

Chapter 5

The Role of Line Managers in Motivation of Older Workers

Eva Knies, Peter Leisink, and Jo Thijssen

It is relatively easy for governments to pass legislation which raise the pension age. It is far less easy for employers to motivate older workers who face the prospect of having to work longer than they had anticipated, whilst also ensuring that their contribution remains productive. It is line managers who have a crucial role in dealing with these challenges, as they are the people who most closely interact with the older workers they supervise on a day-to-day basis. Indeed, recent studies show that older workers who feel supported and valued by their line managers are less inclined to opt for early retirement (Armstrong-Stassen, 2008; Armstrong-Stassen & Ursel, 2009; Bal, De Jong, Jansen, & Bakker, 2012; Henkens & Van Solinge, 2003; Leisink & Knies, 2011).

The questions we ask are: to what extent and how do line managers support older workers at work? And to what extent does supervisory support influence the motivation and productivity of older workers? In order to answer these questions we will examine Human Resource (HR) policies for older workers and the role of line managers in the implementation of these policies.

Over the years a set of HR policies which are designed specifically for older workers has emerged alongside general HR policies. These older worker policies focused initially on early retirement issues. They have since broadened to include a range of policies dealing with measures to adapt the working environment and to create training options for older workers.

Line managers play an important role in the implementation of these policies (Leisink & Knies, 2011) since the responsibility for HRM has been devolved to the line (Larsen & Brewster, 2003). Their role is even more crucial as they are able to tailor HR policies to the individual situations of older workers (Hornung, Rousseau, & Glaser, 2009). This is important because differences among individuals tend to

E. Knies (✉) • P. Leisink • J. Thijssen
School of Governance, Utrecht University, Bijlhouwerstraat 6, 3511 ZC,
Utrecht, The Netherlands
e-mail: e.knies@uu.nl

increase as people grow older (Baltes & Lang, 1997; Greller & Stroh, 1995; Raz & Rodrigue, 2006). These same studies also indicate that line managers can provide support to older workers through their leadership behavior. This influence over the motivation of older workers coincides with recent ideas concerning people management by line managers (Knies, 2012; Purcell & Hutchinson, 2007).

However, line managers are known to avoid engaging in implementing HR policies (Bos-Nehles, 2010; Larsen & Brewster, 2003). A longstanding concern has been that line managers hold negative stereotypes about older workers that impact on their behavior towards them (Boerlijst, Van der Heijden, & Van Assen, 1993; Chiu, Chan, Snape, & Redman, 2001; Maurer, Wrenn, & Weiss, 2003; Visser, Henkens, & Schippers, 2003). Therefore, it is directly relevant that we ask the question as to what factors influence the support that line managers provide to older workers.

This chapter starts with a review of the role line management plays in HRM generally. It goes on to examine HR policies and line manager activities that are specifically relevant for older workers. Subsequent sections address the effect of line manager's activities on older workers' motivation and productivity, as well as the factors that influence line managers' activities towards older workers. We conclude with a summary of our findings and suggest issues for future research.

5.1 The General Role Line Managers Play in Human Resource Management¹

In general, line managers have a twofold role in managing people (Knies & Leisink, 2014; Purcell & Hutchinson, 2007). First, they are responsible for implementing HR practices, and, second, their leadership behavior is important in shaping employees' attitudes and behaviors. Purcell & Hutchinson introduced the concept of 'people management' to cover both aspects and suggest these form a 'symbiotic relationship' (p. 3).

According to Boxall and Purcell (2011, p. 3) Human Resource Management (HRM) refers to 'the management of work and the management of people to do the work'. Recent HRM models (Purcell & Kinnie, 2007; Wright & Nishii, 2013) make a theoretical distinction between intended, actual and perceived HRM/HR practices. Intended practices are those designed by senior management or HR management. Actual practices are those that are actually applied. This conceptual differentiation is based on the awareness that not all practices are implemented in the ways originally intended, and that some may not be implemented at all. Perceived practices are actual implemented practices but as they are perceived by employees. The distinction between intended and actual HR practices draws our attention to the actors responsible for HR implementation. The literature mentions

¹ In this section we draw from Knies and Leisink (2014) which deals with the same topic.

several 'HRM delivery channels', such as HR professionals and HR shared service centers. Larsen and Brewster (2003) emphasize that line managers play a very significant role in HRM enactment.

