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The author is a Director of Ctrain Pty Ltd, a Registered Training Organisation specialising in vocational training and HR consultancy. Contact [david@ctrain.com.au](mailto:david@ctrain.com.au) or visit [www.ctrain.com.au](http://www.ctrain.com.au)

### **The Certificate IV in Training and Assessment – How to retrain and retain your mature age workers.**

Mature age workers (those between the ages of 45 and 64)<sup>1</sup> make up approximately 32% of the workforce<sup>2</sup>. There are 3.7 million of us! 77% of people expect to have retired by the age of 65 and most would retire earlier if they thought they could afford to do so.<sup>3</sup>

Mature age workers are typically:

1. Healthier than ever before and can look forward to living up to another 20 years beyond retirement.
2. Wanting to work beyond their originally planned retirement date.
3. Likely to be concerned that their superannuation may not be enough to support them in their retirement.
4. Gainfully employed but keen to do something different, perhaps at a reduced number of hours, using their 30 plus years of experience, skills and wisdom  
OR
5. Having difficulty re-entering the workplace post-retrenchment.

The problem facing mature age workers is how to remain employable working in their field of expertise. Some may want a job which is less physically demanding and others may want to work fewer hours per week.

### **What is the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (TAA40104)?**

It is a nationally recognised qualification for people who wish to be trainers and/or assessors in the workplace. Most employers who advertise for trainers now insist on TAA40104 as the minimum qualification.

The course consists of 14 units and, depending on the learning institution, could be completed within six months, with as little as 8-10 days face-to-face training. The Recognition of Prior Learning process (RPL) means that an individual does not necessarily have to attend classes for all 14 units. Work background, training or other relevant experience may be deemed equivalent to some or all of the 14 units. RPL is particularly useful for those who already have some training experience but no formally recognised training qualification.

The course covers all facets of training and assessment in the workplace including units such as ‘Plan and organise group-based delivery’; ‘Design and develop learning programs’ and ‘Facilitate individual learning’.

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<sup>1</sup> As defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

<sup>2</sup> ABS 2003/4.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

### **What it means for the individual**

TAA40104 opens the door to the world of vocational training. People can teach in their area of expertise at TAFE, work for a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) or set up their own training business. It also affords individuals the opportunity to change roles within their company and continue to use their experience and knowledge training others. It gives individuals greater flexibility in their working life and allows them to be active members of the workforce for much longer than they or their employer may have envisaged.

### **What it means for business**

Anecdotally at least, many companies are reluctant to discuss career planning with their mature age workers. Companies who want to manage their older workforce better should consider providing TAA40104 training to their mature age workers. The benefits in doing this are:

1. Reduced turnover as more mature age workers stay gainfully employed in the company.
2. Corporate knowledge is retained for longer.
3. As turnover reduces, hiring is reduced, thus saving on recruitment and training costs.
4. Reduced retrenchment costs.
5. Redeployment as a workplace trainer, where redundancy is being considered, might provide a good alternative for the worker and the company.
6. Less reliance on external training providers.
7. The quality of the training and the way the company treats its older employees help to make the company an employer of choice, leading to an increased ability to attract and retain top talent.

TAA40104 is not for everyone. It takes a certain type of individual to become a good trainer. At Ctrain we propose that TAA40104 should be one of a number of options that companies consider when discussing career planning with their mature age workers.

### **Conclusion**

Given the increasing life expectancy for males and females (78.1 years and 83.3 years respectively<sup>4</sup>) many mature age workers are faced with the challenge of financing their retirement for a longer period. TAA40104 gives people the opportunity to be more employable in an environment that continues to discriminate against age. Indeed, with TAA40104 and the years of experience that the mature age worker has accumulated, the prospect of remaining in the workforce as a valued contributor is significantly increased.

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<sup>4</sup> ABS 2004. It should be noted that the life expectancy for people of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin is approximately 20 years less than the national average for both males and females.