and the Ability of Older Persons to Learn New Concepts and Techniques**

The frequently expressed thoughts about the older applicant's mental flexibility and learning ability, in