The first element of the people management concept (i.e. the application of HR practices) has its roots in the HR devolution literature. According to Larsen and Brewster (2003, p. 228): 'the notion of line management accepting greater responsibility for human resource management within employing organizations is now received wisdom'. Boon, Den Hartog, Boselie, and Paauwe (2011) distinguish between seven main HR policy areas: training and development, participation, autonomy and job design, performance appraisal and rewards, teamwork and autonomy, work-life balance, recruitment and selection, and employment security. Line managers have a role to varying extents in each of these areas in their implementation of HR policies (Larsen & Brewster, 2003).

It is not sufficient to focus solely on the presence of practices when studying employees' perceptions of line managers in HR implementation. The perceptions that employees have of the reasons why management adopts certain HR practices (so-called 'HR attributions') are important as well. Nishii, Lepak, and Schneider (2008) introduced this concept. They argued that HR attributions have consequences for employees' attitudes and showed that practices perceived as commitment-focused (i.e. intended to enhance service quality and employee well-being) are related positively to employees' attitudes. Meanwhile, they showed that practices perceived as control-focused (i.e. designed to reduce costs and exploit employees) are associated negatively with their attitudes. Therefore, when studying HR policies and how line managers apply them, it is important to determine the extent to which employees feel either supported or controlled.

Two further levels of HR implementation can be distinguished (Guest, 2007). On the one hand, line managers are responsible for applying general practices to all employees or to specific groups of employees (e.g. older workers). On the other hand, line managers are expected increasingly to make tailor-made arrangements for individual employees; some examples would include idiosyncratic deals and deals made in a cafeteria system.

The second element of the people management concept (i.e. leadership behavior) builds on the notions of social exchange, perceived supervisor support and perceived organizational support. Support theory holds that employees develop general views regarding the degree to which supervisors value their contributions and care about their well-being. Employees see supervisors as agents acting on behalf of the organization they work for and, thus, regard the support received by their supervisor as being directly indicative of the organization's support (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Leadership behavior is understood as a manager demonstrating supportive behavior through specific acts that have the intention of helping employees. Greenhaus, Parasuraman, and Wormley (1990) describe supportive behavior by supervisors including such provisions as career guidance, performance feedback, and opportunities that promote employee development. Oldham and Cummings (1996) observe that supervisors are supportive when they

show concern for their employees' feelings and needs, encourage them to voice their own concerns, provide feedback, and facilitate their development.

Earlier work by Leisink and Knies (2011) made a distinction between two different focal points: supportive behavior aimed at increasing employees' personal commitment, and supportive behavior aimed at supporting their career development. The former includes showing an interest in how employees are doing their job and showing appreciation for employees' work. The latter refers to facilitating employees' participation in training, as well as stimulating their use of career opportunities.

5.2 The Specific Role Line Managers Play in HRM Pertaining to Older Workers

We now turn to the line manager activities targeting older workers and their HR policy implications. HR policies and the perceived role of line managers towards older workers have changed over time as ideas have shifted about the participation of older workers in the labor force. Early retirement used to be the dominant focus in the Netherlands, as in many other European countries (Van Dalen, Henkens, & Schippers, 2009). However, early retirement is only one type of policy aimed at older workers. Thijssen (1997) distinguished between two policy dimensions. The first was the acceptance of the constricted employability of older workers versus the attempt to broaden their employability. The second was the use of financial versus organizational support measures. Early retirement is a typical example of acceptance of older workers' constricted employability accompanied by financial measures to facilitate their exit from paid employment. The assumptions underlying this policy are similar to what Yeatts, Folts, and Knapp (2000) call the 'depreciation model'. This views investment in older workers as costly as an individual's contribution steadily declines after mid-career. Early retirement in this context was processed administratively and involved no role for line managers. However, older worker policies which involve organizational support measures do require line manager activities. These may aim to adapt the job and work environment to the capacities of older workers through training, job rotation and mobility. Investing in a development of older worker policy shares assumptions with what Yeatts et al. (2000) call the 'conservation model'. This views all employees (regardless of their age) as renewable assets that can continue to yield a high return if they are adequately educated, trained and managed.

