



EASYJET MORE THAN DOUBLES OVER 50S CABIN CREW AND IS NOW LAUNCHING A NEW RECRUITMENT DRIVE ENCOURAGING MORE TO JOIN

News / Airlines



easyJet revealed that since first launching its initiative to recruit older workers in 2022, the number of cabin crew over the age of 50 has now more than doubled (up 127%) at the airline, with over 60s almost quadrupling in numbers. Now, with a brand-new recruitment drive for hundreds of new crew roles for 2027 set to open next month, the airline wants to encourage even more to join. Since first inspiring ‘empty nesters’ to join their high-flying ranks back in 2022, adults over the age of 50 have increasingly pivoted to a career in the skies as cabin crew at easyJet, bringing with them transferable skills, years of experience, and enthusiasm in abundance.

New data from easyJet reveals that 4 in 5 (80%) UK adults who have made a career change after 50 reported an improvement in their overall happiness. Key drivers include regaining a sense of control over life and work (78%), feeling more capable (74%) and increased confidence (71%). What’s more, 69% said pivoting taught them what they truly want out of a career and 65% wished

they'd made the change sooner, while almost 9 in 10 (88%) would encourage others in their age group to learn a new skill.

The research showed Travel and Tourism to be the most attractive sector for a career change after the age of 50, followed by Creative Arts, Media and Design, and Health, Science and Care. Top reasons for seeking a job change later in life include wanting more job flexibility (41%), greater job satisfaction and fulfilment (38%), and wanting new experiences (32%).

easyJet's 2024 'Returnships' initiative offered free in person and online cabin crew taster sessions for hundreds of interested career changers over 50, after research showed nearly three quarters (74%) agreed it was the perfect age to change careers and 67% had considered returning to work. However, prior to applying, over a quarter (28%) assumed cabin crew was a job for younger workers, with 46% concerned that they'd be the oldest in their cohort.

Part of that journey was Francesca Hicks. Aged 64 and a former secretary, and nurse for those living with dementia, Francesca was seeking an opportunity to adapt her skills and broaden her horizons. She attended a taster open day, submitted her formal application, and completed a series of interviews before joining her easyJet cabin crew training course. 18 months on, she is now fully trained cabin crew member and has taken to the skies over 250 times - and counting.

Francesca Hicks said: "When the opportunity to join easyJet as cabin crew came up, I jumped at the chance. I knew I already held all the skills required for the job, but it gave me another way to use my communication, organisation and interpersonal skills in a new and exciting setting. The reception both I, and my fellow new joiners have received has been overwhelmingly positive. This, and the experiences I've had over the past 18 months has given me a confidence and sense of fulfilment that I'll take with me through the next stage of my career."

Today, the increase in more over 50s has brought a strong culture of mentorship amongst easyJet's crew. Over half of over 50s surveyed (53%) said they feel like a mentor to younger colleagues, while three quarters (76%) agreed they felt welcome and that age doesn't matter on board. Customers agree, with 68% of crew surveyed saying that travellers of all ages are happy to see multi-generational representation on board, while 55% say travellers often express delight at seeing people their own age operating the flight.

4 in 5 UK adults who have made a career change after 50 (79%) now feel their age is an asset in the workplace not a barrier, and feel they brought key transferable skills, with the most common being problem-solving (40%), handling unexpected or stressful situations with a calm composure (35%), and strong communication (33%) making many excellent candidates for the role. Three quarters of respondents (76%) felt that a later in life career change renewed their excitement about working through their 50s, 60s and beyond, and a quarter (25%) say they want to stay in their new role for as long as possible.

Michael Brown, Director of Cabin Services at easyJet commented: "It's been incredibly encouraging to see the numbers of cabin crew over 50 more than double since 2022 - evidence that many are increasingly viewing cabin crew as a fantastic career pivot regardless of age. We want more over 50s to apply as they not only bring their existing skills to excel in a career at easyJet, but also a wealth of life experience that is appreciated by our customers and colleagues alike, which is at the heart of the fantastic service our crew are known for. With hundreds of cabin crew roles set to be available across the UK, we would encourage even more to apply, and we look forward to seeing this community at easyJet grow further in the years to come."

For those over 50s already flying with easyJet the benefits of a career pivot have been huge. Two

thirds (66%) say they thrive on engaging with passengers, while over half (55%) like the variety of each day bringing something new. Crucially, 4 in 5 (80%) felt supported and valued for their life experience from day one, three quarters (75%) found the training built their confidence faster than expected, and 85% were pleased with how multigenerational and welcoming the team were.

Minister for Employment, Andrew Western MP, stated: "This is a fantastic opportunity for people to land a new role in an exciting sector. Supportive employers like EasyJet know the breadth of experience over 50s can bring to the workforce – and it shows what can be achieved when this is valued. From our major youth employment drive to supporting people later in life, our mission is to Get Britain Working by spreading opportunity to every postcode so everyone can build meaningful careers and boost our economy."

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