

UP BEAT

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an **EMPLOYER ALLIANCE** Publication

Flexible Work Arrangements for Older Employees

A Study by thYnk Consulting Group

Part-Time Scheme Retains Older Staff

Urban Redevelopment Authority

Older Employees Benefits from Job Sharing

Holiday Inn Singapore Orchard City Centre

Meeting the Work-Life Needs of Older Employees

Employer Alliance

Work-Life Conversation with an Expert

Interview with Mrs Joanna Koh-Hoe, Focus on the Family Singapore



7.30am

Tennis

10.00am

Staff meeting

1.00pm

Customer lunch

4.30pm

Swim with grandchildren

7.00pm

Singing class

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About Employer Alliance

Upbeat is a service of Employer Alliance (EA), designed to complement its comprehensive website, www.employeralliance.sg, as well as the numerous Work-Life seminars and forums it organises.

You will benefit greatly from its newest resource, an online one-stop Smart Kit where you can learn from a variety of creative flexible work arrangements, employee support schemes and leave benefits, to suit any company's budget.

Employer Alliance is a network of corporations committed to create an enabling work-environment to support Work-Life Integration. Its vision is to build corporate awareness of the contribution of Work-Life to business results. Singapore corporations are challenged by talent management and staff retention; and a sound Work-Life strategy is key.

More than 900 companies have joined EA as corporate members and the number continues to grow. These corporate members come from different industry sectors such as manufacturing, retail, services, financial and hospitality. Membership is free and member benefits include access to our resources and invitations to forums, events and key Work-Life conferences.

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Message from Chairperson



In view of the concern about Singapore's ageing population and corresponding loss of talent and expertise, we have decided to round up the year with a focus on older employees. This year, EA commissioned thYnk Consulting to conduct a study on Flexible Work Arrangements for older employees aged 50 and above, called "Growing Older, Working Strong – How Do We Do It?". The results of this study have further cemented our conviction that companies need to think about Work-Life strategies with older employees in mind, if they have not already done so.

In a mere two decades, three working people will have to support one elderly person. This will mean greater pressure on working adults. With rising costs of living and longer lifespan because of better healthcare, retirees will also feel financial stress about their retirement funds. The solution is to reduce the dependency ratio by enabling older employees to remain longer in the workforce.

Older employees bring a multitude of advantages to the table, as we will hear in the *Cover Story* and *Interview with an Expert*. We need to re-engineer our human capital strategy to embrace these older employees.

Some of them may have elderly parents who may require more medical care; they themselves may be preparing for grandparenthood; some may have health concerns as they age, while others may want more time to pursue their interests outside the work place. To reach out to this group of employees, organisations need to be mindful of their Work-Life needs.

HR strategy can no longer adopt a rigid "full-time or retire" approach. Companies must explore Work-Life programmes and flexible work arrangements as ways of retaining and attracting mature people. We hope this issue of Upbeat will serve as a springboard for companies to proactively take action and implement a Work-Life strategy to engage and retain our ageing workforce. There is no better time to start.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Claire Chiang". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Claire Chiang
Chairperson, Employer Alliance



Flexible Work Arrangements for Older Employees

A Study by thYnk Consulting Group

Singapore's population is ageing at an exceedingly rapid pace. We are now the third fastest ageing country in the world with 16 percent of our population over 60 years old – and this figure is projected to increase to 36 percent by 2030.¹ Against this backdrop of workforce demographic changes, Employer Alliance (EA) commissioned thYnk Consulting Group to conduct a study on "Flexible Work Arrangements for Older Employees: Growing Older, Working Strong – How Do We Do It?". The study aims to identify flexible work models that will act as a springboard for companies to develop suitable arrangements for their business operations while meeting the needs of older employees in the workforce.

Literature research, focus group interviews and qualitative interviews were conducted as part of the research study. The literature research revealed that governments globally are developing policies and strategies to address challenges arising from rapidly ageing populations. From the focus group discussions, it was found that older employees placed greater emphasis on family, social activities and personal interests as they age. Their primary concerns tend to revolve around health, financial security and stability.