Early retirement schemes still exist: 17 % of employers in seven European countries (Denmark, France, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Sweden and UK) implemented early retirement schemes in 2009 (Conen, Henkens, & Schippers, 2012). This same study also found that employers implement a variety of policies to retain older workers. These policies, ranked by incidence, included: flexible working hours (35 % of employers); ergonomic measures (29 %); reduction of working hours

(23 %); training plans for older workers (23 %); decreased workload (18 %); extra leave (15 %); and reduction in task and salary (demotion; 7 %).

The three most-implemented policies belong to the category which Thijssen labels as ‘adaptation’. Training plans for older workers are the only measure oriented at development. Its implementation ranges widely from 2 % of employers in Italy to 49 % of employers in the UK. A study by Conen et al. (2012) concentrated on employers and organizational policies. The role of line managers, as such, was not examined, but was assumed implicitly. Indeed, because managers are usually responsible for work planning, changes in older workers’ working hours and working times require their approval; even if older workers have a right to reduced working hours granted by a collective labor agreement. Likewise, older workers are likely to appeal to their managers, or else managers themselves will consult with older workers when they feel that the workload of older workers or working conditions may be too burdensome. Line managers will be involved also in the implementation of training plans for older workers since the manager’s approval is usually required for a worker’s enlistment. However, while we can infer a line manager’s role indeed does exist in these older worker policies, these same studies do not tell us what this role entails.

There are an increasing number of studies examining HR policies targeting older workers when seen from the perspective of these workers themselves. Such studies are examining typical HR practices designated for older workers, such as training and development (Armstrong-Stassen & Ursel, 2009; Mountford, 2013), flexible work arrangements (Armstrong-Stassen & Ursel, 2009; Beck, 2013), and job redesign (Kawakami, Inoue, Ohkubo, & Ueno, 2000; Streb & Voelpel, 2009). Other studies are examining general HR practices and take into account the effect of age when they consider to what extent these practices stimulate workers’ well-being and performance (Innocenti, Profili, & Sammarra, 2013; Kooij, Jansen, Dijkers, & De Lange, 2010; Kooij et al., 2013).

An important distinction when considering older workers’ motivation and productivity is between ‘maintenance HR practices’ and ‘development HR practices’ (Kooij et al., 2010, 2013). The former involve HR practices such as formal performance appraisal, career advice, information needed to do the job, and opportunities to give ideas for improvement. These are related to workers’ needs for protection, safety, and responsibilities. The latter involve HR practices such as formal training, a challenging job, and a job that makes full use of knowledge and skills. These are related to workers’ needs of advancement, growth and accomplishment (Kooij et al., 2013, p. 22).

Kooij et al. (2010) assume that employees’ needs change with age. This is reflected in the hypothesis that the association between the maintenance bundle and job satisfaction and affective commitment will strengthen with age, while the association between the development bundle and these outcomes will weaken with age. The importance attached to development practices for older workers differs between Kooij et al. (2010) and Thijssen (1997). Kooij et al. argue that the needs for advancement (which development practices are aimed at) become less

important with age which seems to imply that development practices are less important for older workers.

