Hannes Zacher, University of Queensland

Abstract: Proactivity, or the tendency to initiate changes and to “make things happen”, is generally seen as a desirable attribute in the work context. However, hardly any research has investigated how ageing and adult development impact on proactivity at work. In this seminar, I will outline the core elements of a lifespan perspective on proactivity at work. To this end, I will integrate theories and empirical evidence from the lifespan psychology literature with research on proactive personality and behaviour in the field of organisational psychology. I will discuss how a proactive personality can become either an asset or a liability with regard to successful ageing at work. In addition, I will describe how the underlying motivations as well as contextual opportunities and constraints for proactive behaviours may change across adulthood, and how younger and older workers may differ in the types of proactive behaviours they engage in. I will present findings from studies with workers and job seekers that provide preliminary support for the propositions of the lifespan perspective on proactivity.

Presenter: Hannes is a lecturer, ARC research fellow (Discovery Early Career Researcher Award) and director of the Centre for Organisational Psychology in the School of Psychology at UQ. He received his PhD in industrial and organisational psychology from the University of Giessen (Germany) in 2009, and was a postdoctoral fellow at the Jacobs Centre on Lifelong Learning and Institutional Development at Jacobs University Bremen (Germany) from 2009 to 2010. His research focuses on successful ageing and development in the work context and other factors contributing to organisational sustainability, including innovation, entrepreneurship, and pro-environmental behaviours. His work has appeared in Journals such as Journal of Organisational Behaviour, Leadership Quarterly, Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, and Psychology and Aging.

Date: Friday 29 November 2013
Time: 12:00-1:00pm followed by Sandwich Reception
Venue: BUSN 142 Sir Rod Eddington Case Study Room
Registration: Siew.Wade@uwa.edu.au by 26/11/2013
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