

Older workers (1949)

Replacement copy

EMPLOYMENT OF PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED AND OLDER WORKERS

Summary of a survey of company practices conducted jointly by the Chamber of Commerce of the United States and the National Association of Manufacturers among member companies.



DEPARTMENT OF MANUFACTURE
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF THE UNITED STATES
WASHINGTON 6, D. C. 1949

INSTITUTE OF
INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

RECEIVED
SEP 25 1952

SEP 25 1952

CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Foreword	2
Company Practices in the Employment of Physically Handicapped and Older Workers	5
Companies Following a Practice of Employing Physically Handicapped and Older Workers	6
Selection Based on Ability	6
Job Performance Satisfactory	8
Hiring Policies Based on Sound Business Practices	9
Companies Not Regularly Hiring Handicapped or Older Workers.	10
Extent of Difficulties Experienced with Handicapped and Older Workers on the Job	12
Meeting Job Requirements	12
Effect on Workmen's Compensation Costs	13
Extent of Conflict with Pension Plans	14
Extent of Conflict with Other Benefit Plans	16
Collective Bargaining Agreements	16
General Conclusions	18
Tabulated Summary of Results of Survey	23
Cover Letter and Question Sheet Used in Survey	25

FOREWORD

The competence of physically handicapped and older workers, when given proper job placement, is becoming more recognized by employers throughout the nation. The experience of many companies with these workers has demonstrated that their job performance compares favorably with the average worker. Handicapped and older workers can and are making important contributions to our nation's productive effort.

Currently, the Chamber of Commerce of the United States and the National Association of Manufacturers, under a joint program, are urging employers to expand the job opportunities for these workers. The Chamber and NAM have also cooperated with other organizations, public and private, which have been working through the President's Committee on National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week to encourage the employment of the physically impaired worker.

The National Chamber is indeed pleased to work on this program in close cooperation with the nation's leaders in business, industry and labor; with executives of civic, service and fraternal organizations; with veterans' and women's groups; and religious, medical, farm and other associations of public-spirited American men and women.

Our goal, and that of the members of the President's Committee, is equality of opportunity for the handicapped and older worker and recognition that ability rather than age or disability should be the sole job test.

Many employers are doing a very fine job in providing these workers with self-sustaining employment. Yet, much remains to be done since we still have a sizable reservoir of employable manpower among these workers which is not being fully utilized.

Basically, business and industry must carry the primary responsibility as the final solution of this problem rests with employers who provide the jobs.

A spot survey has been made by the Chamber and NAM among member companies to determine what is being done in the employment of handicapped and older workers. This pamphlet summarizes the findings of the survey, and reflects the practices of a wide variety of companies, including manufacturing, distribution, finance, insurance, utilities and transportation.

The employer is urged to read this summary with the thought of exploring possibilities within his own company for the employment of these workers, who, though physically impaired or in the older age groups, have demonstrated that they are competent and valuable employees.

HERMAN W. STEINKRAUS, President

THE PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL EMPLOY THE
PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED WEEK

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington 25, D. C.

August 23, 1949

Mr. Herman W. Steinkraus, President,
Chamber of Commerce of the U. S.,
1615 H Street, N. W.,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Steinkraus:

I am indeed pleased to learn of the very favorable reports you have received from many members of the Chamber in connection with your recent survey on attitudes toward employment of the physically handicapped and older workers in business and industry.

Those of us who have worked with this human and economic problem for some time feel that the National Chamber has made a distinct contribution in the survey and also in your Statement of Policy adopted this year at your annual meeting.

The Chamber of Commerce has been one of the most active and most cooperative members on The President's Committee and we are looking forward to continued help and understanding from your organization's membership resulting from the excellent leadership your office is giving to this program.