On the other hand, when considering the employer's perspective of the costs and benefits of development practices, Thijssen (1997) regards these development practices as very important because they can prevent and help remedy obsolete expertise which older workers generally tend to suffer from. Obsolescence results from experience concentration (Thijssen, Knies, & Leisink, 2013). This is a process which is characterized by workers accumulating a greater body of experience in their job as they grow older. However, at the same time, their area of expertise usually tends to become constrained and the variety of work experienced declines. This experience concentration can occur because older workers tend to refrain from participation in training and avoid learning new skills. Often this is because they refrain from job rotation and making changes in their work, and because they tend to restrict their social networks to old and trusted relationships (Thijssen & Leisink, 2007; Thijssen & Walter, 2006).

Thus, development is an essential HR practice if older workers are to remain productive at work. The priority which Thijssen (1997) grants to development policies for older workers is not based on attributing a need for advancement to older workers, but on the necessity to remedy skill deficiencies caused by experience concentration. In their 2013 study, Kooij et al. make a similar point. They propose that development practices are related more strongly to employee performance among older workers as when compared with younger workers. Their argument that job enrichment may help to prevent and remediate obsolescence and constriction (Kooij et al., 2013, p. 30), resonates with Thijssen's (1997) earlier analysis.

The role of line managers towards older workers (Furunes, Mykletun, & Solem, 2011; Leisink & Knies, 2011) and in creating an accommodating and developmental climate in work units through which older workers' attitudes and behaviors are influenced (Bal et al., 2012) is the explicit topic of a small number of recent studies. Initially, the role of supervisors in HR implementation was studied because of concerns that their stereotypes about older workers were a negative influence on the eligibility of older workers for training and other HR practices (Boerlijst et al., 1993; Maurer et al., 2003). An early study of older workers' decision to opt for early retirement (Henkens & Van Solinge, 2003) illustrated the paradox, in that older workers indicated that they would have considered staying if only their supervisor had asked them to do so and, thereby, valuing their contribution at work. Meanwhile, supervisors refrained from discussing early retirement with their older workers because they felt obliged to respect the privacy of older workers' decision-making.

Clearly older workers' motivation to continue to work is influenced by their supervisors showing appreciation for their work and supporting their well-being, as well as their facilitating participation in training and mobility opportunities. The importance of the line managers' role for older workers is key, given the closeness of their position and, thus, their ability to tailor the implementation of HR practices to older workers' individual needs (Leisink & Knies, 2011). The relevance of this situation is also significant given that the variations in older worker's individual motives, intelligence and health which are differences that tend to increase as they

grow older (Baltes & Lang, 1997; Greller & Stroh, 1995; Raz & Rodrigue, 2006). Tailor-made arrangements are attractive from a manager's perspective precisely because they have a positive effect on workers' motivation and performance as was shown by a study of supervisor views of idiosyncratic deals (Hornung et al., 2009).

Leisink and Knies (2011) studied 160 front-line managers who had direct supervisory responsibility for older workers in organizations representing various industries, e.g. printing, wholesale food business, financial services, and healthcare. The results showed line managers reporting high scores on their support for older workers' commitment by showing their appreciation of the job done and their interest in their personal functioning. Line managers reported slightly less high scores on their support for older workers' career development by offering their older workers opportunities to participate in training and mobility. Line managers' interest in their older workers' personal functioning was relevant because it relates to their need for maintenance. For instance, when a line manager observes a job may be too burdensome, this offers an opportunity to consult with the older worker about the possibilities for ergonomic measures or for a reduction of working hours. Line managers' support through offering training is unlikely to be accepted without further encouragement. However, this is particularly relevant and is needed to confront the tendency for older workers to avoid training and learning new skills. This is when experience concentration and obsolescence can result and, ultimately, may affect their job performance and the possibility for them to remain productive. Career support by a line manager is important for those older workers who need development and who aspire to a job in which they also might benefit from coaching other, younger workers.

