

# **Mature workers make their mark at McDonald's**

## **New research proves older workers enhance McDonald's business performance**

McDonald's today revealed the commercial impact of creating the right blend of youth and experience in its workforce.

According to new research conducted by Lancaster University Management School, which examined the performance of more than 400 McDonald's restaurants across the UK, employees aged 60 plus deliver a significant business boost.

The study revealed that levels of customer satisfaction were on average 20 per cent higher in restaurants that employ staff aged 60 and over. Widely recognised as one of the largest providers of first time jobs in the UK, McDonald's also has a strong core of older workers, with around two-fifths of restaurants employing staff aged 60 and over.

A survey of McDonald's restaurant managers revealed the reasons behind the customer satisfaction boost delivered by later life workers:

- Over two thirds (69%) said later life workers empathise with and connect well with customers
- Almost half (47%) cited later life workers' ability to go the extra mile to deliver the best possible customer service
- 44% believed later life workers brought mentoring skills to the workplace, helping younger colleagues develop and mature

David Fairhurst, Senior Vice President, Chief People Officer, McDonald's UK & Northern Europe, said:

“Changing demographics in the workplace mean that later life workers are now the fastest growing age group in the labour market. Yet despite the growing numbers of mature workers, their contribution to business and the wider economy often goes unsung. It might surprise people to learn that at McDonald's we employ over 1000 people aged 60 and above. These employees play an important role in our business and, as the research shows, they make a huge impact on customer satisfaction.

“We’ve found that our fast-paced, dynamic and flexible working environment appeals to a wide range of ages. It allows students to work around their studies and means grandparents can earn a little extra cash to spend on their grandchildren. But no matter what their age, we’re proud to offer all of our people the opportunity to develop new skills, and gain valuable, nationally recognised qualifications that enable them to fulfil their potential at McDonald’s and beyond.

“Whilst the vast majority of our employees are under 30, it’s good for our people and good for our business to have a diverse range of ages in our restaurants. I urge employers across our sector to realise the benefits of an age diverse workforce. As our experience has shown, the right blend of youth and experience can make a real difference.”

Professor Paul Sparrow, Director of the Centre for Performance-led HR, Lancaster University, said:

“The research clearly demonstrates the very real business value of recruiting an age diverse workforce. For McDonalds, we can show that the presence of older employees improves customer satisfaction, and in a service led business such as theirs, this drives the bottom line. Mature employees are a key part of the performance recipe.

“This is good news for the workforce given the changing demographics of our society. We’re likely to see more and more people working for longer, either because they are sufficiently fit and healthy to do so, or to shore up their financial security.

“Employers must rise to the challenge of adapting to Britain’s ageing workforce, and this research shows that there can be a sizeable prize at stake for those which succeed in doing so.”

Rachel Krys, Campaign Director, The Employers Forum on Age, said:

“I warmly welcome the research findings from Lancaster University. In what is undoubtedly a challenging commercial environment, it’s vital that businesses across the UK continue to recognise the strong business case for age diversity. McDonald’s has been a prominent and active supporter of the Employers Forum on Age for a number of years and their continued commitment to championing age diversity in the workforce should be applauded.”

**-ENDS-**

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**Notes to Editors**

**1. Case studies and photography available on request**

**2. About the study:**

The research was conducted by The Centre for Performance-Led HR at Lancaster University. The study compared the performance data of 178 company owned McDonald’s restaurants where one or more members of staff aged over 60 years of age is employed with the performance data of 239 company owned McDonald’s restaurants where nobody over 50 years of age is employed.

The survey of 148 McDonald’s restaurant managers was completed from 28-31 July 2009.

**3. About McDonald’s as an employer:**

McDonald’s has a proven track record of investing in the development of employees and offering flexibility as part of its commitment to being a modern and progressive burger company. In fact:

- In January 2009, McDonald’s announced it would provide Apprenticeships to up to 6,000 of its 72,000 UK workforce and then up to 10,000 per year from 2010, providing staff with the opportunity to gain a valuable, nationally recognised qualification equivalent to five GCSEs grade A\*-C
- In January 2008 McDonald’s was given awarding body status, meaning it is able to develop and award its own qualifications. The first qualification that McDonald’s is offering is an A level equivalent, a Diploma in Shift Management
- McDonald’s dedicated employee website ‘Our Lounge’ provides everything from online shift scheduling, to career and lifestyle advice and an online learning programme that leads to nationally-recognised GCSE-equivalent qualifications in Maths and English
- In 2006 an independent study by Adrian Furnham, Professor for Psychology, University College London, showed that employment at McDonald’s has a positive transformative effect on young people compared to other jobs, boosting their confidence, communication skills and career prospects
- In 2004 research by the Work Foundation found that 60% of a typical franchised restaurant’s annual £1.5 million turnover – around £900,000 - stays local and generates a further £2.2 million of local spending
- 95 per cent of restaurant management and one in five franchisees started as crew
- The average tenure for a McDonald’s restaurant manager is over 11 years
- McDonald’s was recognised by The Great Place to Work Institute as one of the top 50 Best Workplaces in the UK in both 2007, 2008 and 2009 and was one of only five organisations with more than 10,000 employees to be included

- In 2005 McDonald's became the first large employer to achieve the new Investor in People Profile status and in 2009 achieved GOLD status
- McDonald's is one of The Times Top 100 Graduate Employers for the tenth consecutive year
- McDonald's was listed in 'Britain's Top Employers 2007, 2008 and 2009' rankings
- McDonald's has been listed as one of the Times 'Top 50 Companies Where Women Want to Work' for three consecutive years, since 2006
- McDonald's was named 'Best Place to Work in Hospitality' in both 2007 and 2008