Sincerely,

(signed) Ross T. McIntire
Chairman

COMPANY PRACTICES IN THE EMPLOYMENT OF
PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED AND OLDER WORKERS

Employers in general recognize that physically handicapped and older workers make good employees. This was shown in a recent survey conducted by the National Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers among large and small companies of many different types and representing almost every state.

In order to determine whether companies are hiring these workers, each organization asked 300 of its member companies to indicate what they were doing in this respect. Of these 600 companies, reports were received from 279. The questionnaire and cover letter used are shown on pages 25-27.

These questions were asked:

- I. Does your company follow a practice of hiring physically handicapped and/or older workers (over 45 years of age)?
- II. Have you experienced difficulties on the job with physically handicapped or older workers?
- III. What examples of outstanding performance by physically handicapped or older workers have you had?

A considerable proportion of the companies surveyed follow a practice of hiring and retaining on the job, physically handicapped and older workers. Of the 279 companies reporting, 159 said they hire workers in both categories while another 65 stated they hire either one or the other of the two groups. Although 55 companies declared they did not generally follow a practice of hiring handicapped or older workers, a sizable number in this group revealed they had no established policy but upon occasion did hire both types of workers.

	<u>No. of Companies</u>
Companies hiring both handicapped and older workers	159
Companies hiring only older workers	35
Companies hiring only handicapped workers	30
Companies not generally following a practice of hiring either handicapped or older workers	55
	<hr/>
Total companies reporting	279

NOTE: While no attempt was made to develop a scientific sampling in the selection of companies, a deliberate choice was made by geographical location and size so that small, medium and large companies from all over the country were represented. The return of 279 out of 600 companies surveyed, or approximately 46%, is several times the percentage considered essential in arriving at an adequate sample.

COMPANIES FOLLOWING A PRACTICE OF EMPLOYING
PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED AND OLDER WORKERS

Most of the companies which have an established policy of regularly hiring handicapped and older workers report favorably on the job performance of these workers. The majority of these companies state that such workers on the average are as competent in their assigned jobs and oftentimes even superior to younger and more able-bodied employees.

Selection Based on Ability

The usual test applied by most of these companies in selecting employees to fill vacancies is not based on age or physical factors, but rather on the ability of the applicant to do the job under consideration.

One company (communications) sums up a fairly typical viewpoint of employers in this group:

"In hiring people for jobs in the _____ Company, consideration is given primarily to their qualifications for the various types of work that must be performed. Age, taken by itself, is not a controlling requirement.

"Furthermore, substantial numbers of people are employed with some degree of physical disability, the primary consideration in these cases being their ability to perform effectively the duties connected with the available jobs without hazard to themselves or to their fellow-workers.

"The employment of physically impaired and older workers is, of course, of great importance to the individuals themselves and our experience has demonstrated that the contributions of these workers compare favorably with the contributions made by any other groups in the business."

It is the practice of a considerable number of companies to classify the jobs according to physical requirements in order to determine which jobs can be filled by applicants with varying degrees of physical impairment. For example, an electric utility company reports:

"We have made a study of the various occupations that could be filled by handicapped people. This has enabled us to absorb our returned disabled veterans, employees disabled by industrial accidents and some applicants. Our experience with handicapped employees has been quite satisfactory."

Similarly, a retail organization states:

"As a practical policy, it is our sincere attempt to compare the capabilities of each employee with the requirements of the job for which he is being considered. If his handicap has no bearing on the job requirements, then it is of no particular consequence in his employment."

The survey also revealed that business and industry, on the whole, recognize the productive effort being contributed by older workers. Age is not the primary qualifying factor used by most employers in the selection of new employees. An airlines company expressed this viewpoint:

"We are following the practice of hiring physically handicapped workers for any job for which they can qualify, and the same is true with reference to age limitations.

"Until some time in the recent past we did have maximum age limits for some jobs, but we have, with very rare exception, been able to eliminate age limits as we do not feel that, except on specialized jobs, we should adhere to some specific maximum age limit. We feel that many people at one age would be suitable for a job whereas others of the same age, or even younger, would not be suitable."