5.3 The Effects of Support for Older Workers on Motivation and Productivity

Having examined which HR policies and practices are being implemented to support older workers' development and productivity now we will address the question in this section as to whether supporting older workers does indeed impact on their motivation and productivity. The literature addressing this issue is scarce. However, studies by Armstrong-Stassen (2008), Armstrong-Stassen and Ursel (2009), Bal et al. (2012), Innocenti et al. (2013), Kooij et al. (2013) and Mountford (2013) have produced insights into the impact of HR practices on an array of different outcomes, such as employee well-being, productivity, the motivation to remain with an organization, and the motivation to work beyond retirement. These studies show also that older workers have different work-related needs and desires when compared with their younger colleagues. These needs must be addressed if older workers' motivation and productivity are to be stimulated (see also Kooij, De Lange, Jansen, Kanfer, & Dijkers, 2011). The studies which examine HR practices tend not to look explicitly at their implementation. Because employees' perceptions of HR practices are dependent to a large extent on the implementation by their line manager, these

studies point implicitly to the fact that line managers' people management activities do have a significant impact on employees' motivation and productivity.

Armstrong-Stassen (2008) and Armstrong-Stassen and Ursel (2009) studied HR practices specifically designed for older workers. The former study concluded that HR practices impact on older workers' decisions to remain in or to return to their job after retirement. Those HR practices which are tailored to employees' preferences are shown to be important as they signal that employees are valued by the organization. The latter study showed that training and development practices enhance the levels of perceived organizational support and career satisfaction which motivate people to remain with the organization. The studies also showed that advancement and promotion are less important for career satisfaction of older workers, when compared with meaningful and interesting work.

Mountford (2013) took a slightly different approach. She studied HR practices in general, rather than those just aimed at older workers, but did analyze results from a sample of older workers. Her qualitative study provides empirical evidence that implementing supportive work practices is effective in retaining older workers. These practices include developing a supportive work environment, recognizing workers' skills and abilities, providing training opportunities, and creating the opportunity to pass on knowledge to younger colleagues.

Innocenti et al. (2013) and Kooij et al. (2013) also studied general HR practices. They used a quantitative design and included younger and older workers in their sample to examine the moderating effect of age on the relationship between HR practices and employee well-being (job satisfaction, commitment, and organizational fairness) and performance. Innocenti et al. show that training and development practices impact positively on job satisfaction and commitment and that this relationship weakens with age. Kooij et al. come to a similar, but somewhat more nuanced, conclusion. As explained in the previous section, they distinguish between two bundles of HR practices and demonstrate that the relationship between development practices and well-being weakens with age, whereas the relationship between maintenance practices and well-being strengthens with age. Moreover, the relationship between development practices and performance is shown to strengthen with age. These findings are in line with their assumption that maintenance (rather than development) becomes more important as employees age (see also Armstrong-Stassen & Ursel, 2009). Kooij et al. show that, as workers get older, their needs and desires change and, as a result, older workers respond differently to HR practices.

The paper by Bal et al. (2012) emphasizes the importance of line managers in supporting older workers in both aspects of the people management role, i.e. negotiating tailor-made arrangements with employees, and showing supportive leadership behavior. They illustrated that development and flexibility i-deals have a positive impact on older workers' motivation to work beyond retirement. This is because such deals fulfill worker needs for personalized work arrangements. I-deals are individual agreements negotiated between an employee and the organization (Rousseau, 2005). As supervisors typically act as representatives of the organization in the negotiation of i-deals, this points to the important role of line managers in shaping employee motivation. Bal et al. also concluded

that the relationship between development i-deals and the motivation to work beyond retirement is strengthened by a supportive climate where the development and the use of knowledge and experience are encouraged. A line managers' leadership behavior is important in shaping a supportive climate (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). As such, this highlights the importance of line managers' people management activities in supporting employee motivation.

The Utrecht University School of Governance, the Netherlands, has developed another line of research studying the effects of line managers' activities on older workers. This addresses the question of how employee-self management and line manager career support impact on workers' employability. Data was collected from more than 11,000 employees who completed an online self-assessment survey 'De Loopbaanspiegel' (The Career Mirror).

