White Paper for EAWOP Small Group Meeting on
Age Cohorts in the Workplace: Understanding and Building Strength through Differences

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The aging of the workforce raises a range of research issues for work and organizational psychologists. These include age stereotyping at work, retirement patterns, engagement of the aging workforce, and how to manage age differences in the workplace. To address these issues, a group of 35 scholars from Europe, the United States, Canada, and Australia met from November 11-13 at the University of Trento, Italy, to share research findings and develop a research agenda in work and organizational psychology to address the aging workforce. EAWOP was the primary sponsor of the meeting. The organizing committee included Franco Fraccaroli (University of Tento, Italy); Donald Truxillo (Portland State University, USA); Sara Zaniboni (University of Trento); Marilena Bertolino (University of Nice, France); Marco Depolo (University of Bologna, Italy); and Jose Maria Peiró (University of Valencia, Spain).

In addition, experts on age issues at work – Ruth Kanfer (Georgia Institute of Technology, USA), Jose Maria Peiró, Annet de Lange (Radboud University, The Netherlands); Lisa Finkelstein (Northern Illinois University, USA); and Mo Wang (University of Florida, USA) – served as keynote speakers on topics such as motivation at different life stages, HR interventions that support different age groups, job design, age stereotypes, and retirement.

The meeting helped to define new lines of research in the field of age and created a network of researchers from around the world. It encouraged the sharing of ideas and development of new collaborations and programs of research regarding the issue of age in the workplace. This white paper presents some of the key conclusions from the meeting and provides guidance for areas of needed research. Specifically, this paper contains summaries of the issues of motivation, age stereotypes, work/family, retirement, and work design as they relate to the aging workforce. The paper concludes with a summary of suggestions for potential workplace interventions. Summaries were written by Ruth Kanfer, Lisa Finkelstein, Tammy Allen, Mo Wang, Andreas Müller, Matthias Weigl, Tinka van Vuuren, Beatrice van der Heijden, Dorien Kooij and Annet de Lange. Contributions and ideas from Jürgen Deller, Leena Maxin, Donatienne Desmette, Caroline Iweins, René Schalk, Justin Marcus and Hannes Zacher were also included.

Motivation in a Multi-Generational Workforce
Summary by Ruth Kanfer

Recent changes in the nature of work, worklife, workforce composition, and economic conditions have increased attention to the topic of work motivation. Three questions loom large in contemporary scientific and popular literatures: (1) How does chronological age relate to work motivation? (2) What impacts work motivation at different stages in the work life span? and (3)What are the challenges that workers and employers face as more of the world's workforce move into midlife and beyond? In this section, I summarize advances in research on motivation across the lifespan and implications for policy makers, organizations, and workers in the changing world of work.

1. How does chronological age relate to work motivation?

Work motivation is a function of both the person and the environment. Questions about the impact of chronological age on work motivation require consideration of how worker characteristics (e.g., cognitive abilities, motives, personality traits, knowledge) that affect work motivation change over the life course.   Several streams of research have emerged over the past few decades to examine this issue. One stream of work in lifespan psychology and cognitive aging focuses on intra-individual changes in person characteristics and traits over time. In contrast to early popular beliefs of a general decline in both cognitive and non-ability attributes, recent findings indicate a complex picture of age-related changes, in which some person characteristics show gains over the life course (e.g., crystallized intellectual abilities, job knowledge, emotion regulation) and other characteristics show decline (e.g., fluid intellectual abilities, motives related to extrinsic rewards; see e.g., Ebner, Freund, & Baltes, 2006; Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004; Kooij et al., 2011; Urry & Gross, 2010). There is also evidence that some motives, such as generativity, do not emerge until midlife (McAdams, Aubin, & Login, 1993). And to make matters more complicated, different person characteristics show different trajectory patterns over the life course.