Job Performance Satisfactory

General satisfaction was expressed by employers with respect to the job performance of both handicapped and older workers. Many companies commented favorably on the stability and experience of these employees, as well as their conscientious application to the job at hand. For example, an insurance company states:

"Our experience with the 'handicapped' has been excellent as regards to job responsibility and the amount and quality of the work performed."

In regard to older workers, an electric utility company makes a similar observation:

"Our most valuable employees are within the age group of 45 years and over. This group is the most experienced, best trained and most stable."

Several instances were also cited by employers where both handicapped and older workers were better equipped to do certain jobs than were the able-bodied and younger workers. A department store reports:

"During the war we had a very high turnover rate on the monotonous job of operating a sortograph. We hired three different deaf mutes (female) and had a teacher from the deaf school come in and teach them. Their work has been so satisfactory that we have continued their employment."

The value of experience and training in certain highly skilled crafts places a premium on the older workers, as indicated by the following comment from a machine tool company:

"Our products must have a high degree of accuracy and our older employees are the ones we depend upon for this."

Hiring Policies Based on Sound Business Practices

Most of the employers in this group advised that their practice of hiring handicapped and older workers was based on sound economic considerations. The best man for the job is selected whether handicapped, in the upper age group or otherwise. Several expressed the opinion that, for economic reasons, all employers should explore the possibility of providing job opportunities which would permit these workers to become productive members of society. To illustrate, an electric power company observes:

"Industry should make use of the contributions that can be made by disabled workers to the country's productive effort. It seems most important that every available source be utilized to enable our economy to stand the strain of more and more social security and retirement benefits."

In a desire to utilize more fully the abilities of these workers, some employers have established company rehabilitation programs. An insurance company relates its efforts in this direction:

"Our company has for over twenty years maintained a very completely equipped physiotherapy department where a rehabilitation program has been carried on for industrial workers, with what we consider tremendous success."

"We have also taken an active participation nationally in this question of employment of the physically handicapped."

COMPANIES NOT REGULARLY HIRING HANDICAPPED OR OLDER WORKERS

No company responding to the survey stated that it did not employ any physically handicapped or older workers. That many of the 55 companies without an established policy do upon occasion hire both types of workers is illustrated by the following comment of an electric power company:

"The _____ Company does not have a fixed policy or practice for employing physically handicapped and older workers, but we do give careful consideration to individual cases in an effort to be of help to such persons by considering them for work in our organization which they may be qualified to perform."

Likewise, a trust company states:

"Our Company has no stated policy with respect to the employment of handicapped and older workers. That is, the Company has made no special effort to acquire such personnel for its staff, and, on the other hand, applicants are not rejected because of age or physical handicap. The Company's test is simply the qualification of the applicant for the job."

Limited recruiting of these employees by those companies which do not follow the practice of hiring handicapped and older workers arises out of circumstances peculiar to their company operations. Among the major reasons is inability to meet job requirements, such as in the transportation field. Here a considerable proportion of the jobs involve hazardous and strenuous work, requiring the services of younger, able-bodied workers as a protection to the employees themselves as well as to the public. Because of injuries on the job or by reason of age, those employees no longer able to continue working on these jobs, were provided with more suitable employment elsewhere within the company.

A number of companies also reported their inability to hire many older workers because of the policy of hiring workers mainly in the younger age groups and promoting these employees from within the company on a career basis. Of the 43 companies in the non-manufacturing group reporting inability to recruit older workers extensively, there were 16 which stated they had a policy of encouraging promotion to senior job openings from within the ranks. This practice has limited somewhat the recruitment of older workers except for specialized types of work. Most vacancies occur at the junior low-pay level usually filled by vigorous young workers. An investment company illustrates this situation:

"Our policy of filling jobs by promotion limits our hiring of new employees to beginning jobs and we have very few beginning jobs for which older workers are qualified. Our experience has been satisfactory in regard to the few we have hired. We make no distinction against the physically handicapped workers in considering them as applicants. The nature of the handicap has to be considered in relation to the job requirements."

