



AM I OFFLINE FOR THE JOB MARKET? THE DILEMMA OF SENIOR PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION IN THE WORKFORCE THROUGH THE LENS OF THE FILM THE INTERN

ESTOU OFFLINE PARA O MERCADO? O DILEMA DA ATUAÇÃO DE PESSOAS IDOSAS NO TRABALHO SOB A LUZ DO FILME "UM SENHOR ESTAGIÁRIO"

¿ESTOY DESCONECTADO DEL MERCADO LABORAL? EL DILEMA DE LA ACTUACIÓN DE LAS PERSONAS MAYORES EN EL TRABAJO A LA LUZ DE LA PELÍCULA EL BECARIO

ABSTRACT

Dilemma: The fashion startup About The Fit, led by Jules Ostin, faces the challenge of implementing an inclusion program for elderly people in the workplace. The arrival of Ben Whittaker, a 70-year-old former executive, raises questions about the adaptation of senior professionals to the modern corporate environment, especially in the context of digital technologies.

Educational Objective: The case aims to foster reflection on the challenges and opportunities of including elderly individuals in the labor market, addressing both social inclusion aspects and the necessary adaptations in highly technological environments.

Context: In 2015, a startup decided to innovate by launching an internship program aimed at senior professionals. Ben Whittaker must adapt to a young and tech-driven environment, while the company's team faces its own barriers and adjustments in working with someone from a different generation.

Main Theme: Inclusion of elderly people in the workplace and the structural and cultural adaptation challenges.

Target Audience: Students of Business Administration and related fields, both in vocational and technological education and undergraduate programs.

Originality / Value: This case presents a workplace inclusion scenario, highlighting the importance of age and experience diversity within organizations. Based on the film *The Intern* (2015), directed by Nancy Meyers, and on stories of other professionals in Brazil published in online media outlets, the case provides a relevant approach for discussing topics such as Human Resource Management and Organizational Behavior, while offering an inspiring example of intergenerational dynamics in the corporate setting.

Keywords: Ageism. Transformational Leadership. Social Responsibility. Intergenerational Teams.

 Nahuan Alaff Virgino Soares

Master

Instituto Federal da Paraíba - Brazil

nahuan.soares@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Dilema: A *startup* de moda *About The Fit*, liderada por Jules Ostin, enfrenta o desafio de implementar um programa de inclusão de pessoas idosas no ambiente de trabalho. A chegada de Ben Whittaker, um ex-executivo de 70 anos, levanta questões sobre a adaptação de profissionais seniores ao ambiente corporativo moderno, especialmente no contexto das tecnologias digitais.

Objetivo educacional: O caso busca promover uma reflexão sobre os desafios e oportunidades da inclusão de pessoas idosas no mercado de trabalho, discutindo tanto aspectos de inclusão social quanto as adaptações necessárias em ambientes altamente tecnológicos.

Contextualização: Em 2015, uma *startup* decidiu inovar ao abrir um programa de estágio voltado para profissionais seniores. Ben Whittaker precisa se adaptar a um ambiente jovem e tecnológico, enquanto a equipe da empresa enfrenta suas próprias barreiras e adaptações ao trabalhar com alguém de uma geração diferente.

Tema principal: Inclusão de pessoas idosas no ambiente de trabalho e os desafios de adaptação estrutural e cultural.

Público: Estudantes de Administração e áreas afins, nas modalidades de educação profissional e tecnológica e graduação.

Originalidade / Valor: Este caso apresenta um cenário de inclusão no trabalho, destacando a importância da diversidade etária e de experiências nas organizações. Baseado no filme *Um Senhor Estagiário* (2015), dirigido por Nancy Meyers, e em relatos de outros profissionais no Brasil, divulgados em veículos de informação *online*, o caso traz uma abordagem relevante para discutir temas como Gestão de Pessoas e Comportamento Organizacional, além de oferecer um exemplo inspirador sobre a dinâmica entre gerações no ambiente corporativo.

Palavras-chave: Ageísmo. Liderança Transformacional. Responsabilidade Social. Equipes Intergeneracionais.

