

# New York City Age Smart Employer Awards

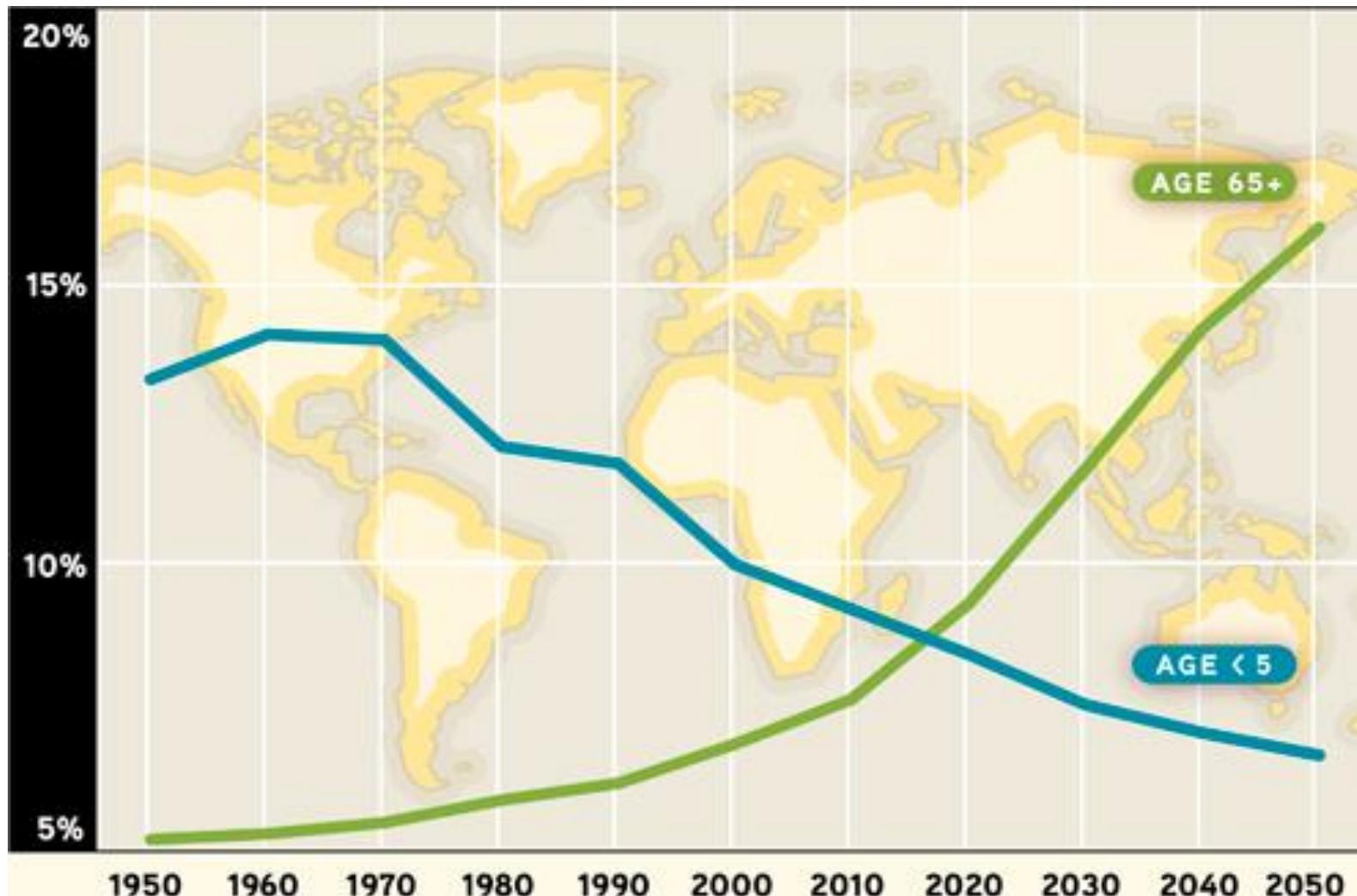
A Strategy to Encourage Business to Hire and Retain Older Workers