A bank also reports the practice of filling senior jobs through in-company promotion of its younger career employees:

"For many years it has been our policy to hire high school graduates, both boys and girls, with the ultimate aim of their providing means for us to have a continuous supply of people to carry on an active promotional program. As a natural result we at all times have a sufficient number of middle-aged people to man the more senior jobs and our employment needs are thereby restricted to the very junior jobs which require the vitality of younger folks."

These and other factors in a number of companies place some limitation on job opportunities for handicapped and older workers.

EXTENT OF DIFFICULTIES EXPERIENCED WITH HANDICAPPED
AND OLDER WORKERS ON THE JOB

Each company in the survey was asked to comment on the question "Have you experienced difficulties on the job with physically handicapped or older workers?" This inquiry was directed particularly toward such problems as inability to meet job requirements, effect on workmen's compensation costs, conflict with pension and other employee benefit plans, and collective bargaining agreements.

Meeting Job Requirements

Most of the companies reported no difficulties with these workers with respect to their ability to meet job requirements. Inability to meet job requirements was cited as the major reason, however, by those companies which indicated a reluctance to hire handicapped or older workers. As stated above, a number of companies pointed out that a high proportion of their jobs were of a hazardous or strenuous nature, requiring the services of young, able-bodied workers. A railroad company explains:

"Due to the nature of railroad employment, it is not generally practicable to employ disabled workers. Furthermore, as we have a number of employees who become disabled while employed with us, we endeavor to take care of these physically disabled men in whatever employment we may have that is suitable for their particular disability. This also would prevent us from engaging very materially in the employment of physically handicapped workers."

As in the case of an ocean shipping line, physical requirements are regulated by law:

"We are in full sympathy with the ideas behind your survey but the crews on our ships must necessarily be in A-1 condition physically both by governmental law and our own desires."

A coal mining company also stresses the need for able-bodied workers:

"In such a hazardous business as ours—coal mining—we endeavor to employ only younger men with no physical handicaps."

By and large, however, most companies expressed satisfaction with the ability of these workers to meet job requirements. An insurance company points out:

"Attendance and performance of work assigned is more satisfactory than that of average non-handicapped or younger employees."

The importance of careful selection is emphasized by another insurance company:

"Would say that those who have physical impairments are well above the average in performance in our company. This is partially due to our selection policy and to the fact that our operations are primarily clerical in nature."

With respect to the job performance of its older employees, a department store reports:

"Our finest and most productive salespeople are our oldest, however, most of them became old in the service of this Company."

Effect on Workmen's Compensation Costs

Less than one out of ten companies surveyed stated that the employment of handicapped and older workers would adversely affect their workmen's compensation costs. This would seem to indicate that there is little foundation for the objection sometimes heard that such costs of a company would be seriously affected by the employment of these workers.

An exception is noted by a mining company:

"We have in the past made it a practice to employ physically handicapped men, for instance, men who have suffered the loss of an eye, a hand, an arm, etc. The _____ State Legislature is now in session, and a labor sponsored bill provides for repeal of a section of the Workmen's Compensation Act which has protected us in hiring such handicapped people by providing that the loss of a second member of the body would only be paid for as such, and would not entail pay for total disability. In view of the possibility of such a law being enacted, we have discontinued hiring physically handicapped men."

NOTE: The following are excerpts from a statement by the Association of Casualty and Surety Companies, 60 John Street, New York 7, N. Y.:

"Let this be understood—there is no provision in workmen's compensation insurance policies or rates that penalizes an employer for hiring handicapped workers.

