**Bibliographic Information**

Streb, C.K., Voelpel, S. C. & Leibold, M. (2008). Managing the aging workforce: Status

Quo and implications for the advancement of theory and practice. *European*

*Management Journal, 26,* 1-10.

**Article Synopsis**

It is projected that by 2010 nearly 50 percent of the United States workforce will be composed of 45-year-olds or older (Streb, Voelpel & Leibold, 2008). In order to address that need, modern organizations need to focus on the “aging workforce management” (p. 2). Organizations need to address such issues as “loss of knowledge” if their older workers decide to take early retirement and face a “war for talent” with the younger worker shortage.

In this article, the researchers did a literature review from the Financial Times Top 40 journals and combined that information with practical case studies that showed how a variety of companies have addressed the aging workforce issue. Both the literature review and the case examples were grouped into five categories, there were: managerial mindset, knowledge management and learning, health management, work environment and ergonomics and human resource management.

The authors concluded that even though there was extensive research on the aging workforce, an integrated business management perspective was still lacking. Their qualitative study showed, however, that some industries and companies have started to react to this trend. They introduced managerial tools used by these companies and suggested further and more extensive research be conducted to validate these approaches (Streb, Voelpel & Leibold).

**Article Implications**

Even though I have read numerous articles about the upcoming change in workforce demographics, most of those articles approached the issue from different points of view. Most commonly, the articles have researched the economical factors i.e. social security, wages, and health benefits or addressed cognitive factors i.e. adaptability, technology, and on-the-job performance. However, this article approached the concept of how management plans to deal with the influx of older workers in the workforce. Even though this article was primarily qualitative in nature, it still used a variety of methods and techniques that strived for validity in the findings. Even though the generalizability of the study would be questionable, it still provided important information to organizations.

I feel this research is very important to trainers in the field. It is very difficult to design training that will address the transfer of knowledge, especially between the different generations. I liked how the researchers approached the study from the managerial point of view. In a time when ROI is the most important aspect to organizations, they need to protect their investments and make sure their valuable knowledge isn’t walking out the door. Their human resource departments need to be prepared to address the diversity of their workforce and be prepared for the different learning styles of older workers. I feel that even though this article cannot be generalized to the entire population, it does present valid questions that could be addressed in future studies.