RESUMEN

Dilema: La *startup* de moda *About The Fit*, liderada por Jules Ostin, enfrenta el desafío de implementar un programa de inclusión de personas mayores en el entorno laboral. La llegada de Ben Whittaker, un ejecutivo de 70 años, plantea cuestiones sobre la adaptación de profesionales sénior al entorno corporativo moderno, especialmente en el contexto de las tecnologías digitales.

Objetivo educativo: El caso busca fomentar una reflexión sobre los desafíos y oportunidades de la inclusión de personas mayores en el mercado laboral, abordando tanto los aspectos de inclusión social como las adaptaciones necesarias en entornos altamente tecnológicos.

Contextualización: En 2015, una *startup* decidió innovar lanzando un programa de prácticas dirigido a profesionales sénior. Ben Whittaker debe adaptarse a un entorno joven y tecnológico, mientras que el equipo de la empresa enfrenta sus propias barreras y ajustes al trabajar con alguien de una generación diferente.

Tema principal: Inclusión de personas mayores en el trabajo y los desafíos de adaptación estructural y cultural. Público objetivo: Estudiantes de Administración y áreas afines, tanto en la educación profesional y tecnológica como en programas de grado.

Originalidad / Valor: Este caso presenta un escenario de inclusión laboral, destacando la importancia de la diversidad etaria y de experiencias en las organizaciones. Basado en la película *Pasante de Moda* (2015), dirigida por Nancy Meyers, y en relatos de otros profesionales en Brasil publicados en medios de comunicación en línea, el caso ofrece un enfoque relevante para discutir temas como Gestión de Personas y Comportamiento Organizacional, además de proporcionar un ejemplo inspirador sobre la dinámica entre generaciones en el entorno corporativo.

Palabras Clave: Edadismo; Liderazgo Transformacional; Responsabilidad Social; Equipos Intergeneracionales.



INTRODUCTION

In the early spring of 2015 at the Vibrant New York Center, the About the Fit fashion startup was at its height. Jules Ostin, the company's founder and CEO, was excited about the rapid growth of her innovative brand. The atmosphere in the office was electric, marked by the natural light that entered the large windows and the vigorous conversations of the young employees who worked with fervor. The mood was pleasant and sunny, reflecting the optimistic spirit of the team.

Then Jules, known for his bold view and charismatic leadership style, was addressed by his advisor to discuss adding some consolidated interns in the market to bring a new perspective to the dynamic work environment. The initiative aimed for a balance between the innovation and energy of young employees with the wisdom

and strategic knowledge of senior professionals. However, Jules demonstrated not being thrilled about the duration or impact of the program and wondered if this change was aligned with the company's objectives. However, she agreed to it to please his co-worker.

The disclosure of the selection process for the senior internship program was announced with great expectation. The Human Resources Department (HR) created a recruitment campaign that highlighted the opportunity to bring an experienced professional to an innovative startup. The announcement was aired on posters, job sites and social networks, appealing to professionals with extensive experience and who were interested in reinventing themselves and contributing to a growing company.

Image 1

Senior intern vacancy announcement.



Source: Image generated by artificial intelligence (Canva.com)



The selection process consisted of steps to evaluate the best candidate profile for the position. Initially, video screenings presented the candidates identifying the profiles aligned with the About the Fit. Those selected went to face-to-face interviews, where they dealt with a series of challenging questions about their experiences and how they could adapt to the startup's agile environment.

It was in one of these interviews that Ben Whittaker stood out. With an impressive curriculum and charismatic presence, the executive showed a genuine enthusiasm to collaborate with the team. Ben's enthusiasm and desire to adapt to the new work environment were decisive factors that led to their team integration, marking the beginning of a new chapter for the company.

Ben Whittaker's integration: technological challenges and personal connections

Ben Whittaker's integration into the startup was a challenging process, but also full of learning and growth opportunities. As he began his internship, Ben came across a work environment full of new technologies and methods that were quite distinct from those in his previous career. Despite his vast experience, he had to familiarize himself with digital machines and tools essential for everyday work.