A second stream of research highlights normative, age-related changes in job attitudes, what people want from work, and their perceived efficacy for accomplishing work roles. Findings in the retirement decision-making literature, for example, suggest both age- and cohort-related changes in motivation to work during late life. Other studies show age-related differences in preferred work conditions, such as work schedule, and older worker preferences for work roles that permit skill utilization (e.g., Warr, 2001). These age-related changes in turn affect an array of motivational phenomena, such as the decision to retire, whether to participate in new skill learning, and how much effort to allocate to work tasks. The nascent research literature on age-related changes in work motivation indicates that declines in work motivation stem from decreased person-job fit rather than any pervasive or universal decline in motivation per se.

2. *What impacts work motivation at different phases in the work lifespan?*

Theories of adult development, such as those by Erikson (1963) and Carstensen (1993) propose that individuals focus on different life goals and tasks at different points in the lifespan. During adolescence and early adulthood, emphasis is placed on the development of knowledge and skills, and finding employment in jobs that afford an opportunity for personal and professional growth. Work motivation at this stage is strongly influenced by inter-individual differences in intelligence, learning opportunities, and achievement motives. During midlife, however, emphasis shifts to the refinement of work competencies and management of growing non-work demands. During this stage of worklife, the socio-technical work environment can be expected to exert stronger influence on work motivation through practices that increase job embeddedness and opportunities for skill utilization. Adult development perspectives suggest that during the latter decades of life (e.g., ages 65 and older), non-work demands (e.g., healthcare and caregiver support) increase and motives for activities that support a positive sense of identity gain in salience. These age-related changes may reduce work motivation, particularly when accompanied by the absence of intrinsic incentives for work roles, work conditions that highlight intergenerational conflicts and the use of age stereotypes by managers that reduce job embeddeness.

Another class of influences on work motivation among midlife and older workers pertains to age-graded cultural norms about retirement and employment law. During early adulthood, motivation for work and motivation at work represent closely related, synergistic processes by which workers gain a foothold in society and create a pathway for personal and professional advancement. During later work life, the link between motivation for work and motivation at work weakens, as age-graded social norms, finances, and employment laws exert exogenous influence on retirement motivation that may differ from motivation in the workplace. Recent findings on work activities following retirement from one's primary job suggests that inter-individual differences in motives, personality traits, and non-work conditions return to play key roles in job search and work motivation among late life workers (Loi & Shultz, 2006; Shultz & Wang, 2011; Zappala, Depolo, Fraccaroli, Guglielmi, & Sarchielli, 2008).

3. *What are the challenges that workers and employers face as more of the world's workforce move into midlife and beyond?*

Research to date shows the existence of complex, age- and cohort-related changes in worker motives and demands. In contrast to younger workers, older workers show lower levels of fluid cognitive abilities, higher levels of crystallized abilities and job knowledge, higher levels of emotion regulation and emotional stability, conscientiousness, and agreeableness, stronger motives for generativity and skill utilization, and lower levels of openness. At the same time, midlife and older workers experience different socio-cultural, economic, and non-work forces

than do younger adult workers. As a consequence, organizational practices and social policies that have historically fine-tuned to promote work motivation among young adults are likely to be less effective among midlife and older workers. To encourage continued workforce participation among older workers, social policy makers and employers will need to develop new human resource paradigms that include performance incentives of high value to older workers. A growing body of research on the impact of bridge retirement policies and job redesign on older worker retention and satisfaction provide initial evidence for the potential of new practices. Additional research is needed, however, to examine how these practices affect work motivation processes and which workers are most likely to benefit from such systems.

Two issues of particular relevance pertain to age-related influences on social relations and creativity. Recent findings on age-related changes in terms of social networks and performance on tasks that involve complex combinations of abilities and interests, such as innovation and creativity, also have potentially important implications for understanding the boundary conditions of work motivation among older workers. Evidence from the lifespan literature, for example, shows an age-related decline in the size of an individual's social network, but not in the intensity of social communications. The increasing use of short-term project teams for performing work that promotes the development of larger social networks stands at odds with age-related tendencies in network size, and may act as a job design deterrent to older worker motivation. Research is needed to determine the features of social work design that help and hinder motivation among older workers.