Professor Ruth Finkelstein, Hunter College



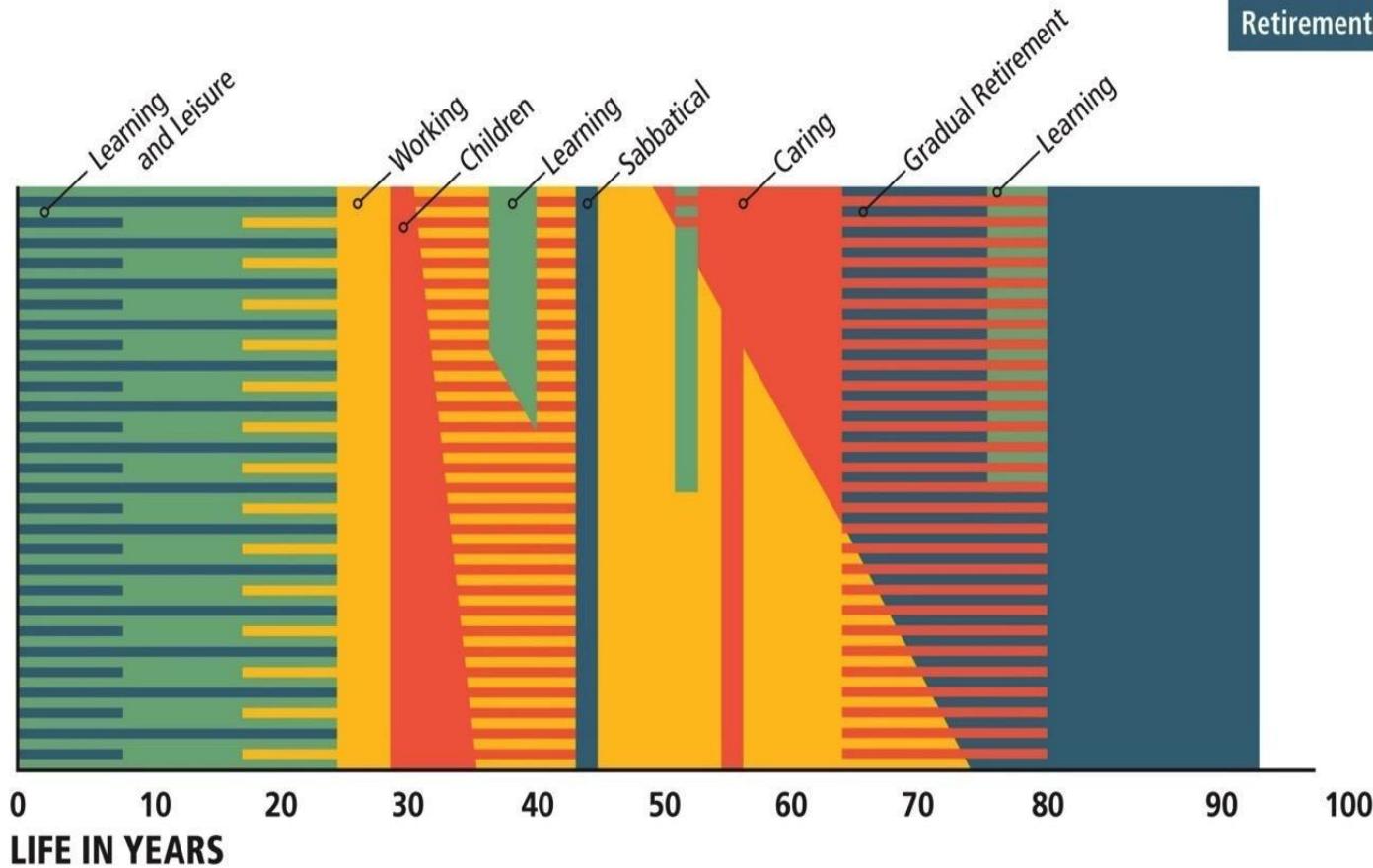
# A New Time in the History of the World:

