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Making the case for older workers**

Against a background of population ageing, and with it, concomitant effects on social welfare systems and labour markets, public policy makers in affected nations are seeking ways of pushing out the final age of withdrawal from their labour markets. Central to such efforts is promoting the contribution of older workers to organizations and overcoming labour market age barriers. Within this advocacy approach there has been recent interest in identifying and promulgating examples of employer best practice in order to emphasize new dimensions of the business case for employing older workers. Drawing on literature concerned with advocating an ethical concern in human resource management as it pertains to older workers, this article examines an exemplar set of employer case studies aimed at promulgating best practice. It considers the concept of age management and its manifestations to argue that many standard HRM practices are firmly, although probably unwittingly, grounded in ageist assumptions concerning the capacities, potentiality and contributions of both younger and older workers. This, we argue, is a consequence of an unnecessarily narrow conception of good employment practice based in an economic rationality that is not conducive to the effective management of age in organizations.

Key words: **discrimination, labour markets, age barriers, age management, HRM best practice, ageing societies** (JEL: J23, J24, J26, J71, J78)

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** Article received: October 5, 2015

Revised version accepted after double blind review: December 23, 2015.