Ben struggled to adapt to modern technologies, spending hours learning product management systems and digital marketing platforms used by the company. His enthusiasm and determination to adapt to new tools were remarkable and quickly became a valuable addition to the young team, offering creative insights and practical advice that complemented their skills.

Image 2

Ben in the first week of work.



Source: Image generated by artificial intelligence (Canva.com)

Then, Ben started to work directly with Jules Ostin. Although being the brilliant mind behind the About the Fit, she was visibly overwhelmed. However, Jules accepted the mission of being Ben's mentor. Jules is known for his energy and innovative vision but was constantly dealing with a full schedule, operational challenges, and the pressure to deliver quick results. Her leadership was marked by constant agitation and a workload that often made her seem distant.

- Knock knock knock ...

- "Come in!" - **Jules**

- "It's me, Ben, your new intern" - **Ben**

- "(laughs) I'm glad you also see the humor in this" - **Jules**

- "Be hard not too" - **Ben**

- "So, don't worry, I'm not gonna have a lot for you to do! And you being assigned to me is kind of just for me to set an example for the rest of the team. If you ask me, I think that you'd be much better off working in creative or marketing. It's a little bit slower pace" - **Jules**

- "I don't want to change" - **Ben**



- "Are you sure?" - **Jules**
- "Yes! I'm here to learn about your world"
- **Ben**
- "Okay! I send an email when you have something" - **Jules**

At first, Jules's stance against Ben reflected a typical leadership challenge in contexts of change: she did not reject the intern for personal contempt. She dealt with the insecurities of integrating someone out of the usual team profile – a senior professional with different values and rhythm. As a young founder and manager, Jules faced the challenging task of balancing the company's growth pressures with their dilemmas, which made it more rigid and reticent to changes that would run away from their immediate control.

In this context, Ben, with sensitivity and patience, adopted an approach based on listening, empathy, and continuous presence. His effort to build a bond of trust, demonstrating competence discreetly and respectfully, was fundamental for Jules to rethink his beliefs about leadership and value the plurality of team experiences. The transformation of the relationship between the two, therefore, reveals not only the maturity of coexistence but also the evolution of a more open leadership to generational diversity and dialogue.

Other "Bens" around the world: Brazil and the challenge of professional reintegration for 50+

If Ben's arrival at About the Fit seemed unlikely to some, the Brazilian scenario shows that he is far from an isolated case. The ageing of the Brazilian population is already a significant reality and in rapid advance. According to IBGE population projections, between 2000 and 2023, the proportion of people 60 or older has almost doubled in the country – jumping from 8.7% to 15.6% of the population. In absolute numbers, this group went from 15.2 million to 33 million Brazilians in just two decades. And the future points to an even more pronounced demographic turn: by 2070, seniors will represent about 37.8% of Brazil's total population – the equivalent of 75.3 million people aged 60 and over.

Given this scenario, a question is imposed: how is the labor market prepared to welcome this increasingly numerous and active population? Although the entry of senior professionals still faces numerous barriers, some initiatives of large Brazilian companies – or those operating in Brazil – have surprisingly made room for this audience (EXAME, 2020). Hess, 62, engineer and administrator, faced the usual silence that many mature curricula find in the entrance boxes of the companies. "It's extremely frustrating for you to apply for vacancies and not even receive an answer," he says. The turn came when he decided to return to the classroom and was selected for the Unilever Senior Trainee Program. A trainee. At 62.

Unilever's proposal, launched in 2019, surprised: within a few days, he received over a thousand registrations – five times more than the volume of the traditional program. "Our goal was clear: inserting people over 50 who have returned to study in search of new opportunities," said Fernando Rodrigues, the company's director of human resources. And, as with Ben, the challenge was not technical, but cultural: overcoming stereotypes and opening real space for learning and exchange.

