

Older people

Letters

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Older people deserve better support from employers

Age discrimination is still having a harmful effect in the workplace, says Steve Butler



'Many over-50s want to continue working for another decade or more before retiring.' Photograph: insta_photos/Alamy

The Centre for Ageing Better says that we are experiencing a mass exodus of older people from the labour market. The findings show a problem with our world of work in stark relief, as does Ros Altmann's observation that older people are now re-entering the market "even if their health may not be up to it" (Britain's 'great unretirement': cost of living drives older people back to work, 25 July). The fact is that Britain is not doing enough to support people late in their careers.

Many over-50s want to continue working for another decade or more before retiring, but feel discouraged from applying for new jobs due to frequent rejection and scant prospect for career progression. Employers are not implementing policies to accommodate this group.

Age discrimination was an issue long before the cost of living crisis, but it is now more important than ever that business leaders ask themselves how they can support an age-diverse workforce and make the most of skills currently being wasted. This means creating opportunities and looking anew at flexibility, which is especially beneficial to older employees with health concerns or caring responsibilities. If we embed these changes, we can shape a better future for all older workers.

Steve Butler
Chief executive, Punter Southall Aspire

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