"There appears to be much misinformation on this point... Therefore to erase any misunderstanding, these are the facts. Workmen's compensation rates are determined by two factors. These are the relative hazards in a company's work and its accident experience. The formulae for determining the premium rates make no consideration of the kind of personnel hired. Whether a company is staffed with workers having two legs apiece or one or none—influences the rates not at all. The insurance contract, therefore, says nothing implied or direct about the physical condition of the workers an insured may hire."

Extent of Conflict with Pension Plans

The employment of physically handicapped and older workers does not cause any conflict with pension plans in the majority of responding companies. A number of companies did report, however, that it was necessary to maintain upper age limits on new employees hired so that all employees would be able to

participate in the pension plan long enough to permit retirement at a full pension.

This viewpoint is expressed by an insurance company:

"We have a non-contributory pension plan based on years of service. Our past experience has been that workers who cannot accumulate credits for an adequate pension still feel at retirement that the Company has a responsibility for their well-being. Since the Company has always felt and taken this responsibility, special arrangements had to be made outside our formal pension plan. This has created inequities in relation to our employees of long service and undue expense to the Company."

A wholesale fruit organization presents a similar situation:

"Our retirement plan is applicable to all women at age 60 and all men at age 65. Participation in the plan is based on units attained from salary and service. Units are not issued after age 55 in the case of women and 60 for men, so opportunity to build up adequate units is limited, resulting in retirement at inadequate amounts of income."

On the other hand, most companies reported that hiring these workers causes no conflict with company pension plans. The following observation by a public service utility is typical of this group:

"We do not let old age interfere with our pension plan. So long as anyone is able to continue to work, we permit him to do so. In some instances, however, this brings criticism from younger people seeking employment."

It is the practice of some companies, also, to hire older workers on a temporary basis outside the regular pension plan, as reported by the following insurance company:

"Insofar as older workers are concerned, we have no general policy against the employment of such workers. If the potential employee is of such an age that he will not be insurable under our pension plan, he is hired on a temporary basis. We have a number of fine older employees who have been hired since 1940"

Extent of Conflict with Other Benefit Plans

Although it was noted above that there was no serious conflict with pension plans in the hiring of handicapped and older workers, there was even less conflict reported with respect to other benefit plans, particularly as concerns the older workers. Several companies mentioned, however, the practice of carefully screening certain types of handicapped workers to avoid undue burden on company benefit plans as well as to protect other employees in the work force. The comments by an insurance company illustrate this point:

"We presently have a number of handicapped workers in our employ and have no hesitancy in hiring others when we feel that the handicap will not prevent them from performing the duties of the particular position under consideration.

"However, we maintain certain standards insofar as the general health of new employees is concerned. We do not employ those whose health is such that they may affect other employees or become a financial burden to the company. In other words, we do not employ those with social or other communicable diseases. Nor do we employ those with serious cardiac conditions, osteomyelitis or other similar ailments which give promise of eventually involving workmen's compensation, company disability payments and payments under the total permanent disability provisions of our group life and pension programs."

Similarly, a petroleum company observes:

"Occasionally we do hire physically handicapped persons for selected jobs, provided they are in good health. For example, we would employ a person with a leg missing for a clerical job. On the other hand, because of the liberal provisions of our benefit plans, we do not feel it advisable to hire persons in poor health. Also, from time to time we employ older workers, usually because they possess unusual skills or experience. But again, we do not make such employment the general practice because we think it would interfere with satisfactory administration of the benefit plans."

Collective Bargaining Agreements

No serious deterrent to the hiring of employees in the older or handicapped group is presented by collective bargaining agreements according to the companies surveyed. As would be expected, this is especially evident in the non-

manufacturing field where only five out of 131 companies reported any problem in this respect. An electric utility company illustrates the type of difficulty mentioned by a few companies in relation to collective bargaining agreements:

"On occasion we have employed persons in these two categories (handicapped and older workers) so long as their physical qualifications meet the requirements and working conditions of the jobs wherein vacancies exist. Due to the existence of collective bargaining agreements, we are naturally quite restricted in the selection and placement of such persons, as our direct employment needs are largely limited to beginning grade jobs."