In a related vein, generalizations about the impact of age-related decline in fluid intellectual abilities may operate to reduce older worker motivation by supporting negative age-stereotypes about the potential contribution that such workers may make to creativity and innovative performances. Given the premium placed on these forms of job performance in the current work world, research is sorely needed to evaluate age-related changes in innovation and creativity. Future studies should examine age-related differences in motivation when engaged in these forms of job performance.

Summary

Work motivation refers to the allocation of personal resources for goal accomplishment. Problems in work motivation may arise from poor person-job fit and/or the misalignment of worker and organizational goals with respect to the activities and outcomes that can be expected to result from worker effort. As workforces age throughout the developed world, organizations will need to take greater account of how age-related changes in worker characteristics affect person-job fit, and new strategies for maintaining alignment of worker and organizational goals. Research on age-related changes in worker characteristics and job/career patterns suggests that older worker motivation deficits may be more malleable than previously thought (Armstrong-Stassen, 2008). Innovations in organizational policies and human resource management practices, such as job crafting, bridge retirement, and supervisory policies that create a positive

work unit climate for older workers represent promising strategies already in use in many organizations. Future research and practice is needed to move one step further; that is, to examine how increases in older worker motivation may yield cumulative and longer-term worker and organizational outcomes, including improved organizational performance in terms of teamwork and innovation, and increased worker employability and well-being in late life.

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Age Stereotypes
Summary by Lisa Finkelstein

In her keynote talk entitled, "Age stereotypes: What we know, what we don't know, and where we should go," Lisa Finkelstein discussed her view on our current state of knowledge on age stereotyping. First, she posited that we know a fair amount about the content of older worker stereotypes (e.g., poor performance, resistance to change, lower ability to learn, shorter tenure, more costly, more dependable; Posthuma & Campion, 2009; out of touch, grouchy, experienced, knowledgeable, mature; Finkelstein, Ryan, & King, in press). She argued that we should be careful when asking the question of whether these stereotypes are accurate or not, as no stereotypes can ever be accurate by definition (if the definition is a belief that *all* members of a group share a characteristic). However, if we consider an accurate stereotype to be one in which a group has significantly more of a characteristic on average than another group, there is indeed evidence in the literature that, for example, older people do not on average perform more poorly, do not on average have shorter tenures, and are not necessarily resistant to change. Further, differences in learning capacity may be tempered by varied training techniques.

Finkelstein also suggested that we have accumulated solid knowledge regarding the contexts that trigger our age stereotypes. These include contexts that lack individuating information, those where people are cognitively busy, those where age becomes a salient feature of the people around us, and where there is a mismatch between the job and age prototype. We also have information on the type of workplace decisions that stereotypes may impact, such as lowering hiring ratings and performance appraisal ratings, and squelching opportunities for development. However, many of the studies in this area have been lab studies, and although age stereotyping is often implied as a mediating mechanism, it is not always examined directly.

Finkelstein argued that many areas of knowledge are still lacking regarding age stereotypes, and that there are many intriguing directions for research. For example, we still know very little about the stereotypes of other age groups – younger workers, middle-aged workers – in the workplace. There is some information beginning to emerge regarding the stereotypes held about younger (typically couched as "Millennial") workers, including traits such as entitled, needy, disrespectful, and good with technology. There is very little on middle-aged workers, although Finkelstein, Ryan, and King (in press) found that the characteristics were largely positive, including experienced, professional, knowledgeable, and analytical. She also lamented the fact that our notion of *who* an older worker is (or who is younger or middle-aged worker) is quite unclear in the literature, and that much more work is needed to understand the many alternative meanings to chronological age. Such work should incorporate legal definitions, developmental theories, average opinions, decades of age, age identification of the respondent, and the many suggested components that comprise subjective age, including those suggested in the Prism of Age model (Pitt-Catsouphes, Matz-Costa, & Brown, 2010; Finkelstein, Heneghan, Jenkins, McCausland, Siemieniec, in progress).

There is also a surprising lack of attention to the beliefs about specific subtypes of older workers. For instance, there is little research on stereotypes of older (or younger) female workers, older (or younger) minority workers, or age combined with other demographic groups that may be particularly relevant to a context. Finally, Finkelstein emphasized that age stereotypes are just one of the cognitive components of age bias to consider. We should also consider age meta-stereotypes (what we *think* other age groups are thinking about us), and how affect/emotions triggered by contact with other age groups contribute to our inter-age interactions.

