Appendix A

Interview Guideline

**1) Introduction and background**

**a) Questionnaire to assess demographics**

**b) Age and aging[[1]](#footnote-1)**

i) What does ‘old’ mean for you? From what age are you considered ‘old’?

ii) How old do you feel? Why? \*Health, using a personal computer, describe the aging process

iii) Which characteristics do you know that are commonly attributed to older people (i.e., stereotypes)? \*inflexible, ill, senile, incapable of learning, loyal, conscientious, trustworthy

iv) Which characteristics actually relate to older people?

v) Which characteristics have already been attributed to you? \*Have you ever been confronted with stereotypical thinking? If so, what were the consequences?

vi) Which role does aging play in your job? \*When dealing with superiors, when dealing with colleagues, in the team?

vii) How does your superior address aging in your company? \*Does your superior support you (e.g., by changing your job, ergonomics, autonomy, and recognition)? Do you need more support?

**2) Job and vocation**

a) Please describe your job: \*varied or routine? Do you need further training?

b) What about your vocation is important to you? *<Show priority list>*[[2]](#footnote-2)

**3) Employee training**

*Studies have shown that companies often do not tap into older employees’ potential*

a) Have you participated in training in the last few years (\*e.g., job or social skills, related to your job, health-related seminars, safety training)? Formal training, informal training *<Explain, show priority list>*

i) *🡪if yes:* When? Why? How often? What did you learn there?

ii) *🡪if no:* Why not? And in the past? Have you been supported in different ways?

b) How important is it for you to advance in your job?

i) *🡪 if important:* What would you like to learn? What kind of training would you like to receive? What are you interested in?

ii) 🡪 *if Unimportant:* Why not?

c) Do you have the same opportunities at work as your younger colleagues? \*Can you name some examples?What do you think the reason is that older employees are offered fewer training opportunities?

d) How does your superior think about this?

e) How does your company manage training opportunities in general?

f) If you could decide freely what your job should look like in the future, what would you change? *<Possibly skip questions with employees who will retire soon>* \*increase workload (e.g., promotion, more responsibilities, become a mentor, take on additional tasks); reduce workload (e.g., no shift work, easier tasks)

g) *Older employees are the future for companies and they should always be up-to-date.* How could companies interest older workers in training? \*How could companies motivate older workers to learn?

**4) Knowledge transfer**

a) Are your knowledge and our experience valued here? \*By your superiors? In the team?

i) *🡪 IF YES:* Can you name a few examples?

ii)🡪 *IF NO:* Do you have an idea why not?

b) Would you or do you share your knowledge with your colleagues?

c) What would you like to pass on before you retire?

d) How could you company support the knowledge transfer between older and younger workers? \*How can workers best learn from each other?

e) In your opinion, what else could be improved around here?

f) Do you have any further questions or remarks? *<Time for questions>*

Thank you for your time, help, and support.

1. \* indicates follow-up questions to stimulate participant responses [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. see Figure 1 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)