

This is working with electronic computers. Their average age is 27. This is a relatively new field requiring recently developed and specialized competence. Only those who entered the work force within the last 10 years are apt to have the requisite abilities for these jobs so that this occupation does have a low relative age. In contrast, the median age of our toolmakers is 47. The toolmaker is a product of years of experience and training and the job requires a wide range of mechanical skills and particularly requires experience. Experience in a field that is not moving too rapidly, at least it has not been up to now, and we regularly hire toolmakers in their 60's. The average age of our guards is 53. Here we look for stability, mature judgment, a sense of responsibility. Since our retirement income plan went into effect we have had four retirement counselors. Their average age has been approximately 68. The most important requisite to this job is firsthand knowledge of the problems of leaving work and entering retirement. I have selected these men. They are in my department and whenever I need a retirement counselor, I try to find somebody who has retired successfully.

Also, the question is sometimes asked "What does industry do when an employee for one reason or another reaches an age where he can no longer carry the full load of his assigned occupation"? We certainly do not have all the answers to this, but we do have courses of action that can be taken if we feel that inflexibility is not a unique characteristic of the older person, that there are flexible and inflexible people throughout the entire age range. I think this is an important point. I am going to repeat it. We feel that inflexibility is not a unique characteristic of the older person, that there are flexible and inflexible people throughout the entire age range. This is something that I think that maybe you should talk about in your workshops. Maybe not as a theme but as a point to be brought out to potential employers.

We have found the transfer of older people to different lines of work often can be accomplished quite successfully. For example, Lockheed has an occupation called wire fabricator. It is a relatively low scale and does not require real strenuous effort, but it does require patience and requires good attention. The incumbents in this occupation have a median age of 53 years. That means that 50% of the women, and these are largely women in this occupation, are more than 53 years of age. Forty-five of the 62 incumbents were transferred into this occupation at one time or another from some other more demanding job. The average age at the time of such transfer was 49. Through transfer policies like this we can minimize age placement problems.