

# 48 years old

when people feel their  
careers start to stagnant.



why career planning and upskilling  
is important for business sustainability.

# diversity and inclusion drives growth.



- 57% of respondents feel that they have fewer training opportunities as they get older.
- 31% of young respondents aged 18 to 34 choosing to avoid any interaction with mature workers aged 55 or older
- Workplace equality is integral not only in ensuring a diverse talent pipeline for employers, but also a sustainable career for Singaporeans

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The mean age that 1,052 locally-based respondents think that they will reach career stagnation in Singapore is 48 years old. This is 17 years before Singapore's 2030 retirement age at 65 years old, highlighting the lack of skills and growth opportunities as employees get older. Respondents aged 18 to 34 believe that their careers will come to a standstill at 41 years old on average.

Commissioned by Randstad Singapore, the "Ageism in the Workplace" survey aims to understand the prevalence of age discrimination in the workplace. The survey also shares insights on how age discrimination impacts career and growth opportunities on the different working generations in Singapore.

## fewer training and development opportunities as workers age

57% feel that they are offered fewer training opportunities by their employers as they age. Almost 2 in 3 respondents aged 55 and above (64%) share this sentiment.

Ms Jaya Dass, Managing Director of Singapore and Malaysia at Randstad said, "The survey results highlight that workers have a lack of visibility on their own career progression. When employees feel that they have peaked in their career, they will start to lose motivation. This lack of drive and passion could have a negative impact on their work productivity. Therefore, it is critical that companies provide equal and adequate opportunities for all their staff to continuously upskill themselves. Employers need to understand their staff's career aspirations and skills gaps, regardless of where they are at in their careers, and provide guidance on how they can further build and deepen their capabilities."

## 3 in 10 young workers avoid communicating with mature professionals in the workplace

Despite multiple initiatives to integrate workers from different generations in the workplace, ageism is unfortunately still visibly evident in Singapore. It is also especially pronounced against members of the older generations.

41% young respondents aged between 18 and 34 find it a challenge to communicate with Baby Boomers (born between 1946 and 1964). Results further showed that 31% of young respondents would even avoid interacting with Baby Boomers.

"The prominence of the phrase 'OK Boomer' not only highlights the widening generational gaps, but also displays the reluctance to understand different viewpoints of others. When members of different generations choose to actively avoid interacting with each other, it inherently creates a poor and uncooperative work environment. To mitigate the effects of ageism, employers need to enforce non-discriminatory HR policies and intervene as soon as they are made aware of any potential cases of workplace discrimination. Companies should also create teams that consist of employees from different generations to encourage learning through the sharing of contrasting viewpoints and perspectives."

Ageism prevails even outside of professional work, and it does not only impact mature workers. Only 29% of mature workers aged 55 and above would consider inviting a colleague below the age of 23 to a social gathering.



# diversity and inclusion drives growth.



## younger workers experience ageism too

The survey also reveals that ageism in the workplace affects younger employees. 28% of respondents aged 18 to 34 feel or were told that they had been denied a leadership position because they were too young.

“In Asian societies, it is not uncommon for young professionals to be passed over for managerial positions due to their age rather than inadequacies in their skills or leadership abilities. Young employees are not only self-driven but also digitally-adept to take on new challenges, as they constantly push the boundaries of innovation. We are also starting to see a positive change in attitude towards younger workers, attributed largely to start-ups and SMEs which tend to have younger leaders.”

“While this type of talent structure may not be for every company, we encourage employers to take a more holistic approach towards managing their talent pipeline. Instead of judging an employee’s abilities based on how long they have worked, employers should be focussing more on skills and competencies such as learning potential and leadership qualities. Employees who are motivated to succeed are usually those who are equipped with skills that are critical to driving business growth and success.”

## about the ageism in the workplace survey

- Online survey independently conducted by YouGov Singapore PTE
- 1,052 locally-based respondents
- Fieldwork was conducted between December 5 and December 6, 2019
- These figures have been weighted and are representative of all Singaporean adults (aged 18+)
- Young respondents are defined as those between 18 and 34 years old
- Mature respondents are defined as those aged 55 and above

If you want to find out more about the survey, please contact [communications@randstad.com.sg](mailto:communications@randstad.com.sg).



