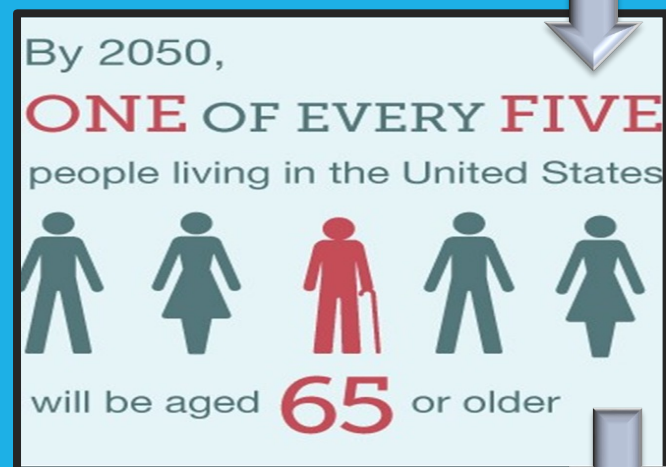


# Why Am I Still Here: The Experience of the Older Knowledge Worker

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**2MM workers retire each year as the U.S. is 5MM workers short...**



## The skilled "older worker" issue

- Skilled workers are retiring in historic numbers – **too many!**
- With more vitality and longer lives, an **"anchor" retirement age 65 is an outmoded norm**

## Learning from In-depth Interviews

- A **phenomenological study**, using 15 older knowledge workers' narratives of **experiences as an older worker**
- What influences them to stay or go?
- Fashioning an ideal work situation: would it make them stay?

## What more do we need to know?

- What does "older worker" mean?
- How can an employer engage skilled "older workers" to retain them?

## What is in "older worker" research?

- **"Age stratification"** creates outmoded age norms, conflicting with needs
- Older workers feel **socio-emotional pressures of "running out of time"**
- Few studies of organizational influence on older workers experiences

## Themes from the conversations

- Ideal situation: reduce hours, train others, give back, leverage expertise
- **Little interest in major role changes**
- Had moments when **expertise felt dismissed**, but feel **value grew with age** even if not recognized
- **Generally not approached by leaders** to fashion a role and work structure as encouragement to stay
- Agreement of **some "older workers" images as valid**
- Seems to be a **"solo" experience**

## Conclusions

- Older knowledge workers may be able to **"cut a deal"** and should ask
- Employers should use an incentive **"toolkit" to key in on individuality**
- Employers should **match roles to accumulated skills**, not new skills