Qualitative interviews with 22 organisations from various industries such as food & beverage, healthcare, retail and professional services were conducted. Over 40 Flexible Working Arrangement (FWA) models were uncovered and documented. The interviews findings showed that businesses highly appreciate what older employees can bring to the table, such as expertise, knowledge and experience. The maturity of the older employees acts as "social glue" for the work units they support. Organisations were also able to leverage on FWAs to retain valued older employees



– and along with them their valuable experience and skills-set.

Findings

The Business Case

thYnk found that most of the organisations implemented FWAs as a way to retain experienced and talented older employees. FWAs were also used as a benefit tool to reward deserving and long-serving employees. Business operations which required a large pool of flexi-time workers have used FWAs as a strategy to attract and retain older employees. There were also organisations which automated their processes, improved infrastructure or redesigned jobs to meet business demands while addressing older employees' needs.

Factors Facilitating FWA Implementation

The study revealed that factors critical to the successful implementation of FWAs for older employees in organisations were similar to those necessary for general FWA implementation. Visible support from senior management and a supportive work environment were commonly cited as key success factors.

Challenges in FWA Adoption

Organisations interviewed did not find that older employees posed unique or additional challenges to the FWA

¹ Ageing: Impact on Companies in Asia, published by Community Business and Diversity & Inclusion in Asia Network, 2010

implementation process. In fact, the challenges for implementation of FWAs were common across all age groups. Such challenges included the need to (i) balance between personal and organisational needs; (ii) manage the issue of fairness; and (iii) manage line managers' mindset. Regular and clear communication with staff was an effective strategy that organisations used to manage these challenges. HR managers would also engage line managers regularly in dialogue, coach and equip them with resources to manage employees on FWAs.

Moving Forward

With the changing workforce demographics, organisations will benefit by being proactive in engaging their older employees. They can achieve this by:

- **Building an enabling organisational culture** based on a strong set of values where employees are recognised for their contributions regardless of age. The loyalty and contributions of the older employees are to be celebrated and honoured.
- **Understanding the needs and motivations of older employees.** Managers can be trained to manage workplace diversity, better relate and motivate the older employees and harness their wealth of institutional knowledge, work experience and insights. Older employees can also be empowered to mentor their younger colleagues.
- **Addressing older employees' physical, emotional and social needs.** Beyond

addressing financial needs, the workplace allows older employees to connect and build meaningful relationships. This in turn engages and retains them. Some jobs can also be re-designed or adjusted **to leverage on the older employee's experience** and take into account any physical considerations.



Conclusion

With the rapidly ageing workforce, employers who are not proactive in engaging older employees will find themselves facing a talent shortage in the coming years. To be better prepared for the demographic shift, employers can leverage on FWAs as a useful tool to attract, retain and re-employ older employees on a short or long-term basis to capitalise on the expertise, knowledge and experience that older employees can bring to the organisation.

thYnk Consulting Group is a HR and Management consultancy and training firm. It provides training and consultancy services for Leadership, Organisation Development and Work-Life initiatives among others. Ms Evelyn Kwek brings with her a wealth of experience in change management, staff engagement, leadership development and talent management and is also a certified Work-Life consultant.

The Case for **Work-Life** *Integration*



In Yangzheng Primary School, we believe the staff are key and play pivotal roles. We are committed to a high level of staff well-being and staff engagement which naturally leads to positive student outcomes. Work-Life harmony has always been central to the staff resource planning process. Qualitative workload and working hours of staff are improved through various initiatives such as job-redesign and streamlining of work processes.

*Mrs Jacinta Lim,
Principal of Yangzheng Primary School*

An effective role model practises what he preaches. I deliver what I promise, and when employees witness the commitment and passion with which I approach Work-Life harmony, they do the same.

*Dr Gurchan Singh,
Founder and Group President,
Cherie Hearts Group International Pte Ltd*

Progressive organisations who focus on programmes to promote Work-Life Integration will ultimately find themselves victors in the war for talent and in establishing a more holistic employee value proposition which will benefit both parties in the long term.

