

## Type 1. Multiple Choice (one answer from 4 options)

*[Note: This is a shortened extract from a Part 1 IELTS exam text about older people in the workforce.]*

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The general assumption is that older workers are paid more because of their seniority rather than because of their productivity. That probably explains why, when employers need to cut staff costs, they persuade older workers to take early retirement. Take away seniority-based pay scales, and older workers may become a much more attractive employment proposition.

Faced with the need to cut staff costs, and having decided to concentrate cuts on 55 to 60-year olds, IBM Belgium using a new approach, set up a separate company called Skill Team, which re-employed any of the early retired who wanted to go on working up to the age of 60. The company offered services to IBM, thus allowing it to retain access to some of the intellectual capital it would otherwise have lost.

The best way to tempt the old to go on working may be to build on such 'bridge' jobs: part-time or temporary employment that creates a more gradual transition from full-time work to retirement. There seem to be two very different types of bridge job-holder – those who continue working because they have to and those who continue working because they want to, even though they could afford to retire.

If the job market grows more flexible, the old may find more jobs that suit them. Often, they will be self-employed. Sometimes, they start their own businesses: a study by David Storey of Warwick University found that in Britain 70% of businesses started by people over 55 survived, compared with an overall national average of only 19%.

Questions 1 – 4

Choose the correct letter, **A**, **B**, **C** or **D**.

Write the correct letter in boxes 1-4 on your answer sheet.

- 1 In paragraph one, the writer suggests that companies could consider
- A** abolishing pay schemes that are based on age.
  - B** avoiding pay that is based on piece-rates.
  - C** increasing pay for older workers.
  - D** equipping older workers with new skills.
- 2 Skill Team is an example of a company which
- A** offers older workers increases in salary.
  - B** allows people to continue working for as long as they want.
  - C** allows the expertise of older workers to be put to use.
  - D** treats older and younger workers equally.
- 3 According to the writer, 'bridge' jobs
- A** tend to attract people in middle-salary ranges.
  - B** are better paid than some full-time jobs.
  - C** originated in the United States.
  - D** appeal to distinct groups of older workers.
- 4 David Storey's study found that
- A** people demand more from their work as they get older.
  - B** older people are good at running their own businesses.
  - C** an increasing number of old people are self-employed.
  - D** few young people have their own businesses.