At Votorantim, Rogério Galeto Ramos, 70, found a chance through the MIME Program (Melhor Idade, Melhor Emprego – Best Age, Best Job): "Finding a job as a senior is like looking for the first job: they don't look at their experience, they just see their age". The program offered post-17h worktime, allowing participants to maintain other routines, such as, in the case of Rogério, taking care of their grandchildren during the day.

Gol Linhas Aéreas, with over 1,800 employees over 50, created experience in luggage, seeking to value the trajectory of senior professionals. "They knew what they were looking for. There is useful life at the beginning of the elderly," said Marli Elaine da Silva, 56, hired as an airport assistant. According to the company's internal studies, older professionals show better commitment and accuracy in functions that sometimes require superior technical training from younger people.

Vivo, in turn, bet on age diversity with the

50+ project. “We have more than 20 employees in the program, and 6% of the company’s work-force is over 50 years old,” said Niva Ribeiro, vice president of people. Jardelina de Oliveira, 62, a receptionist hired by the operator, summarizes the feeling of many: “I needed to work not only by financial need but to feel alive, accepted and capable”.

The Maturijobs platform also stands out in the promotion of senior employability. It hired Marisa Lopes, 61, after a sequence of “no” motivated by the revelation of age still in the first calls with recruiters. “Maturity brings wisdom of life, and this is enriching to everyone,” argues Karina Freitas, HR head of the company.

Table 1
What senior professionals teach and what they learn from new generations

Name	Age	Position	What they teach to young people	What they learn from young people
Robert Hess	62	Unilever internship	Learning from mistakes, closing cycles, personal and professional maturity.	Audacity and creativity to solve problems.
Marli Elaine Da Silva	56	Gol Airport Assistant	Balance and serenity during decisions and crises.	Lightness, joy and detachment.
Jardelina de Oliveira	62	Vivo Store Receptionist	Importance of patience and reflection.	Courage to risk and boldness.
Marisa Lopes	61	Mundipharma Quality Consultant	Know how to listen, act calmly, avoid excuses and learn from failures.	Digital evolution, use of apps and new terms of communication.

Source: Exame (2020).

Another inspiring initiative comes from the Cataratas Group, a national reference in managing sustainable parks and tourist attractions. Challenging the traditional image of the intern as a young and inexperienced someone, the company launched the “VôVó Estagiário” (Grandpa-Grandma Trainee) program, aimed exclusively at seniors attending higher education and who are grandparents or grandmothers. It intends to make room for seniors to resume old dreams and reunite their purpose in the professional environment. The program offers a range of benefits, such as gym aid, massage therapy, flexible hours, grants, meal vouchers and training, demonstrating the company’s commitment to the well-being and appreciation of these professionals. In addition, the initiative aligns with the Estatuto do Idoso (a law concerning seniors’ rights), which encourages the insertion of seniors in the labor market and combats discriminatory practices.

Although these programs seek to include seniors, companies still care about the productivity and adaptation of this audience to modern technologies. Considering that seniors are more likely to have health problems and frequent ab-

sences, as well as higher work accidents, remains a factor of distrust for some organizations.

Thus, hiring older professionals involves challenges beyond the selection process, such as adapting employees to the workplace and the need for adjustments to the company’s structures. This may include process reviews and communication methods to better serve this audience. In addition, companies may face additional costs related to continuous training in technologies, function adequacy and even accessibility structure. These aspects must be considered to ensure effective integration and reduce long-term financial impacts.

The Dilemma

While companies worldwide move – albeit shyly – to include senior professionals, daily living with Ben has practically exposed the challenges and powers of this integration into the workplace. Hiring senior professionals, as the Cataratas Group proposes, is only the first step. The real question is: do our organizations have physical, procedural, and managerial structures to welco-



me these employees properly?

What seems to be a simple inclusion can involve significant challenges, such as process adaptation, communication and even flexibility in functions, as seen in the “VôVó Estagiário” program. In addition, it is crucial to reflect on how these changes can impact on the views and dynamics of other employees, especially if there is no adequate integration and effective communication on the value that this age diversity adds to the work environment.