# age discrimination

## in the workplace.



Which, if any, of the following age groups do you face difficulty communicating with? Please select all that apply. [%]

	22 years old or younger	23 to 38 years old	39 to 54 years old	55 years old or older	none of them
<b>all</b>	16	7	6	24	59
<b>men</b>	17	8	7	24	56
<b>women</b>	16	6	6	24	62
<b>18 - 34</b>	18	10	14	41	41
<b>35 - 54</b>	16	5	5	23	62
<b>55+</b>	15	7	2	10	71

Which, if any, of the following age groups do you avoid communicating with? Please select all that apply. [%]

	22 years old or younger	23 to 38 years old	39 to 54 years old	55 years old or older	none of them
<b>all</b>	11	5	6	17	70
<b>men</b>	10	5	7	17	69
<b>women</b>	11	4	5	18	72
<b>18 - 34</b>	13	6	12	31	56
<b>35 - 54</b>	8	4	6	13	75
<b>55+</b>	11	3	2	10	77

Which, if any, of the following age groups do you avoid communicating with because you have difficulty doing so? Please select all that apply. [%]

	22 years old or younger	23 to 38 years old	39 to 54 years old	55 years old or older	none of them
<b>all</b>	8	3	4	14	77
<b>men</b>	8	4	4	14	76
<b>women</b>	8	3	3	14	78
<b>18 - 34</b>	10	4	7	26	65
<b>35 - 54</b>	7	3	3	12	80
<b>55+</b>	8	3	1	6	84

# age discrimination in the workplace.



Imagine you are employed at a workplace... There is a social gathering organised by your workplace. If you had the choice to invite your colleagues, which age group of colleagues would you invite? Please select all that apply. [%]

	22 years old or younger	23 to 38 years old	39 to 54 years old	55 years old or older
<b>all</b>	30	64	69	42
<b>men</b>	30	60	70	40
<b>women</b>	30	68	68	43
<b>18 - 34</b>	29	87	45	22
<b>35 - 54</b>	32	60	81	37
<b>55+</b>	28	49	76	65

Imagine you are employed at a workplace... You are organising an informal social gathering for your workplace. If you had the choice to invite your colleagues, which age group of colleagues would you invite? Please select all that apply. [%]

	22 years old or younger	23 to 38 years old	39 to 54 years old	55 years old or older
<b>all</b>	31	64	67	40
<b>men</b>	32	63	68	39
<b>women</b>	29	66	66	41
<b>18 - 34</b>	30	87	40	19
<b>35 - 54</b>	33	60	77	36
<b>55+</b>	29	49	79	64

# age discrimination

## in the workplace.



At what age do you think you will experience a stagnation in your current / future career, if at all? By stagnation in your career we mean feeling like there is no growth or achievement in your career. [%]

	30 years old and below	31 to 40 years old	41 to 50 years old	51 to 60 years old	61 years old and older	N.A - I do not have nor intend to have a career	Mean age
<b>all</b>	8	18	23	14	10	26	48
<b>men</b>	8	16	24	16	11	25	50
<b>women</b>	9	21	21	11	9	28	47
<b>18 - 34</b>	21	27	23	7	4	18	41
<b>35 - 54</b>	4	23	29	14	9	22	48
<b>55+</b>	2	6	16	20	17	39	55

Which, if any, of the following has ever happened to you at work? Please select all that apply. [%]

	Felt / were told you did not get a leadership position because you were too young	Felt / were told you did not get a leadership position because you were too old	Felt / told you were excluded from a social gathering because you were too young	Felt / told you were excluded from a social gathering because you were too old	Felt singled out because you were too young	Felt singled out because you were too old	None of these
<b>all</b>	15	11	9	12	12	17	55
<b>men</b>	16	12	12	16	12	18	50
<b>women</b>	14	10	7	9	11	16	59
<b>18 - 34</b>	28	5	18	8	23	3	47
<b>35 - 54</b>	16	12	8	15	10	19	56
<b>55+</b>	4	16	2	14	3	26	61

# age discrimination in the workplace.



I feel I have fewer opportunities for training or to progress at work as I get older. [%]

	agree (strongly agree + slightly agree)	disagree (strongly disagree + slightly disagree)	not applicable
<b>all</b>	57	40	3
<b>men</b>	58	40	2
<b>women</b>	57	40	3
<b>18 - 34</b>	47	47	6
<b>35 - 54</b>	60	40	-
<b>55+</b>	64	34	2

My workplace values all employees regardless of age. [%]

	agree (strongly agree + slightly agree)	disagree (strongly disagree + slightly disagree)	not applicable
<b>all</b>	63	34	3
<b>men</b>	63	35	2
<b>women</b>	64	33	3
<b>18 - 34</b>	66	28	6
<b>35 - 54</b>	64	36	-
<b>55+</b>	60	37	3

I feel I have been managed unfairly compared to other colleagues due to age. [%]

	agree (strongly agree + slightly agree)	disagree (strongly disagree + slightly disagree)	not applicable
<b>all</b>	41	56	3
<b>men</b>	43	54	3
<b>women</b>	39	58	3
<b>18 - 34</b>	34	61	5
<b>35 - 54</b>	42	57	-
<b>55+</b>	47	50	3