

# SWOOP PROJECT

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South West  
Opportunities  
for  
Older  
People

# SWOOP

- **Multi-strand, multi-partner EQUAL Project**
- **Aimed at 45+**
- **ESF, RDA funded with partner match**
- **Delivery phase concluded June 2007**
- **Currently disseminating lessons learned, & mainstreaming**

# SWOOP Strands

- **Employers Strand**
  - Combating workplace age discrimination
  - Preparing employers for legislation
- **Skills and Learning**
  - Helping older workers become or remain economically active
  - IAG and development
- **E-Portfolio**
  - Developing and piloting on-line assessment and development tool targeted at older workers.

# Skills and Learning

## Age Concern Training

- Workwise project - IAG ,PDP, job search and work preparation
- Supported employment

## CareerFinder/PRIME

- SEESAM – I & A, Self-Employment preparation
- IAY – brief IAG intervention for older people at life crossroads

## Exeter CVS,

- IAG, Volunteer Placement, Basic Skills, Work Preparation

# ePortfolio

- **The development of an ePortfolio solution to**
  - **Support the process of representation & recognition of older peoples' experience, capacities, aptitudes & attainments**
  - **Utilise the output of supported ePortfolio preparation to enhance the process of gaining or developing employment for the individual and the employer**

# Project achievements

- **Approximately 400 beneficiaries recruited**
- **Almost 70% aged 50-59**
- **28% no qualifications, 28% with Levels 4 & 5 and others distributed variously across Levels 1-3**
- **A quarter had not worked for more than 3 years**
- **30+ in volunteer placements**
- **Approximately 80 have gone into employment or self-employment**
- **Approximately 70 have received training in self-employment skills**
- **Less than 2% progressed from the project to F/T education or training**



# Are the old dogs keen to learn new tricks?

- **The older people are, the less likely they are to learn**

niace, 2006

- **Large proportions of older workers do not take up the opportunity to train**

Urwin, 2004

- **Less than 20% of SWOOP participants expressed a strong interest in the education of training aspects of the programme**

SWOOP, 2007

## On the positive side...

- **3 in 10 of 55-64 group are current/recent participants in learning**

niace, 2002

- **More people in the later stages of working life are actively pursuing work-related study than were 10 - 20 years ago**

niace, 2007

- **Most popular area of learning for 50+: ICT and Visual and Performing Arts and Media, non-accredited, non-vocational**

niace, 2005

# Why older people resist...

- **Lack the confidence to acquire new skills**
- **Redundant or unnecessary as they can see no benefit**
- **Sometimes over-skilled for current job, so do not see it as relevant to them**
- **Done enough learning in life**
- **Too late in life to acquire skills they have managed to survive without for so long**

Research from dfes, IES, CROW, DWP

# Why older people resist...

- Can't afford the courses
- Health problems
- Not encouraged by employers
- Reluctance to attend colleges as they have poor perceptions or bad memories
- Don't have time – perhaps because of conflicting priorities or the accumulated demands of maturity

Research from dfes, IES, CROW, DWP

# Expectancy



# How do we address the issue?

- Is the Expectancy Model valid?
- If YES, how can we use it to increase take up of skills development opportunities for older people?
- If NO, are there other frameworks and approaches that we should adopt to engage older learners?