The results revealed that both employee self-management and line manager career support, in fact, do impact on the perceived levels of workers' employability. Although the dependent variable in this study is employability, one may assume that this will result subsequently in higher productivity as workers who are more employable are more able to perform in their job (compare Villanueva, 2005).

The analysis of the overall dataset included workers from all ages. It showed that employee self-management ($r=330, p<.01$) is more strongly related to employability than line manager support ($r=.260, p<.01$). When focused on employees in particular age groups the study revealed some differentiated results. The employability of workers aged 35 or younger is more strongly related to line manager support ($r=.326, p<.01$) compared with employee self-management ($r=.287, p<.01$), whereas the employability of older workers (55+) is more strongly related to employee self-management ($r=.348, p<.01$) compared with line manager support ($r=.219, p<.01$). These results show that line manager support matters, but to a somewhat lesser extent for older rather than for younger workers. This might be explained by the fact that the preferred type of support changes with age (see Kooij et al., 2011), i.e. when people age, maintenance practices become more important than development practices.

Another relevant conclusion that can be drawn from this study is that older workers perceive less support from their supervisors than their younger colleagues. This might be explained by considering the role of stereotypes that influence line managers' behavior.

5.4 Factors Influencing Line Managers' Actions Towards Older Workers

The above confirms the crucial role line managers play in motivating older workers. Yet, the stereotypical attitudes of line managers about older workers might introduce negative influences. This is indicated by many studies, both older (e.g. Boerlijst et al., 1993; Chiu et al., 2001; Maurer et al., 2003; Visser et al., 2003) and more recent (Karpinska, 2013; Karpinska, Henkens, & Schippers, 2013; Leisink & Knies,

2011). We will review now what is known about these features and will describe also those factors that influence line managers' actions towards older workers.

Early studies of support for older workers were mainly interested in managerial attitudes and age-related stereotypes. For instance, Boerlijst et al. (1993) found that most managers prefer to have a majority of younger workers in their unit and that they legitimize this through negative stereotypes of older workers who are seen as lacking flexibility, creativity, ambition and performance. Other studies (Chiu et al., 2001; Maurer et al., 2003; Visser et al., 2003) confirmed the existence of these dispositions, but they have reported also that older workers are valued for their trustworthiness, commitment and interpersonal skills. The negative stereotypes about older workers were seen as a cause of discriminatory decisions in the implementation of HR policies, such as participation in training and promotion (Boerlijst et al., 1993; Maurer et al., 2003). Visser et al. (2003) showed that employers who subscribe to negative stereotypes are less supportive of retention policies.

More recent studies of managerial actions related to age stereotyping differ from previous research. Karpinska (2013) and Karpinska et al. (2013) show that stereotypical attitudes did not have a major influence on managers' actions with regard to retaining older workers eligible for early retirement and offering training opportunities for older workers. Karpinska et al. showed that managers' perceptions of what they call 'hard skills' (mental and physical capacity, willingness to learn new skills and adapt to new technologies and flexibility) did not affect significantly retaining people, while their perception of 'soft skills' (organizational citizenship behavior) had a slight positive effect. Overall, general stereotypical attitudes of managers were not found to influence their specific retention decisions when more information is available on workers' individual attributes (degree of employability, health, specialist knowledge) and labor force shortages that are faced by their organization.

In another study, Karpinska (2013) included the influence of age norms on managers' propensity to offer training opportunities to older workers. Age norms refer to customary rules of behavior that coordinate human interaction and affect decisions; in this case about what is the appropriate time to retire. Karpinska hypothesized that, the higher the norms held by managers regarding the labor market participation of older workers, the more likely they are to offer training opportunities to older workers. However, managers' age norms about the appropriate time to retire had no significant effect on offering training opportunities. Again, as in the case of retention, older workers who perform well and have a positive work attitude are provided with more training opportunities, while workers who do not perform well are much more likely to be excluded from training.