The trajectory of Ben, as well as the stories of Hess, Rogério, Marli, Jardelina, Marisa and many other senior professionals, highlights a significant provocation: including seniors in organizations is, in fact, a genuine response to contemporary demands by intergenerational teams and more diverse environments, or is it just a symbolic strategy focused on institutional reputation? This issue should instigate leaders and managers to rethink the meaning of age diversity at work, assessing whether adopted practices promote structural transformations or only reinforce discount discourses without real commitment to valuing experience, listening and exchange between generations.

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TEACHING NOTES

Teaching purpose

This teaching case is directed to Business students and related areas, both in vocational and technological education and undergraduate courses. It can be applied to subjects such as People Management and Organizational Behavior, offering a reflective approach to an organization's diversity. Considering the dilemma of the insertion of senior professionals in young and innovative work environments, the case encourages, based on Bloom's taxonomy, three main objectives: critically analyzing organizational strategies aimed at age inclusion (cognitive dimension), valuing intergenerational coexistence as a factor of learning and mutual respect (affective dimension) and proposing practical actions to foster diverse work environments (dimension psychomotor). Thus, students will be invited to reflect on how to balance experience and innovation within organizations, understanding both the challenges and the opportunities of this process.

Source and data collection method

This teaching case was developed based on an analysis of the movie *The Intern*, released in 2015 and directed by Nancy Meyers. The film, starring Robert de Niro (such as Ben Whittaker) and Anne Hathaway (such as Jules Ostin), addresses topics related to the performance of senior professionals in modern work environments. Data collection included an analysis of the most relevant scenes of the film, focusing on the insertion of the senior character in contemporary organizational daily life.

In addition, we used secondary data from online information vehicles such as institutional websites, news agencies and official portals, to enrich the narrative of other characters and the companies mentioned in the case. Such data provided real and updated inputs on intergenerational management practices and senior internship programs in Brazil and abroad.

The characters' names have not been changed, as their identities and statements are already public and widely disclosed on their respective sites and materials of referenced origin, allowing their educational and reflective use in academic environments.

The figures included in the case were generated by artificial intelligence through the Canva tool, using descriptive commands (prompts) that led to the creation of images. They were designed to visually illustrate elements of the narrative, without reproducing physical traits of the film actors. The following prompts were used: Figure 1 – comic scene, grayscale, job announcement, senior trainee vacancy; Figure 2 – comic scene, grayscale, office, work team, senior executive. These images have an exclusively didactic purpose, collaborating with the visual setting of the case for teaching purposes and discussion in the classroom.

Questions for debate

I. What factors encourage companies to implement the senior internship program, and what expectations do companies have with this initiative?

II. Was there evidence of ageism in the narrative of Ben Whittaker and the other professionals reported in the case? Justify your answer

III. What is the role of people managers in creating an intergenerational work environment? How can managers adopt strategies to promote inclusion, respect, and use of the potentialities of each generation?

IV. Jules Ostin, as a leader, was designated Ben's mentor to serve as an example in implementing the program. Based on the narrative, how do you evaluate the manager's performance in this process of integration and leadership?

V. What are the main challenges and benefits associated with the implementation of programs for senior professionals in an organization and how can companies prepare their teams and processes to maximize benefits and minimize challenges?

Theoretical support for solving questions

Ageism, or age-related prejudice, is a contemporary challenge in organizations. Loth and Silveira (2014) point out that age stereotypes manifest both positively, valuing experience, and negatively, associating ageing with physical limitations and adaptation difficulties. This perception affects recruitment and retention processes, impairing the inclusion of senior workers. Hanashi-



ro and Pereira (2020) deepen this issue, noting that, before their resignation, these professionals are seen as inflexible and with high salary costs. Then, after the dismissal, they face systematic barriers, such as skewed selection processes. This demonstrates how ageism is a structural phenomenon, with serious psychosocial consequences, such as the erosion of self-esteem.

