

PRACTICE 4

Situation:

You work for a multi-national telecommunications company, which has branches in many countries in the world. The company has a highly-skilled workforce and is finding it increasingly difficult to attract suitably qualified and experienced staff.

The company's Human Resources Manager, Mr Cassius Mtengwa, has recently attended a conference which explained the possibility of employing older people, even those who are beyond the normal retirement age.

Mr Mtengwa has given you the notes he made at the conference and you have carried out some more research with a view to producing a **report** on the subject.

Notes from the conference – employing older people

Aim of the conference – to build awareness of the issue and key actions to be taken. The main point to emerge is that the world's population is ageing – fewer people are being born and, world-wide, people are living longer. There are great skill shortages amongst young people, so it is not economically viable to allow older people to be inactive.

Some issues are still to be resolved – the older segment of the population generally does not re-train. No reason why this should be the case.

Older people are much fitter now – no need to retire early – longer life expectancy – many prefer to keep working. If all older people do not work – great burden on decreasing numbers of younger people to support them.

Our company should investigate this further.

From: Interview with the Principal of the local college

"It is a myth that older people cannot be given further training or are incapable of learning new ideas. Some of our better students have been "mature" students. They have more experience of life and are often much more motivated to learn. Many older people are already highly skilled and even those who require to have their skills updated can usually achieve this very easily. Of course, we have some excellent younger students also, but sometimes those people have more distractions in their lives and they don't always perform as well as older students."

Statistics (from United Nations sources)

Globally, number of people over 65 will grow by nearly 60% from 2002 to 2042. World population growth generally will be 5.5%.

In 2002, 23% of the world's population was aged 20-34. By 2010 this will have dropped to 15%. From 2002 to 2022 the number of people world-wide under age 18 will drop by 10% whilst the numbers of those over 85 will rise by 54%.

From: Interview with Human Resources Manager of another major international telecommunications company

"We changed our policy to one of positively discriminating in favour of older people some 5 years ago and it has proved to be very successful. Older people have greater experience, are often more tolerant and, perhaps surprisingly, take less time off work due to illness than younger people. Remember, older people usually have families who are grown up so they often prefer to go to work, particularly if this enables them to earn more money much later in life."

Task

Write the report as requested. You should summarise the main issues concerned, and make any appropriate recommendations.

(25 marks)