Other papers presented at the Small Group Meeting shed light on this issue. Gellert and Schalk's examination of 152 members of work groups in six residential homes for the elderly in Germany, for example, examined beliefs about the capabilities of both older workers *and* younger workers as predictors of work group characteristics, such as LMX and MMX -- member-member exchange, which in turn were posited to impact performance. They found that older worker capabilities were perceived more positively by older employees, and that those more positive perceptions were related to higher MMX and intergenerational cooperation, whereas the perception of younger people's characteristics was not a predictor of any relationship factors.

Papers by Cleveland and by McCausland and King argue for looking at the specific experiences facing older women at work. In Cleveland's conceptual piece, she highlights many of the reasons why employed Baby Boomer women deserve greater research attention. For example, women in this group (47-65) are likely to outlive their husbands and have longer labor force participation, while at the same time facing health and security challenges and the possibility of balancing child and elder care. Cleveland sees a need for seeking to understand whether these women may face additive stereotyping and discrimination (for being older and for being women as separate forces), or interactive stereotyping and discrimination. She also argues for expanding age conceptualization to consider not only the chronological age of these women, but their social and physiological age as well.

McCausland and King focus on developmental work experiences (DWEs), operationally defined as support and challenge, and ask if the perception of such experiences depends on age, gender, and their interaction. These researchers also expand the definition of age to include chronological, generational, organizational, and occupational age. Using data from the 2008 National Study of the Changing Workforce, McCausland and King found significant curvilinear effects for generational, chronological, and occupational age on both support and challenge, and that the patterns differed for men and women, and depending on the particular definition of age. Patterns indicated, for example, that younger and older employees tended to receive less challenge, and that patterns for women were exaggerated, such that older and younger women seemed to be receiving more 'protective' behaviors.

Barnes-Farrell and McGonagle examined a different intersection of demographic characteristics - age and chronic illness. They were interested in threat of stigmatization of chronic illness (in some senses, a type of meta-perception) as related to age, as well as whether age would moderate the relationship between threat and well-being. In a sample of 332 working adults with at least one chronic illness, age was not predictive of stigma threat, but there was some evidence that age helped mitigate the relationship between threat and well-being. Older and younger workers seemed to take on different styles of coping in response to threat.

McCarthy, Heraty, and Cross examined attitudes toward older workers by 243 organizational decision makers in Ireland. First, they explored the question of "Who are older workers?" by investigating how their sample defined this group chronologically, and found the average age to be about 52-53 years in their perception. These researchers also wished to expand the definition of "attitudes" to include both stereotypes and affect, and to see whether a variety of organizational and individual difference factors would impact these attitudes. They found that, on average, these decision-makers' stereotypes about older workers' work effectiveness, interpersonal skills, and reaction to criticism were on the negative side, and that their affective reaction to this group tended more toward a negative pole as well. Although this sample was more favorable about retaining older workers, they were less favorable about recruiting them. Organizational factors such as size, industry, and diversity policy did not predict attitudes, whereas age, gender, and position played some moderating roles.

Although their paper did not examine age stereotyping directly, the work of Bertolino, Steiner, and Zaniboni is relevant to this discussion, as they found that various measures of subjective age (including feel age, look age, do age, and interest age) can show different patterns of relationships to important work-related outcomes, emphasizing further the need to include theoretically relevant alternative age measures to our stereotyping work.

Finally, two papers took an important step toward investigating interventions that might reduce age bias. First, Scheibe and van de Ven randomly assigned 194 American employees responding on-line to one of three conditions: reading a positive news story about older adults, reading a negative news story about them, or reading a news story not related to age. They found that workers over 40 who were in the positive condition were significantly more positive about older workers. Also, among younger workers, a similar pattern was found only if they reported high interest in the story; those with low interest had a pattern in the opposite direction. Second, Desmette, Iweins, and Schalk examined whether organizational support and contact might mitigate age bias, and the effects of whether the perceiver was of majority or minority age status in their group. Among a group of 158 workers in a Belgian military organization, they found that being a solo member in a group seemed to benefit younger workers, while being in the majority benefited older workers. For example, contact with older coworkers reduced younger workers' age bias more when they were solo status than when they were not, but contact with

younger coworkers reduced age bias for older workers when they were in the majority age group. This work emphasizes the complexity of the role of context in the efficacy of efforts to reduce age bias.