Managing age diversity, as suggested by Dejavite (2022), goes beyond simply hiring older professionals. It is necessary to create an inclusive environment that promotes intergenerational exchange. This implies policies that stimulate mutual learning and reduce conflicts, helping to strengthen the team's collective identity. Abranches and Lourenço (2024) also reinforce that ageism is not only linked to chronological age but to productivity loss stereotypes and adaptation. The authors argue that organizational interventions, such as intergenerational training, are necessary to create more inclusive environments and reduce suffering at work.

In addition, Paiva, Sobreira and Lima (2022) show the bi-directionality of ageism, where both young and older can exercise prejudice, depending on organizational dynamics. The research highlights the importance of understanding these dynamics to promote changes that favor intergenerational coexistence. Silva et al. (2021) complement this view, advocating comprehensive policies not limited to specific actions, such as continuous qualification and the flexibility of working conditions, but also awareness of age stereotypes. These actions are crucial to mitigate ageism and ensure organizations fully enjoy generational diversity, promoting a more inclusive and productive environment.

These studies connect to the teaching case debate by providing a basis for understanding how age perceptions influence organizational dynamics and people management practices, highlighting the importance of a strategic and inclusive approach to dealing with age diversity. To guide the answers to the questions based on the literature, specific subsections are structured in relation to suggested questions.

Factors that encourage the implementation of the senior internship program and expectations of companies

The implementation of senior internship programs by companies has been driven by multiple factors, including the growing longevity of the population, the need to enhance the experience accumulated by older professionals and the commitment to business social responsibility. According to Carroll (1991), when assuming ethical and philanthropic responsibilities, besides the economic and legal, organizations now consider actions that promote social justice and inclusion – such as the senior internship.

In this context, companies expect not only to promote age diversity but also enjoy benefits such as greater emotional maturity, commitment to work and more developed interpersonal skills, often associated with senior workers. According to Silva et al. (2021), senior professionals can enrich the organizational environment, collaborating to a more cohesive and productive intergenerational team, if accompanied by qualification policies and work flexibility. Thus, senior internship programs reflect a strategy that aims to combine social gains with organizational effectiveness, promoting inclusion and use of human capital in its age diversity.

Evidence of ageism in the narrative of Ben Whittaker and other professionals reported in the case

Yes, Ben Whittaker's narrative shows manifestations of ageism, although subtle and sometimes disguised under the appearance of cordiality. Upon arriving at the company, Ben is often underestimated, treated as obsolete or unable to adapt to the dynamism of a young-led startup. Such perceptions reflect stereotypes identified by Loth and Silveira (2014), which show how ageing can be associated with both qualities and experience and limitations such as slowness and resistance to innovation.

Hanashiro and Pereira (2020) also point out that, even with qualifications and willingness to learn, senior workers face structural and symbolic barriers to reinsertion in the market. In this case, although Ben demonstrates empathy, emotional intelligence and adaptability, its value



is only fully recognized over time after proving competent. This illustrates how ageism operates as a previous filter of expectations, requiring additional validation effort from the seniors.

At the beginning of Ben's story, the character faces an implicit prejudice for his age, being seen as "out of tune" with the company's young and technological work environment. The distrust of its ability to adapt to the new context reflects ageism, which manifests in the preconceived idea that older people are less able to learn or adapt to new work technologies and dynamics.

This stigma is shared by many companies, as illustrated by the reports of professionals such as Hess and Rogério, who have faced the difficulty of being considered for vacancies due to their advanced age, with many companies simply ignoring their curricula or considering them unfit for the corporate environment. Branches and Lourenço (2024) add that such prejudices affect emotional well-being and self-esteem, even when not explicitly hostile, reinforcing the need for environments that promote real respect for age diversity.

Given this, this representation relates to the theoretical essay of Silva and Helal (2019), which discusses the phenomenon of ageism in the organizational environment and its influences on the ageing process. The authors emphasize that work plays a significant role in the constitution of the identity and well-being of the elderly. However, negative stereotypes limit their permanence and challenge their reintegration into the formal market. As a result, many end up being directed to informal and precarious forms of work. In addition, the authors argue that institutionalized ageism reinforces intersectional inequalities and compromises the possibility of active and decent ageing. As a contribution, they advocate inclusive organizational policies that value intergenerational coexistence and foster respectful and collaborative work environments between different age groups.

