

Retiring Boomers may fill needs in churches

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DALLAS—A surge of Baby Boomers does not necessarily mean a wave of retirements, but it does mean business as usual may change.

Casey Bailey, senior human resources consultant with HRHouston Group—which serves the Baptist General Convention of Texas, Buckner Baptist Benevolences and South Texas Children's Home—already sees many Baby Boomers who want to work well past what traditionally has been called retirement age.

In general, she sees supervisors and senior management working longer, while individuals in administrative and clerical positions retire earlier. The retirement decisions are tied directly to individual health, financial resources and potential for retirement health benefits. This dynamic actually will help businesses as they become led by younger generations because the transition will be smoother, Bailey said.

Baby Boomers are able to share their knowledge and experiences with younger people over a longer period of time. Younger generations will gain

valuable information that, when coupled with their strong technology skills and higher education, cause them to become a greater asset in the workplace, she noted.

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Younger generations bring new ideas and methods to an organization, Bailey observed. They may want to implement a new structure or utilize more technology than the Boomers. As more Boomers and younger individuals attain mid-management and senior-level positions, the culture of an organization will change.

Some organizations, particularly churches, may benefit from hiring retired people on a part-time basis, Bailey said. Many retired people look for work to supplement their income or provide health benefits. This could be especially helpful to small congregations looking for a pastor. Experienced ministers may be looking for just such a church where they can serve.

Above all, the wave of Baby Boomers pushing toward retirement means organizations must plan in providing benefits to employees that will assist them to plan for retirement, Bailey said. Retirees most likely will need more benefits and for a longer period of time due to the continuing rise of healthcare and related expenses.

The rising cost of health insurance easily can add up over time, leaving organizations scrambling to continue to care for employees and retirees. To prevent this, Bailey recommends organizations regularly evaluate their benefit programs. It is possible to cut costs while maintaining comprehensive benefit plans, she said.

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