Summary
- We have amassed a literature in age stereotyping in the workplace that has provided us with solid knowledge about (a) the content of older worker stereotypes, (b) contextual factors that tend to elicit stereotypes, and (c) workplace decisions that can be impacted by stereotypes.
- Thus far, we have not paid enough attention to (a) stereotypes about other age groups, (b) the best ways to conceptualize and define age, (c) subtypes of older workers, (d) the roles of meta-stereotyping and affect in age bias, and (e) ways to reduce age bias. Newer work is being developed in these areas and should continue to be a focus.
- Research at the conference brought to light a need to consider the specific issues facing older women in the workplace. Older women may face different challenges when aging; they may be provided with different opportunities than older men, and they may be subject to interactional effects of age and gender bias.
- The experiences of older and younger people in work teams may depend on the context that they are in, and interventions to minimize age bias may operate differently for older and younger people.

Guidance for Future Research
- Continue to investigate age bias (stereotyping/meta-stereotyping, affect, and discrimination) of and by workers of all age groups.
- Consider that the way age is conceptualized and measured can make a difference in research, and alternative age measures that are theoretically relevant to a context can add to explained variance.
- Consider more complex patterns of relationships, such as curvilinear relationships, to understand age effects more completely.
- More work should consider the intersection of age and gender, age and race, age and chronic illness/disability, and older workers in various work contexts.
- Work should continue to focus on interventions that can reduce stereotyping and/or the effect of stereotyping on workplace decisions and behaviors. Interventions can be at the job, team, and organizational level.
- Another important issue is shared perceptions of younger and older workers in organisations (Bowen, Noack, & Staudinger, 2010; Noack, 2009; Staudinger & Bowen, in press). Preliminary findings suggest that organisational age climates exist, that they differ across organisations, and that they are influenced by human resource and leadership practices.

Guidance for Practice

- Age stereotyping and age bias should be considered in any diversity training efforts. Requiring specific explanations for performance appraisal ratings could help to identify and combat stereotypical thinking.
- Age doesn't mean the same thing to everyone. Workers of the same chronological age may identify with very different age groups depending on their appearance, their life stage, their career stage, their health, etc. Leaders should take care not to 'lump' people together in terms of what they expect of people of the same chronological age.

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Work and Family
Summary by Tammy D. Allen

Background

Work-family research involves investigations of the intersection between work experiences and the family lives of employees. Research on work-family issues has flourished during the past several decades (see Hammer & Zimmerman, 2011 for a comprehensive review). Work-family research often focuses on the difficulties associated with multiple role engagement, commonly referred to as work-family conflict. Work-family conflict is defined as "a form of interrole conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect" (p. 77) (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). It is recognized that work can interfere with family and that family can interfere with work. In the past decade, a growing body of research has also investigated the salutary effects of multiple role engagement, establishing that work can enrich family and that family can enrich work (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Other constructs such as work-family balance, which has been defined as, "the extent to which an individual's effectiveness and satisfaction in work and family roles are compatible with the individual's life role priorities at a given point in time" have also become a focal topic of interest (Greenhaus & Allen, 2010).

Work-family Issues and Age

Although engagement in multiple roles occurs throughout the adult lifespan, research on work-family issues rarely includes age as a variable of substantive interest (Allen & Shockley, in press). Understanding the role of age in relation to work-family experiences is important for several reasons. Family-related demands, such as dependent caregiving, beginning with caregiving for dependent children and culminating with care for elderly parents, follows a developmental pattern that is somewhat intertwined with employee chronological age. Other family formations that deviate from this normative pattern also exist. For example, in many countries, modern social challenges such as HIV/AIDS, urbanization, drug use, international migration, and armed conflict, have resulted in a larger number of families in which employed grandparents are the primary caregivers for children (AARP International, 2008). In addition, the age of women with young children has increased as women have delayed the age of first childbirth and continue to bear children into the forties in greater numbers. These trends underscore that multiple role engagement occurs across the life span and that the specific challenges are likely to vary, bringing into sharp relief the importance of greater integration of age into work-family research.