*Mr Stephen Tjoa,
Partner, People, Performance & Culture, KPMG*

Human skill and talent are key to any business. Any company that wishes to stay competitive and succeed must therefore ensure that their talent remains motivated and productive. Work-Life Integration is a key cornerstone to ensuring this.

*Mr Patrick Ang,
Deputy Managing Partner, Rajah & Tann LLP*

Part-Time Scheme Retains Older Staff

- Urban Redevelopment Authority

The Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) is Singapore's national land use planning and conservation agency. URA's mission is "to make Singapore a great city to live, work and play in". It has a strong team of urban planners, architects, system analysts, research and property officers as well as other technical and clerical staff who are dedicated to achieving URA's mission.

About two-thirds of URA staff are aged 40 and above, and of these, 40 per cent are aged 50 and above. The management feels that it has benefited from retaining the older employees who have the vast experience and expertise that is complemented by the new perspectives and fresh ideas offered by younger staff.

To attract and retain these valued employees, URA looks for solutions from Work-Life strategies. As one of its Work-Life initiatives, URA offers a wide range of flexible work arrangements (FWAs) in recognition that the Work-Life needs of employees change as they grow older. With the exception of shift workers and frontline staff, all URA employees benefit from a 5-day work week. Flexi-time is also available. The management also looks favourably upon applications for no-pay leave by employees who need to be away for childcare, eldercare or to upgrade themselves.

Another widely favoured Work-Life programme among the older employees is



Lunchtime talk on Work-Life and health issues

part-time work. Of the 15 employees who opted for part-time employment in 2010, 11 are aged 40 and above, whilst three are aged 50 years and older. Under this scheme, an employee works between 11 to 36 hours a week.

To facilitate the application and approval process, Group Directors and Deputy Directors are given the authority to approve applications for part-time employment and no-pay leave.

To better prepare staff for possible re-employment and eventual retirement, URA has put in place a 1.5-day course on pre-retirement preparation and re-employment and all its older employees are encouraged to attend. As a result, URA has been able to re-employ 70 percent of its retirees in the past three years, thereby retaining valuable institutional knowledge through a more stable workforce.

URA encourages all its officers to lead a healthy lifestyle. Its Employee Support Schemes include a whole range of health and fitness programmes that are conducted during and after office hours, including lunch-time health talks. Popular among the older employees is the annual health screening conducted on company premises, which are offered at subsidised rates. This encourages older staff to have regular health screening and allows for early detection of potential health problems.

Provision of different types of leave is a major focus of Work-Life Integration in any company. In order to equip older employees with the skills to cope with changing technology and work processes, URA encourages its older staff to continually upgrade themselves and provides study leave for those who attend courses.

"I find that URA offers many opportunities for continual learning, whether for young recruits or for the more experienced officers like myself," said a 65-year-old employee who has been re-employed by URA for the last three years, "It is not just work, work, work here in URA. I have also been actively involved in many interesting and meaningful activities like raising funds for our adopted charity and organising fun activities at our workplace for the children of our staff (through the Bring Your Child to Your Workplace programme)."

For its efforts to promote Work-Life harmony, URA won the Work-Life Achiever Award in 2006 and since then, it has been awarded the biennial Work-Life Excellence Award in 2008 and 2010.



Mass Workout 2010

"I find that URA offers many opportunities for continual learning, whether for young recruits or for the more experienced officers like myself."