The people manager's role in the creation of an intergenerational work environment

People managers play a significant role in building inclusive intergenerational work envi-

ronments, responsible for implementing policies that respect the specificities of each age group and fostering collaboration between generations. Effective strategies include intergenerational conversation wheels, reverse mentoring, joint training, and open communication channels, as pointed out by Paiva, Sobreira and Lima (2022), who show the importance of active listening and respect for various trajectories.

Hanashiro and Pereira (2020) warn that, without active management, the coexistence between different generations can generate conflicts, reinforce prejudices and hinder cooperation. Therefore, managers must act as mediators, raising awareness about unconscious biases and creating a culture of valuing experience and innovation.

The study of Silva et al. (2024) revealed that age stereotypes continue to influence recruitment and selection processes. The absence of familiarity with the concept of ageism in companies and the preference for candidates between 26 and 40 years show the exclusion of older and youth professionals, as well as the presence of self-ageism: the internalization of prejudices by senior workers themselves. These findings reinforce the need for awareness and continuous training of HR professionals so that the senior stage is not just a symbolic measure, but part of an inclusive people management policy.

Linhaires and Aguiar (2019) also contribute to this discussion by analyzing the social representations of HR professionals about seniors in the labor market. The authors identified an ambivalence in perceptions: as attributes such as experience, maturity and attention are valued, stigmas related to limitation and resistance to change persist. The main obstacle reported by professionals was the resistance of managers, often influenced by age stereotypes that disregard the productive potential of senior workers. This reinforces the importance of deconstructing prejudice and creating an organizational culture that recognizes age diversity as a strategic value.

Jules Ostin's performance as leader and mentor in the process of integration and implementation of the program

Jules Ostin's performance as Ben's men-



tor reveals a transformation trajectory as a leader, marked by mutual learning and overcoming prejudice. Initially, Jules demonstrates some discomfort and resistance to Ben's presence, signalling unconscious internalization of age stereotypes—which aligns with Hanashiro and Pereira's (2020) discussions on how ageism can be reproduced even by well-intended managers.

However, as he lives with Ben, Jules recognizes his competence, empathy, and balance, developing a relationship based on confidence and partnership. This process mirrors the Dejavi-te proposal (2022), noting that leaders sensitive to age diversity can build fairer and collaborative environments.

Jules then demonstrated the transformational leadership style, contributing to integrating Ben and strengthening the team. Its evolution shows that effective inclusion requires a willingness to learn from each other and break with moved leadership models, valuing the complementarity between generations as an organizational force. As Bass (1985) points out, transformational leaders are capable of expanding the interests of their employees, awakening awareness of collective objectives and activating higher levels of motivation and performance.

In the study by Kumar and Bagga (2024), the authors investigate the relationships between transformational leadership, perceived organizational support, employee involvement and organizational commitment in the Indian Information Technology (IT) sector, proposing a conceptual model that highlights the mediator of engagement. The results reveal that both transformational leadership and perceived organizational support directly influence organizational commitment but also act indirectly by strengthening employee involvement, which proved to be a key factor in promoting organizational loyalty. In addition, the study emphasizes the importance of humanized management practices, such as mentoring, equal opportunities and a positive work environment, to support high levels of engagement and commitment, especially in a dynamic sector such as IT. These findings dialogue with leaders and organizations that seek to improve

talent retention and organizational performance through employee-centered strategies.

Challenges and benefits in implementing programs for senior professionals

Implementing programs aimed at senior professionals brings challenges, such as the deconstruction of age stereotypes, the adaptation of physical structures and organizational processes, and the preparation of teams for healthy intergenerational coexistence. According to Loth and Silveira (2014), age prejudice directly impacts the inclusion and appreciation of seniors, while Silva et al. (2021) argue that the mitigation of ageism requires comprehensive policies from hiring to continuous development. Among the benefits are the strengthening of organizational culture, the expansion of the repertoire of skills and the increase in cohesion and maturity of the teams.