Relevant Work Presented at the Small Group Meeting
- Across two studies, Fisher and Matthews found that older workers reported higher levels of work/family enhancement compared to younger workers – in both directions. The authors concluded that future research needs to better address the age/work-family relationship with work attitudes, work motivation, and job characteristics.

- Allen found in an analysis of data from the US National Study of the Changing Workforce (N=1841) that there was a small negative relationship between age and work-family conflict. However, there were moderators, such as when the youngest child is a teen. The study may discredit the assumption that WFC is greatest when children are youngest.

Summary

Navigating work and personal demands and aspirations is one of the major challenges of contemporary society (Kossek & Lambert, 2005; Zacher & Winter, 2011). For instance, recent research with middle-aged and older employed caregivers suggests that combining work and eldercare is the work-life balance issue of the 21st century (Zacher & Winter, 2011). This research also suggests that perceived organizational support for eldercare buffers the negative effects of high levels of eldercare demands and strain on work engagement. To date, age has rarely been studied as a key variable in understanding work and family issues.

Research Guidance
- Investigate how work-family conflict, work-family enrichment, and work-family balance vary across the life span. Look at variation across gender, family stage, and family structure.
- Integrate different dimensions of age (functional age, social age) into research on age and work-family.

Practice Guidance
- Experimental research that investigates the kinds of policies that are most useful to employees throughout the life-span is lacking. Partnerships between organizations and researchers are needed so that practice can be better informed with regard to what works and when.

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Retirement: Challenges to the Field and Recommendations to Move Forward
Summary by Mo Wang

In the past two decades, retirement has attracted much attention from policy makers, employers, popular media, and academic researchers. I first summarize the progress made in this research field. I then discuss the issues that it faces moving forward and provide recommendations for researchers to overcome these challenges.

Progress That Has Been Made
In the past two decades, retirement researchers have made some important progress:
- Researchers have moved beyond only using the economic perspective to analyze and understand retirement-related phenomena. More and more researchers recognize that retirement is not merely an issue of maintaining resource-consumption balance for an individual after exiting the workforce. Rather, it also serves important psychological functions for individuals and their families in their late life and career stages, as well as socioeconomic functions for their organizations, communities, and society-at-large (Wang, forthcoming).
- Researchers now know significantly more about the psychological processes of retirement. In particular, the longitudinal progression model (Shultz & Wang, 2011; Wang & Shultz, 2010) that includes retirement planning, retirement decision making (including early retirement), bridge employment, and retirement transition and adjustment, has been established as the general framework for understanding the dynamic psychological mechanisms underlying the retirement process.
- Researchers have paid substantial attention to understanding the important association between pre-retirement work experience and retirement-related phenomena, an issue which has been previously neglected. In particular, researchers have examined a broad range of work-related variables (e.g., employment history, job characteristics, job attitudes, career attachment, age stereotypes at work, and flexible job options) on retirement decision making, bridge employment, and retirement transition and adjustment (e.g., Adams, Prescher, Beehr, & Lepisto, 2002; Adams & Rau, 2004; Gobeski & Beehr, 2008; van Solinge & Henkens, 2007; van Solinge & Henkens, 2008; Wang, 2007; Wang, Zhan, Liu, & Shultz, 2008).

The Challenges That We Face
Moving forward, here are several key challenges that we need to address to grow the field of retirement research:
- There is still a lack of communication among multiple disciplines (e.g., Economics, Sociology, Public Health, and Psychology) in studying retirement, which prevents us from comprehensively analyzing the phenomena of interest and compromises our ability to have a cumulative science of retirement.

