

TABLE 10-1 (CONTINUED)

CONSIDERATIONS FOR OLDER WORKERS		
	IMPACT OF AGE-RELATED CHANGES ON WORK	ENVIRONMENTAL OR JOB ADAPTATIONS
COGNITIVE FUNCTIONS		
Aerobic capacity	Decreased endurance	Pace self Alternate light and heavy work Take "pause breaks"
Cognition	Changes in working memory, complex problem solving, prioritizing	Simple directions Written or verbal cues Time to complete tasks Practice Ongoing training
Driving	Changes in motion perception Slower braking time Slower signal selection Changes in scanning at intersections	Ample space between cars Minimize left hand turns Clearly labeled controls Wide maneuvering area
Adapted from M. Sanders, personal communication, 2013.		

needed. Such principles will become increasingly important as more Baby Boomers remain at industrial jobs.

Work Task Training

Fisk, Rogers, Charness, Czaja, and Sharit (2009) suggests that training for older adults should be thorough, yet self-paced, with ample time to learn and practice tasks prior to performing them on the job. Training programs should build on previous experiences of older workers to enable them to make cognitive associations for new job tasks. Progressing an older worker from simple to complex tasks in a training program may facilitate the older worker's adaptation to new work environments. Good training should include time, practice, simple instructions, self-paced learning, and access to help.

Personal Work-Life Balance

As discussed in Chapter 8, older adults have increasingly complex home responsibilities that may impact their jobs. They may have dependent or elder care (grandchildren, adult children, or spouses) issues that affect their work schedules, and may benefit from flexible scheduling or part-time work due to caretaking. Just as work environments are increasingly offering pre-tax spending options for dependent childcare, human resource departments may

be encouraged to provide information on broader life planning needs for older workers related to assisted living, home care options, and retirement planning. Finally, workplaces can offer health promotion programs that include diet, nutrition, exercise, energy conservation, and stress management. Referral to Employee Assistance Programs may help coordinate the individual needs of older workers with community and corporate resources.

Learning Activity 79: Adapting Worker Roles

Choose a specific occupation, such as office workers, construction workers, or nurses.

1. Search online for articles about how workers age 60 and older in these fields can continue to perform the tasks required. Summarize your findings, with references.
2. How does increased age impact their ability to work in the area you have chosen? List three factors that might limit their ability.
3. How could these be adapted? What do the articles suggest, and what can you add?