

Age discrimination team project



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Age Discrimination 38-year-old John Bower walked out of the apartment complex after being told by the 24-year-old manager that there were no empty apartments at the time. One hour later, 26 year old Cindi signed a one-year lease on an apartment at the same apartment building. There was nothing wrong with Bower's credit, employment, or background check. He had been a victim of age discrimination because the landlord was trying to attract a younger crowd. We usually think that age discrimination only affects the senior citizens and elderly, but everyday people are denied employment, credit, or housing based on a stereotype that the individual decision maker has of older age. That age may be 37 or 87, but it is still discrimination. Anytime a decision is made that is based on a person's age there is the potential for age discrimination to exist and it may be illegal. There are numerous reasons that people commit age discrimination, and as an employer they often feel like it is an innocent right that they have. An employer may want someone younger to greet their customers in an effort to give their company a more youthful image. A manager may wish to hire a younger man in the belief that they will be better able to understand the new technology than the older gentleman. The sales manager hires the younger candidate because she feels that the older lady just won't be able to keep up with the demands of the schedule. However, studies conducted with Human Resource managers have consistently proven that these are myths. The public trusts the experience that comes with age, the technology gap does not exist, and there is no loss of productivity as people age (Grossman). No matter what reason is given for age discrimination, it is usually based on a myth or misconception.

The tragedy of age discrimination is that it seems to be a growing trend in

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the American workplace. According to Barry, " Abercrombie and Fitch officials proudly acknowledge that they purposely build a pretty and handsome sales force" and this same attitude prevails in companies such as " cosmetics giant L'Oreal, the Gap, and the W hotel chain" (46). The popular media, advertising, and the images that flood our magazines and television sets further exaggerate this mind-set. Yet, this strategy overlooks and discards some of the most important qualities that are needed in an employee; experience and expertise. As this trend continues, we may see the quality of goods and services decline.

Not only is the practice of age discrimination unjust and ill advised, in many cases it may be illegal. The Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) has a broad ban on any use of age to make a decision involving hiring, awarding of benefits, or termination, and an employer can not post job notices that have age preferences or limitations (Age Discrimination in Employment Act). Violations may result in anything from a fine to prison time. However, employers can often hide behind the provision in the law that allows discrimination if it is a bona fide occupational qualification. Youth and beauty may, in some situations, be a job qualification.

Employers and managers could do everyone a favor by hiring expertise instead of beauty, experience instead of youth, and trusting in the resilience of age. Managers that fail to do so risk being prosecuted under the federal equal employment opportunity laws. In addition, the myths that surround age are largely unfounded and result in the unfair treatment of many older workers. In today's competitive world of globalization it is even more imperative that employers get their moneys worth, and not just another pretty face.

Works Cited

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