- There is still great complexity in conceptualizing retirement and retirement processes. As Ekerdt (2010; p. 70) recently noted, "The designation of retirement status is famously ambiguous because there are multiple overlapping criteria by which someone might be called retired, including career cessation, reduced work effort, pension receipt, or self-report." Therefore, researchers may conceptualize or operationalize the same retirement-related phenomena in different ways, which may yield dramatically different findings.

- There is a great need to understand causality in the field of retirement. The vast majority of previous studies have relied on cross-sectional designs, which makes it difficult to make causal inferences based on the findings (Wang, Henkens, & van Solinge, 2011). In addition, most studies do not take specific steps (e.g., including covariates and instrumental variables) to rule out alternative explanations that may confound the interpretation of the findings.

- There is a lack of consideration for research context (e.g., government policies, socio-economical environment, sample characteristics, etc.). Retirement is an institution-based phenomenon. Therefore, depending on the societal background at large, the same retirement-related construct may mean different things under different government policies, demographic compositions, and organizational practices. These issues have not been widely considered in terms of their implications for interpreting research findings in the field of retirement.

Recommendations for Moving Forward

Here, I provide several recommendations for researchers to overcome these challenges and move retirement research forward. These recommendations are organized in sequential stages of a systematic paradigm for conducting retirement research. Following this systematic research paradigm may help researchers effectively manage uncertainty and randomness in the connection between research decisions and actions and their consequences.

- Stage 1: Determining research questions. When determining research questions for a study, retirement researchers should not only consider whether there is sufficient public and academic interest, but also the true novelty of the research question. Here, broad literature search across multiple disciplines are recommended to both gauge the prevalence of interest and to see how researchers in other disciplines approached similar research questions.

- Stage 2: Clarifying research contributions. There are typically four ways for a study to make a contribution: (1) testing and extending existing theories/findings, (2) studying new constructs/phenomena and developing new theories, (3) summarizing empirical findings and informing theory-building, and (4) reconciling inconsistent findings and integrating existing theories. Researchers should clarify what types of contributions they intend to make with the study, which helps to better position the study and connect it to the existing literature, thus contributing to the cumulative science of retirement.

- Stage 3: Conceptualizing key constructs. Given the complexity in conceptualizing retirement-related constructs (e.g., retirement satisfaction vs. retirement adjustment), it is extremely important to consider perspectives from different research disciplines and the institutional context of retirement in this step. Providing clear and comprehensive

conceptualizations of the key constructs can help researchers communicate their interpretation of the phenomena and select useful theories for generating the scope of studied variables. Thus, it can decrease the potential disassociation between the theoretical framework and the operationalization of the key constructs.

- Stage 4: Establishing the theoretical framework. In this stage, following the theories chosen in Stage 3, researchers should gather both theoretical and empirical evidence that informs the relationships among the studied variables. The quality of the evidence can be evaluated in terms of how much it can contribute to establishing causal relationships among the studied variables. It is also important to pay attention to alternative explanations for the expected relationships at this stage and to generate testable hypotheses that could rule out alternative interpretations.

- Stage 5: Research design and data analysis. In this stage, researchers should strive to employ a research design that can help establish causal inferences. Typically, longitudinal designs and quasi-experimental designs in naturalistic settings are great options for studying retirement-related phenomena, as these phenomena are not easily manipulated in lab settings. Further, researchers should articulate the target population to which they would like to generalize their findings, because the sample characteristics may interact with the theoretical mechanisms that are examined. To address this issue, the constructive replication approach could be beneficial for researchers to use to cross-validate their findings. In data analysis, there are a number of statistical procedures that researchers can use to ensure that good measures are used (e.g., reliability analysis, exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis) and there is no endogeneity problem that jeopardizes causal inferences (e.g., simultaneous equation models; regression discontinuity models, dynamic modeling and nested data modeling).

Findings from the Small Group Meeting

A number of papers addressed career and retirement issues among older workers, including the following:

- Marcus, Fritzsche, and Reeves used a US sample of 728 observations from the 2006 General Social Survey dataset and found that between-career transitions disadvantage some older workers (e.g., non-white males), but make no difference (e.g., older white males), or even benefit others (e.g., non-white females).