Spotlight on EA Activities



EA EXCO Luncheon with Mr Hawazi Daipi, Senior Parliamentary Secretary for Manpower and Health and Chairman, Tripartite Committee on Work-Life Strategy and partners from Ministry of Manpower



Guest-of-Honour for the EA Book Launch, Mr Hawazi Daipi



A guest speaker sharing best practices on Work-Life Integration at an outreach forum

2010 At

- Over 900 members
- Published 3 UPBEAT newsletters reaching over 2000 people for each issue
- Reached over 2500 people through our monthly e-news and other mailers on Work-Life



CEO Roundtables – an outreach effort to introduce Work-Life Integration



A winner of My Work-Life Story Contest speaking to special guests during the prize-giving



EA Chairperson, Ms Claire Chiang, at discussion with panel of distinguished leaders in the financial industry

a Glance

- Reached over 1500 people through Work-Life Integration presentations at EA forums and partner events
- Over 70 organisations contributed to EA's Work-Life initiatives and projects



Expert Forum with Dr Ellen Kossek, Michigan State University - jointly organised with the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports



The EA team provided support as working committee for the Work-Life Excellence Award 2010



Ms Chiang with contributors to EA Research Study on Flexible Work Arrangements for Older Employees

Older Employees Benefit from Job Sharing

- Holiday Inn Singapore Orchard City Centre

Located in the heart of downtown Singapore and minutes away from Orchard Road, Holiday Inn Singapore Orchard City Centre is a newly refurbished and fully equipped hotel offering 319 hotel rooms. Established in 1985, the hotel is managed by the InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) and owned by the Harilela Group.



Annual games with Northlight School as part of Holiday Inn Orchard's Responsible Business project

Older employees do particularly well in the service industry as they bring their years of wisdom to the job and have lower absenteeism rates than younger workers, thus bringing stability to the team. In cases where physical labour is part of the job scope, the roles and responsibilities of older employees may need to be reviewed and, sometimes, reassigned.

Holiday Inn Orchard has its own answer for older employees in its Housekeeping department. Room attendants have physically demanding tasks like the making

of beds and cleaning of bathrooms. To counter this, Holiday Inn Orchard implements Job Sharing, a type of Flexible Work Arrangement (FWA) where the older employees are usually teamed up with younger buddies to mentor and provide guidance for their younger colleagues. In return, the younger colleagues help their older counterparts with the physically demanding tasks.

Director of Talent Development Mr Steven Tay explained, "Job sharing is an excellent way for older employees to help



One of Holiday Inn's older employees whom the hotel is proud to retain

newer team members better transit into their new roles, as well as to create a more diverse working environment with various approaches of solving the same problems."

Compressed work week is another type of Flexible Work Arrangement (FWA) which was an initiative raised by the staff. The management took serious note of this feedback, going so far as to cast votes on the issue and finally giving the approval for five-day work week to be implemented in Holiday Inn. This arrangement has helped employees achieve better Work-Life Integration as they now have a two-day break for personal and family matters.

From here, it can be seen that two-way communication between staff and the management is a key factor in deciding and implementing Work-Life Integration programmes. Verbal feedback is the popular starting point for new initiatives. Holiday Inn hosts regular "Tea with Shantha" sessions,

where employees are invited to informal meet-ups with the General Manager Mr Shantha de Silva.

In order to better retain their valued employees, Holiday Inn also has a system where employees' responsibilities are regularly reviewed to ascertain if changes are needed to accommodate changes in their life stage needs as they age. For example, some older employees might prefer to have reduced work-load or choose to work part-time so that they have more time with their grandchildren or to pursue their personal interests. After the review process, work redesign is implemented so that a win-win situation is derived. The organisations retain their valued older employees, their experience and expertise whilst meeting the needs of the older employees.

Beside FWAs, other Work-Life Integration programmes such as LOVE (Leave Office, Vanish Early) initiative also appeals to the older employees. Once a month, employees get an extra hour off to spend time with their loved ones or just to relax. Employee Support Schemes (a type of Work-Life Integration programme) like excursions to the Zoo and Kusu Island help facilitate interaction between the old and the young of different departments.

Holiday Inn Orchard's package of Work-Life programmes must have worked because it has a healthy retention rate where the average length of service is 8 years and a majority of their staff are older employees. As these employees approach or pass retirement age, Holiday Inn Orchard's policy towards older employees becomes ever more critical in the retention of its talent pool that will continue to contribute to the success of the hotel.