Young Children & Older People as a Percentage of Global Population



# Projected Future Life Course

- Learning
- Working
- Providing Care
- Retirement/Leisure

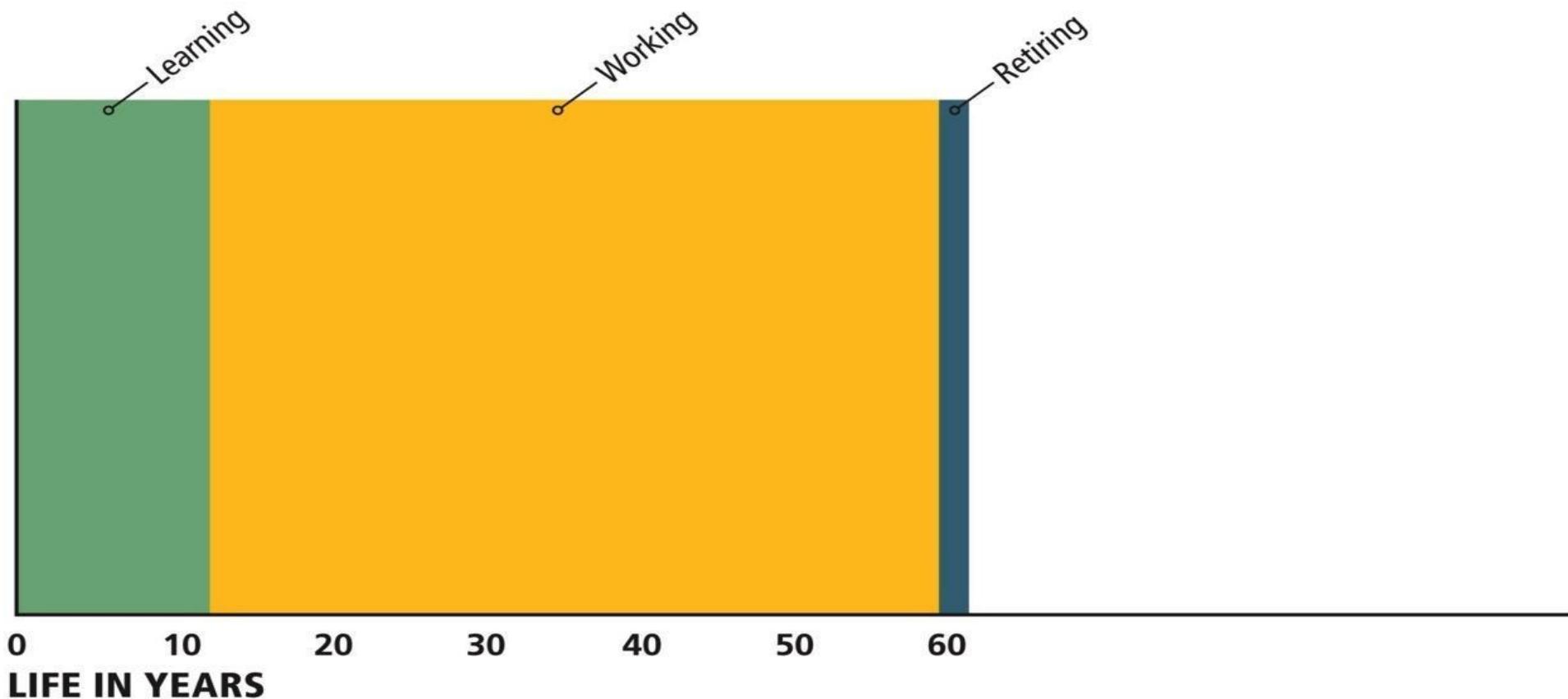


Adapted from Alexandre Kalache. *The Longevity Revolution: Creating a society for all ages*. Government of South Australia. 2013.