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

I. Recognition of Responsibility by Employers

The survey indicates an alertness of most employers to the competence of handicapped and older workers when carefully placed, coupled with a desire to utilize the abilities of these workers. Employers, on the whole, recognize their responsibility to do everything in their power to remove any barriers which may prevent qualified people from obtaining and holding self-sustaining employment. This viewpoint is typified by the following comment by an insurance company:

"I believe we are fully alert to the contributions which physically handicapped and older workers can make to the productive effort of our Company and the nation and we are endeavoring to translate this belief into action whenever the opportunity arises."

II. Handicapped and Older Workers are Valuable Employees

Employers express general agreement that the handicapped and older employees constitute valuable members of their work force, notably in the following important respects:

1. Less Absenteeism. Employers emphasized the lower absenteeism rates of both the physically handicapped and older workers. A railroad company offers this typical comment:

"In general we have less difficulties with the older workers as the restlessness that exists among the younger workers does not exist in the older group. We have a great deal less absenteeism amongst the older workers than we do with the younger group."

A department store similarly makes the following observation:

"We do find that physically handicapped and older workers are apt to be more regular in attendance."

2. Greater Reliability and Better Work Habits. Employers are appreciative of the demonstrated steadiness and reliability of the handicapped and older employees. A department store illustrates this general viewpoint by stating:

"We have found the physically handicapped to be loyal, steady, conscientious and valuable employees."

With respect to older workers, a savings bank similarly observes:

"We frequently find more stability and conscientious work in the employment of older employees than we have with the younger."

And a manufacturing company reports:

"Generally our handicapped and older workers are more loyal and have better work habits than younger, able-bodied men with less seniority."

3. Lower Personnel Turnover. The survey revealed that employers usually find that both physically handicapped and older workers are inclined to remain on the job longer than the average employees. The following statement by a railroad company is fairly typical:

"One outstanding thing we have noticed in employing physically handicapped or older workers is that these individuals are extremely appreciative of the opportunity given them. They have a greater desire to please and labor turnover among these workers is lower than among other workers."

4. Job Performance Good. Employers expressed satisfaction with the job performance of both older and handicapped workers, and in a number of cases cited these employees for their outstanding work. An office equipment company's comments represent this generally prevailing viewpoint:

"It has been our observation that the persons with physical handicaps are above average in performing their duties because of their handicaps, and their consequent great desire to justify their employment by fine performance."

A bank states with respect to older workers:

"On numerous occasions we have hired men over forty-five years of age, for as you know, very often individuals forty-five years old, or older, can bring valuable experience to the job. It has proven to be of advantage to both the bank and the individual."

III. Selection Methods Important

Proper selection and job placement methods are emphasized by employers as highly important if a company is to enjoy the greatest success with the employment of handicapped and older workers. The usual test is the ability to do the job, often based on job-matching techniques, rather than on arbitrary age or physical standards. As a chemical company states:

"Any successful program must have as its premise the fact that the job assignment must be made on a sound economic basis both from the standpoint of output to the company and the monetary return to the individual. Therefore, in the job to which he is assigned, the disabled person should be able to produce as much as able-bodied persons performing the same job after an adequate learning period. This means matching the requirements of the job and the physical abilities of the individual. When a handicapped person is able to perform the duties of a job, he is no longer handicapped so far as that job is concerned."

And a petroleum company reports:

"Concerning age, we have no fixed upper limit (other than automatic retirement at 65) but use physical requirements and fitness as principal criteria."

Those companies which had experienced the greatest success in the employment of both older and handicapped workers also indicated that these workers were fitted into existing jobs rather than in special jobs created for them.