- Deller, Maxin, and Schultz examined the post-retirement activities of former professionals. They focused on experienced differences between one's former job and post-retirement activities in a sample of German active retirees. They found that to support these workers, we should create new functions and jobs (specific use of competencies), design tasks carefully and with less disciplinary responsibilities, and offer more flexibility in job tasks. Three factors referring to organizational policies (different function, less responsibility, and more flexibility) and one factor referring to individual attributes (person-related variables) seem to be relevant for the crafting of jobs of employees post-retirement.

- Clark and Arnold used a sample of 41 men (aged 45-55) in diverse careers, finding that both generativity and growth motives are relevant in mid/late career. They also noted that a sense of continuing forward momentum in career – understood in intrinsic as well as extrinsic ways – seems more adaptive than career maintenance.
- Furunes, Mykletun, Solem, de Lange, & Schaufeli used focus groups to identify five late career types of patterns: love of the job, in the middle of a project, pension as stipend, on hold, and done.

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Work Design
Summary by Andreas Müller & Matthias Weigl

As the workforce continues to age, it becomes increasingly important to investigate the effects of work design on employees throughout the lifespan. Initial research in this area has shown that there is, in fact, an interaction between age and work design features in predicting individual and organizational outcomes such as satisfaction and engagement (Zaniboni, Truxillo, Fraccaroli, McCune, & Bertolino, 2011) and OCBs (Ng & Feldman, 2008).

Discussions and research from the Small Group Meeting suggest a number of paths forward in research on work design and age:

- Consider the growing importance of work characteristics (e.g. job control, social support) and their impact on successful ageing.
- Establish dynamic occupational life-span models that incorporate the interplay between individual factors (e.g. life management strategies) and environmental factors (e.g. demands and resources at work) over time.
- Integrate different dimensions of age (functional age, social age) in occupational life-span models, e.g. maintaining the work ability of employees with functional impairments.
- Further integrate the perspectives of other fields into research on ageing at work (e.g. developmental psychology, occupational medicine, human resources).
- Bridge the gap between science and practice by developing and implementing interventions that support successful ageing at work; particularly evaluating the implementation process and practices.
- Work design can help maintain older workers' positive outlook on their remaining goals and opportunities (Zacher & Frese, 2009, 2011; Zacher, Heusner, Schmitz, Zwierzanska, & Frese, 2010). Specifically, when job complexity and job control were high, older workers had higher levels of occupational future time perspective which, in turn, positively predicted work performance. Also, Zaniboni, Truxillo, and Fraccaroli (presentation from the Small Group Meeting) found that while some job characteristics benefit older workers in terms of well-being, others are more likely to benefit younger workers.

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Potential Interventions

Summary by Tinka van Vuuren, Beatrice van der Heijden, Dorien Kooij, & Annet de Lange

Based on the information presented at the Small Group Meeting, a number of potential avenues for workplace intervention were identified. The following ideas can potentially help employers to optimize both individual an organizational outcomes in an increasingly age-diverse work workforce:

- Focus not only on interventions to cure or prevent the negative effects of work, such as stress, health complaints, sickness, and absence, but also on interventions to amplify the positive effects of work, such as engagement, well-being, performance, employability, and work ability.
- Focus not only on older workers, but on all workers from young to old.
- Innovative HRM strategies entail not only interventions such as training and career management, but also interventions to enhance health and workability (e.g., occupational health interventions and lifestyle interventions with respect to diet, physical activity, smoking, alcohol consumption, and relaxation.)
- Include interventions at the job, team, and organizational level.
- For HR interventions to be successful, it is important to choose the right solution with regard to the context of the situation. Which solution works best probably depends on the specific causes of the problem, as well as the needs of the workforce. For instance, it is pointless to take actions directed at the worker's health or employability if the employees and their managers are not interested in these types of activities.
- Take into account individual differences within the workforce.
- Try to combat age-related stereotyping by explicitly asking supervisors to explain why certain ratings are given in performance appraisals. Also, use think-aloud protocols, and try to investigate the possible causes of significant differences between self-ratings and supervisor ratings.