# Bismarck's Life Course

The life of a person during the 1880s

|          |
|----------|
| Learning |
| Working  |
| Retiring |



# The Age Smart Employer Awards



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gMGB6kLre0c>

# Age Smart Employer Awards

## 2012 - 2018

Funded by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, the Age Smart Employer Awards address the needs of both businesses and older workers by:

- Researching best practices of NYC employers, especially small businesses
- Identifying and honoring employers who value workers of all ages through an awards program
- Supporting businesses interested in hiring and retaining older workers

# Methodology to Develop Resources for Employers

- Conducted qualitative interviews and site visits with 100 small business owners in NYC, and analyzed their experience.
- Conducted secondary research and evaluated policies and practices to hire and retain older workers.





## Employer Problems

1. Skills shortage in manufacturing & health care
2. Costly and disruptive turnover (service industries)
3. Lack of institutional knowledge
4. Lack of interpersonal communication skills



# Employer Resources Developed

[www.agesmartemployer.org](http://www.agesmartemployer.org)

Food Services: 10 Ways to Reduce Turnover and Retain the Workers You Need

<https://www.mailman.columbia.edu/research/age-smart-employer/food-services>

Manufacturing: 10 Tips from NYC Small Businesses to Retain and Train Industrial Workers

<https://www.mailman.columbia.edu/research/age-smart-employer/manufacturing-and-skilled-trades>

Non-Profits: 5 Ways Non-Profits are Managing for Succession

<https://www.mailman.columbia.edu/research/age-smart-employer/non-profit-organizations>

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Family Business: 10 Ways Family-Owned Businesses Successfully Transition to the Next Generation of Ownership

<https://www.mailman.columbia.edu/research/age-smart-employer/family-owned-business>

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Age Smart Compendium of Policies and Practices

<https://www.mailman.columbia.edu/research/age-smart-employer/compendium>

10 Advantages Retaining and Hiring Older Workers

<https://www.mailman.columbia.edu/research/age-smart-employer/advantages-older-workers>

# Older workers are skilled and experienced



# They stay in jobs longer and take fewer days off



# They have a strong work ethic



# They retain a business's knowledge and networks



# The perceived technology gap can be overcome



# The best teams are multigenerational



# Older workers play a critical role in training the next generation of workers



They provide customers with consistency  
and personal attention



# Older workers attract more business



# Older workers are part of the business brand



# Age Smart Policies & Practices: Welcome experience in new hires



# Age Smart Policies & Practices: Clear paths to advancement/promotion from within



# Age Smart Policies & Practices: Cross-training and mentoring



# Age Smart Policies & Practices: Access to training and life-long learning



# Age Smart Policies & Practices: Work hours and location are flexible



# Age Smart Policies & Practices:

Workers have input into making a safe, healthy work place



# Age Smart Policies & Practices: Job restructuring to fit abilities of worker



# Age Smart Policies & Practices:

Workers can retire in phases, gradually reducing work



Yeselka

# Age Smart Policies & Practices:

## Retirees can work part-time or as consultants



# Age Smart Policies & Practices: Comprehensive benefits & wellness plans



# Age Smart Employer Awards: Process

- Create Age Smart Employer application from the policies and practices
- Outreach through business associations, businesses interviewed, employers who hire senior trainees, skilled crafts, referrals
- Panel of judges (leaders in business, workforce, occupational health, academe) evaluates the applications to select finalists.
- Employee survey (universal or random sample) is conducted for all finalists
- Judges select “Winners” from among finalists

# Age Smart Employer Awards: Ceremony

- Award ceremony
  - Festive breakfast
  - Employers are invited to bring employees and other guests
  - Speakers: business leaders, policy-makers, awardees
- Physical award

# Age Smart Employer Awards Ceremony



# Impact

- US Federal agency charged with worker safety (NIOSH) used policies and practices for their older workers' website
- Promotion and recruitment of leadership from Award winners due to all their publicity.
- Other localities adopted (Montgomery County; Maryland; Portland, Oregon)
- Other localities considering adapting/adopting (Vermont; Ontario, Canada, YOU)
- Extensive medial coverage including: The Wall Street Journal, Business Week, The Economist, Forbes, Time Magazine, Industry publications

# The Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging

**Giving *everyone* an opportunity to age as well as *anyone* can.**

The Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging

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