IV. No General Employer Reluctance to Hire Handicapped and Older Workers

The majority of employers surveyed are not reluctant to hire handicapped and older workers, and in fact most of the companies follow a practice of employing such workers. Even those companies which did indicate some reluctance

in this respect commented favorably on the demonstrated ability of both the handicapped and older employees in their work force.

As indicated above, however, certain industries have a rather high proportion of hazardous and strenuous jobs, requiring the services of young able-bodied workers. These companies recognize their responsibility to provide employment for their own employees injured or grown old on these jobs, before recruiting new workers in these categories.

Older workers also have limited employment opportunities in certain companies which have a policy of hiring young workers and promoting them to senior-level jobs on a career basis. An electric power company illustrates this practice:

"The policy of this company is to employ on a career basis, usually starting employees in the early twenties. In justifiable cases individuals are employed regardless of age. Thirty-five percent of our regular employees are 45 years of age or over. Our most valuable employees are within the age group of 45 years or over."

And a food products manufacturing company observes:

"At present we have 6,500 in that group (over 45) which is approximately 22% of our entire personnel. Most of these people have long service records and we feel morally obligated to keep them on the active payroll to normal retirement age if possible. With such a large group this requires a considerable amount of adjustment in the way of job changes, etc. It is therefore, our intent to hire at age 45 or over only those persons who we can absorb in our organization without prejudicing the future of our own 'older workers.'"

These conclusions serve to point up the recent policy statement of the National Chamber, adopted May 4, 1949 at the Annual Chamber Meeting. This policy emphasizes the need for employers to utilize, to the fullest possible extent, the abilities of both the handicapped and older workers. The Chamber statement reads:

Employment of Handicapped and Older Workers

Many employers throughout the nation are giving increased recognition to the competence of physically impaired workers when properly selected and placed on suitable jobs. The experience of employers with these workers has demonstrated that their job performance records compare favorably with those of the able-bodied, with respect to productive efficiency, accident rates, and absenteeism.

Similarly, many employers are becoming increasingly alert to the important contributions which older workers are making and can make to our nation's productive effort.

There still remains, however, a sizable reservoir of employable manpower among the handicapped and older workers which is not being fully utilized.

All employers are urged, therefore, to lend their support to the fullest extent possible in providing satisfactory placement of handicapped and older workers in suitable, self-sustaining employment.

This compilation was prepared by R. D. Siverson,
Department of Manufacture, Chamber of Commerce
of the United States, Washington 6, D. C.

September, 1949

SUMMARY OF RESULTS
SURVEY OF COMPANY PRACTICES IN THE EMPLOYMENT
OF PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED AND OLDER WORKERS

(Conducted jointly by the Chamber of Commerce of the United
States and the National Association of Manufacturers)

		<u>HANDICAPPED</u>			<u>OLDER WORKERS</u>		
		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>No Ans.</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>No Ans.</u>
<u>Question - I</u>							
Does your company follow a practice of hiring physically handicapped and/or older workers (over 45 years of age)?	Mfg.	103	42	3	114	30	4
	Non-Mfg.	85	45	1	84	43(b)	4
		188	87 (a)	4	198	73	8
<u>Question - II</u>							
Have you experienced difficulties on the job with physically handicapped or older workers such as:							
1. Inability to meet job requirements	Mfg.	37	86	24	44	76	27
	Non-Mfg.	34	57	40	28	71	32
		71	143	64	72	147	59
2. High Workmen Compensation Costs	Mfg.	10	103	34	17	98	32
	Non-Mfg.	4	76	51	10	83	38
		14	179	85	27	181	70
3. Conflict with Pension Plan	Mfg.	3	89	45	17	79	44
	Non-Mfg.	11	76	44	27	73	31
		14	165	89	44	152	75
4. Conflict with other Employee Benefit Plans	Mfg.	5	103	36	15	97	32
	Non-Mfg.	9	75	47	15	77	39
		14	178	83	30	174	71
5. Collective Bargaining Agreements	Mfg.	10	89	42	10	94	37
	Non-Mfg.	5	75	51	5	81	45
		15	164	93	15	175	82

- (a) 21 companies said that the nature of their work prevents them from hiring the physically handicapped. (9 manufacturing and 12 non-manufacturing).
15 companies said they have no formal policy but have no objection to hiring handicapped persons when qualified. (8 manufacturing and 7 non-manufacturing).