Holiday Inn Singapore Orchard City Centre is a winner of the Work-Life Achiever Award 2010.

Work-Life Conversation with an Expert

Interview with Mrs Joanna Koh-Hoe,
President of Focus on the Family Singapore



Upbeat: What are the life stage needs of older employees?

JK: Older employees are understandably more concerned about health and wellness issues, as well as financial security for their retirement and old age. At their life stage, work may take on a different meaning – instead of striving to climb the corporate ladder, work is often seen as a way to give back to society while continuing to earn a living. Of course, they do express the desire to be recognised and valued for their work, and also to have more time for relationships and to pursue their interests.

Upbeat: What are some Work-Life programmes that are most suitable for older employees?

JK: Organisations have found that flexible working arrangements can help retain their mature employees. For example, job sharing is ideal for older employees who wish for more personal time or in roles where physical labour is required. Some employees approaching retirement may not wish to retire completely, so they would appreciate phased retirement, i.e. be re-hired on a contract basis. Job re-assignment may also be necessary.

One leave benefit that may appeal to mature staff is Grandparenting Leave, as many employees of this age are now grandparents of young children. Since older employees value meaningful work, offering Voluntary Service Leave allows them to give back to the community and further energizes them at work.

Another useful Work-Life programme is Employee Support Schemes that promote health and wellness.

Upbeat: What are obstacles to implementing Work-Life programmes for older employees?

JK: The success of any strategy always starts with a paradigm shift. If employers do not see the value of retaining older employees, they would not explore Work-Life strategies that benefit these staff and improve their retention. Redeployment and job restructuring may be required, and along with it, re-training. All these efforts may be perceived as time-consuming and resource-draining.

Some flexible working arrangements that are highly dependent on mobile technology could pose a challenge for older employees. Therefore, a variety of Work-Life programmes needs to be made

available. Occasionally, older employees may also have to contend with a change in roles and any corresponding change in remuneration. These challenges can be overcome with skills training and allowing time for adjustments.

Upbeat: How can an organisation benefit from implementing Work-Life strategies for older employees?

JK: There are both quantitative and qualitative advantages to the organisation! Quantitatively, the company can better retain its employees as well as the invaluable expertise that these older employees have accumulated in their years on the job. The company also saves on recruitment costs and training for new recruits. Qualitatively, these Work-Life strategies demonstrate to the older employees that their employer cares for them, and further builds their loyalty and commitment to the company. Older employees also have experience and job knowledge which can be transferred to younger staff through intentional mentoring.

Certain industries with offshore/overseas postings may find older employees easier to deploy than employees with young dependent families.

Ultimately, our ageing population necessitates that companies prioritise implementation of Work-Life strategies for older employees, should they wish to retain talent and expertise.

Upbeat: How can a company help older employees be better engaged in its Work-Life programmes?

JK: To better engage their older employees, the management must first identify their specific Work-Life needs and the kind of Work-Life programmes that are most suitable to meet these needs. Thus, communication is a good start and organisations can use either a survey or conduct a focus group with older employees to gather information. Some companies have in place Employee Counselling for their older staff, to obtain feedback and coach them as they take up Work-Life programmes. Simultaneously, Work-Life education and training should be provided for older employees to help them understand how they can better utilise and manage their Work-Life benefits.



Focus on the Family Singapore Ltd (FOTFS) is a local charity dedicated to helping families thrive at every stage and phase of life through preventive education, resources and support. It conducts over 600 talks, workshops, seminars and events each year, supplemented by family life resources and content placement in the mass media reaching over 3 million people. Mrs Joanna Koh-Hoe is President of Focus on the Family Singapore and recipient of the Work-Life Leadership Award 2010.

Meeting the **Work-Life Needs** of Older Employees

- Employer Alliance

Employer Alliance is a network of corporations committed to create an enabling work environment to support Work-Life Integration. Ms Pamela Sng is the Senior Manager for Work-Life at Employer Alliance. Over the past three years, she has spearheaded capability development efforts and managed research projects. She has also been responsible for content development of various programmes.