While earlier studies focused strongly on the influence of stereotypical attitudes on line managers' support for older workers, recent studies, such as Karpinska's, also consider other factors, such as the labor market situation of the firm. Leisink and Knies (2011) also included other factors, which align with the AMO model (Abilities, Motivation, Opportunities) used in HRM-performance research. This means that the performance of line managers in their support for older workers is seen as a function of their abilities to support older workers, their

motivation (stereotypical attitudes and willingness to support older workers), and the opportunities they perceive they have, including their discretionary room and support from HR specialists and other managers. Their study showed no significant relationship between line managers' who subscribed to negative stereotypes and their support for older workers. They did show that this support is dependent on their abilities and mediated by their willingness to support older workers. In turn, their willingness is, to an extent, dependent on the opportunities for action they have.

These more recent studies suggest that stereotypical attitudes have far less influence on managers' actions towards older workers than earlier studies indicated. This may be because attitudes in society about older workers have changed over the past decade. This is illustrated by the good practices of age management promoted by the European Union aiming at 'active ageing' by promoting workers' employability over their working life (Dublin Foundation, 2008). The studies also may have become more comprehensive by not concentrating on stereotypical attitudes only and by including other factors as well.

The findings indicate that organizations wanting to support older workers' labor participation need to provide line managers with sufficient opportunities for action and support from the HR department to implement HR policies generally, as well as those tailored to the individual situations and needs of older workers. Leisink and Knies (2011, p. 1911) found that line managers are aware of this area of potential improvement. A study of Norwegian public sector managers Furunes et al. (2011) also concluded this fact and showed that line managers' knowledge and attitudes affected their perception of the latitude they have for decisions on activities aimed at retaining older workers. Managers' opportunities for action, and their abilities and motivation to support older workers, influence each other in both ways. While Leisink and Knies (2011) showed that managers' opportunities for action influence their willingness to support older workers, Furunes et al. (2011) demonstrated that managers' knowledge of, and attitudes to, managing the daily work in ways that allowed every employee, regardless of age, to achieve individual and organizational targets, in itself encouraged managers to perceive their own greater decision-making latitude to undertake activities towards this goal.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter set out to answer the question: to what extent and how do line managers support older workers at work and how their support influences the motivation and productivity of older workers? In general, line manager's role in people management is twofold. On the one hand, they have a responsibility for the implementation of supportive HR practices and tailor-made work arrangements. On the other hand, their leadership behavior is important in shaping employees' attitudes and behavior. In the case of older workers, HR policies and practices aimed at development are of particular importance, as these seek to remedy skill deficiencies and to broaden

workers' employability. Other bundles of practices that are important for older workers' well-being and performance are aimed at maintenance and job enrichment. The implementation of these HR practices by line managers has a positive effect on an array of different outcomes, such as employee well-being, productivity, the motivation to remain with an organization, and the motivation to work beyond retirement. Moreover, line manager career support is positively related to workers' employability, although this is more the case for younger rather than for older workers. The support that line managers provide to older workers is dependent on line managers' abilities and willingness to support older workers, while willingness is enhanced by the opportunities available for action. Stereotypical attitudes no longer appear to exert any major influence on line managers' behavior.

We identify three areas for further research. First, the role of line managers in managing older workers needs further attention. We should not limit our research to just the existence of maintenance and development practices, but focus more on how line managers enact these practices. Extra attention is needed regarding line managers' leadership behavior towards older workers and how this differs from the behavior when they deal with younger workers. Second, the dependent variable analysis needs to go beyond the motivation to remain with an organization or the motivation to work beyond retirement. We advise the use of other outcomes as well, such as workers' employability and their productivity in their job. Third, it appears that the line managers' stereotypes regarding older workers have been overemphasized in past research and the effects attributed have been inconsistent. Therefore, we urge approaches that go beyond simple characterizations into research that embraces a broader array of contextual factors that are known to influence line managers' behavior toward their older workers. Examples of this include: the time available for people management activities, the support for supervisors, and the recognition of the role of line managers with regard to people management in general.

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