(b) 11 companies said the nature of their work prevents them from hiring older workers. (2 manufacturing and 9 non-manufacturing).

13 companies said they have no formal policy but hire older workers when qualified. (5 manufacturing and 8 non-manufacturing).

19 companies said their policy calls for promotion from within the organization and that they hire older workers only when they cannot fill the vacancy from within the organization. (3 manufacturing and 16 non-manufacturing).

(Sample of Letter Used
in Making Survey)

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
of the
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
WASHINGTON 6, D. C.

Office of the Manager

February 4, 1949

(Name of Company)

We would like very much to have your views and experiences on an important phase of human relations, i.e. the employment of physically handicapped and older workers. The accompanying statement explains more fully our reasons for this inquiry.

We will greatly appreciate receiving from you the information asked for on the enclosed question sheet.

Cordially yours,

(signed) ARCH BOOTH
Manager

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF THE UNITED STATES

INFORMATION DESIRED ON COMPANY POLICIES FOR
EMPLOYMENT OF HANDICAPPED AND OLDER WORKERS

Employers are becoming increasingly alert to the important contributions which physically impaired and older workers are making and can make to our nation's productive effort. The experience of many companies demonstrates that these workers, when properly selected and placed on suitable jobs, compare favorably in job performance with the able-bodied, with respect to productive efficiency, accident rates and absenteeism.

Although business and industry is extending much support and effort in the employment of the handicapped and older workers, there still remains, however, a sizable reservoir of employable manpower in these areas which is not being fully utilized.

In recognition of this fact, the National Chamber and the National Association of Manufacturers have entered into a joint effort for the promotion of the employment of the physically handicapped and older workers in business and industry.

We now wish to find out how extensively employers have established definite policies relating to the employment of physically handicapped and older workers and also to learn of the experiences employers may have had with these workers. We shall appreciate receiving information from your company.

Enclosed are two copies of a question sheet which we hope you will complete and return one copy to us, retaining the other for your files. The compilation of the results of our inquiry will be sent to you in due course. In this compilation, the names of the companies will not be given, and the identity of your company will be held in confidence.

February 4, 1949

(Sample of Questionnaire Used
in Survey by both the National
Chamber and NAM)

ALL INFORMATION TO BE HELD CONFIDENTIAL

Please return to:

NAME:

Department of Manufacture
Chamber of Commerce of the USA
Washington 6, D. C.

TITLE:

COMPANY:

ADDRESS:

EMPLOYMENT POLICIES FOR PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED
AND OLDER WORKERS

- | | <u>Handicapped</u> | <u>Older Worker</u> |
|--|--------------------|---------------------|
| I. Does your company follow a practice of hiring physically handicapped and/or older workers (over 45 years of age)? | yes ___ no ___ | yes ___ no ___ |
| II. Have you experienced difficulties on the job with physically handicapped or older workers such as: | | |
| 1. Inability to meet job requirements | yes ___ no ___ | yes ___ no ___ |
| 2. High workmen compensation costs | yes ___ no ___ | yes ___ no ___ |
| 3. Conflict with pension plan | yes ___ no ___ | yes ___ no ___ |
| 4. Conflict with other employee benefit plans | yes ___ no ___ | yes ___ no ___ |
| 5. Collective bargaining agreements | yes ___ no ___ | yes ___ no ___ |
| 6. Other situations (explain) | yes ___ no ___ | yes ___ no ___ |
| III. What examples of outstanding performance by physically handicapped or older worker have you had: | | |

(Please describe):

(Use reverse side for additional comments)