Many organisations implement Work-Life Integration solutions which can be broadly grouped into 3 areas, namely Flexible Work Arrangements, Leave Benefits and Employee Support Schemes.

As older employees enter the next phase in their lives, their values and priorities shift away from career development toward health matters, new hobbies and family. Most organisations have implemented Work-Life programmes intended for all age groups; however, to complement the call for organisations to engage older employees' participation and to retain their experience and expertise, we have compiled some Work-Life options appropriate for this employee demographic.

Flexible Work Arrangements

This refers to work arrangements in which the employee does not work a traditional 8:30am to 5:30pm schedule in the office. Some examples suitable for older employees include:

Part-time Work / Reduced Workload

Older employees may prefer a job with shorter hours or a reduced workload,

to enable them to spend more time on their personal interests and families. Some examples could include working half-days every day, working a few days a week, less travel, a smaller portfolio, reduced targets, etc.

Re-scope Work or Job Schedule

Older employees who wish to phase slowly out of the workforce, opt for more regular hours (rather than rotating shifts) and/or a less stressful role may prefer a change in job scope, e.g. no profit-and-loss responsibility. They may take on alternative roles within the organisation, including coaching their successor, mentoring or training younger colleagues or taking on an advisory role.



Leave Benefits

This refers to leave practices over and above statutory requirements, which are implemented to meet different employee needs. Some examples suitable for older employees include:

Grandparenting Leave

Older employees do not need childcare leave, but would appreciate time-off to spend with their grandchildren and help take care of them when the need arises.

Eldercare Leave

An older employee in his 50s or 60s typically has parents in their 70s to 90s. As such, they would appreciate time-off to bring their parents for medical appointments, physiotherapy, and/or assist in running errands.

Extended Block Leave

Some older employees may wish to take paid or unpaid extended block leave for travel to visit their children overseas or tour with friends, etc. This may be negotiated up front as part of their employment contract, to be taken during off-peak periods.

Community Service Leave

Many older employees develop an interest in community service as they seek greater significance in life. Organisations may consider providing paid, unpaid or subsidised leave, e.g. half-day every week or fortnight, for them to engage in community service, either on an individual level or at a corporate level.

Employee Support Schemes

This refers to programmes and activities to help to address employees' day-to-day personal needs and family responsibilities. Some examples suitable for older employees include:

Family Day / Movie Night / Bring Your (Grand)Child to Work Day

Such corporate events allow family members of older employees to participate in the fun and festivities on a sponsored or co-payment basis, and allow grandchildren to better understand their grandparents' roles in the organisations.

Health & Wellness Programmes

Older employees typically develop a greater awareness and concern over health and wellness issues. Health screening to monitor their wellness levels and identify areas of concern tends to be appreciated. This can be complemented by health programmes such as fruits day, brisk walking, etc. Likewise, family life programmes such as talks on grandparenting and retirement planning also generate interest.

Games & Interest Groups

Activities organised should take into account the physical considerations and interests of older employees. Activities could include bowling, line dancing, photography workshops, Chinese calligraphy and karaoke sessions.

Knowledge without follow-up action is meaningless – organisations need to optimise talent and recognise valued contributors whatever their age; and leaders must develop organisational infrastructure and implement processes and systems to support changing workforce demographics.

To read about other Work-Life solutions, please visit www.employeralliance.sg/toolkit or call the EA Secretariat at 6837 8631 to request for a copy of our recent publication "Can We Have It All?".

Work-Life Integration

Personal Notes

Mr Simon Sim, 50+ Human Resource Consultant, Voluntary Welfare Organisation

Soon after I attained the big 55, I retired from my full-time job as the General Manager of a voluntary welfare organisation (VWO) in early 2008. I thought then that I was a free man and could do anything I wanted to. I had lots of time with my wife and we did many things together – we swam, dined, watched movies, went to libraries, walked malls, went on overseas holidays and had too many lazy days. In that year, I felt the most fruitful thing I achieved was writing my first book – *The Family CEO: Building A Happy and Successful Family*.