Abranches and Lourenço (2024) also highlight psychosocial gains for seniors, such as the reinforcement of self-esteem and the sense of social utility. To maximize these benefits, companies must invest in awareness programs, set training, cross-routine mentoring, and flexibility, creating a culture of respect and mutual learning. Thus, senior inclusion programs become not only instruments of social responsibility but also effective strategies for innovation and organizational sustainability.

Finally, Schneider, Fritz and Góes (2024) argue that coexistence between different generations in the workplace is not, by itself, generating conflict, challenging a common belief in organizations. For the authors, when the focus is on shared objectives and specific functions, it is possible to promote effective collaboration between generations. The study also points out that many senior professionals continue to update and demonstrate competence, which shows the inconsistency of stereotypes on the obsolescence of the elders. Thus, the role of HR professionals should transcend conflict management and actively involve the creation of a culture that values ageing as a natural process, ensuring the respect and rights of the seniors.

Class plan

A sugestão de duração de aplicações é de 120 minutos. It intends to explore the impact of including senior professionals on organizations, with emphasis on the challenges and benefits of this practice. The students will analyze the film “The Intern,” discussing age-related stereotypes, management

and leadership strategies, and intergenerational integration. The materials necessary are the film, projector and screen for display, whiteboard and markers, paper sheets and pens, as well as computers or tablets for research, if necessary. The narrative should be presented a week before the debate so that students respond individually. Table 2 below presents a class structure suggestion.

Table 2
Class structure suggestion

TIME	ACTIVITY	OBJECTIVE	METHODOLOGY
10 MINUTES	Introduction and Contextualization	Contextualize the debate and prepare students for subsequent discussions.	Oral presentation and brief discussion. Present the movie trailer.
30 MINUTES	Discussion in Small Groups	Facilitate the exchange of ideas and deepen the understanding of the concepts before the large group debate.	Group work with discussion and elaboration of a summary of the development of issues.
30 MINUTES	Debate in the Large Group	Analyze and discuss the different perspectives on the impact of age on organizations and the role of leadership.	Debate based on the summaries of the groups.
QUESTIONS FOR DEBATE		I. How would you feel if a senior colleague were hired to work on your team? II. Do you think companies should have specific policies to promote the inclusion of senior professionals? Why? III. How can intergenerational team management influence innovation and creativity in the workplace?	
10 MINUTES	Closing and Recommendation	Prepare the students for the critical analysis of the film and their relationship with the topics dealt in class.	Summary of the main conclusions of the debate and guidance to watch the movie.
RECOMMENDATION: Assembly of a movie environment to watch the movie “The Intern” in the next class.			

To stimulate engagement and participation, the teacher can assign 0 to 3 points in the evaluation. The evaluated aspects include group

collaboration, collective contribution to debate and critical analysis of the case considering the concepts worked, as shown in Table 3.



Table 3
Evaluation criterion – film analysis and discussion

Critério	Insufficient (1 point)	Good (2 points)	Excellent (3 points)
Group collaboration	Little interaction between the members; lack of cooperation or unequal division of tasks.	They collaborate reasonably; they demonstrate mutual respect and some level of cooperation.	They demonstrate effective cooperation, active listening, and appreciation of everyone's contributions.
Collective contribution to the debate	Disconnected or superficial arguments; little alignment with the topics discussed.	They have relevant ideas but are limited in terms of depth or cohesion.	They have well-structured arguments, clearly articulated and aligned with the concepts discussed.
Critical analysis of the case	The analysis lacks relationship with the given concepts; shallow reading.	Establish basic relationships between the case narrative and theoretical concepts.	Critically relate the narrative of the case and other situations pertinent to the concepts discussed, in-depth and contextualized.

These criteria must be presented in advance to the class, ensuring that all students understand the dimensions observed during the evaluation and can prepare properly to be active, collaborative, and reflective. This evaluation system aims to promote a thorough reflection and ensure the quality of the proposed discussions and activities, and to be evaluated with criteria as guided in the heading above (Table 3).

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