In 2009, I yearned for more structure in my life, so I went back to my previous company as a part-time Human Resource consultant, appearing at the office two or three times a week. For the rest of the week I had one or two speaking engagements as a motivational speaker, having secured my Diploma of Family Life Education when I was 50 years old. I am thankful that my organisation is an enlightened employer and the present flexible work arrangement suits both parties well.

I will soon hit the big 6-0 and already am planning what I can do well into my sixties. In a typical week, I now meet a couple to prepare them for marriage and officiate at their wedding ceremony as their licensed solemniser.

Indeed, I have 're-tired' and learned to do many new things as the years roll along.

These activities may not always be mentally challenging but I can safely say I have work and I still have a life – by choice.



**Ms Phyllis Tan, 50+
Manager, Consulting Sales Specialist, IBM Singapore**

Two years ago my otherwise healthy mother-in-law suffered a serious fall which severely damaged her spinal cord. As a result, she was immobilised and had to stay in hospital for about four months. Thankfully, IBM's mobile work policy enabled me to work flexible hours, and I was able to take turns with my husband and his siblings to visit her in hospital to support her emotionally till she was discharged.

When she was discharged, we decided that she should move in with us so that we could care for her and monitor her condition. Once again, IBM's mobile work policy allowed me the flexibility to be at home during the crucial early stage when my mother-in-law was adapting to her new environment and learning new ways to manage her movements.

Till today, my mother-in-law still has to go for regular physiotherapy. Having flexible hours means I can take turns with my husband to fetch my mother-in-law to and from her physiotherapy sessions.



**Mr Nazeer M Noor, 60+
Technical Supervisor, PUB**

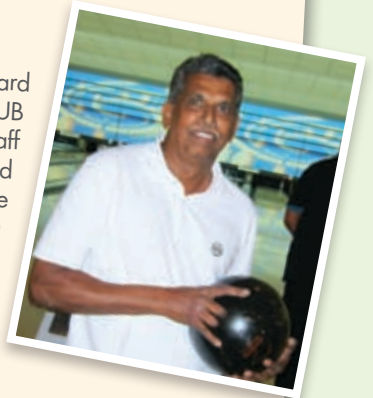
I am working at Changi WRP, a Public Utilities Board Water Reclamation Plant. About five years ago, PUB initiated a Staff Well Being (SWB) programme to get staff to lead a healthy lifestyle, to relieve stress accumulated through work or personal matters. PUB gave us office time and even monetary subsidy to participate in sporting activities. I suppose PUB believes the well being of its staff contribute to better employees. We are allowed to leave one hour early every Friday for the SWB activity.

With this SWB subsidy, a group of us who are in our 40s and 50s took up bowling even though we have never bowled in our lives.

Very soon we got hooked on this sport and even arranged our own meets outside of working hours. This has broken boundaries between colleagues of different ranks and created better understanding, we are able to easily resolve problems at work and, on top of it all, the activity relieved our stress.

I find that, no matter what our workdays have been like, when we meet our fellow bowling colleagues, there's always the game to talk about and that also relieves stress.

From being novice bowlers five years ago, we can now boast of representing our department and even winning the inter department championship. That's a win-win Work-Life story for us and PUB.



ADVANTAGE! Scheme

The ADVANTAGE! Scheme, an initiative by Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA), together with its Tripartite Partners (ASME, NTUC & SNEF) aims to help companies put in place HR systems to facilitate re-employment practices in preparation for re-employment legislation in 2012, as well as to enhance the employment prospects of older workers.

The ADVANTAGE! Scheme provides funding support of up to \$400,000 per company, subject to eligibility criteria. Upon approval, the grants will fund the cost of your company's efforts to recruit, retain or re-employ mature workers, including the developing and implementing of re-employment systems.

The grant will be disbursed over 2 tranches and is tied to the achievement of the outcomes within 1 year.



For more information on the ADVANTAGE! Scheme, please visit www.re-employment.sg or email tag@snef.org.sg.



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