Serving Older Passengers
Training manual for bus drivers

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SERVING OLDER PASSENGERS
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SERVING OLDER PASSENGERS
Foreword

Salzburg AG works together with Zentrum für Generationen & Barrierefreiheit (ZGB, Center for Generations and Accessibility) to meet the public transportation needs of elderly passengers and to improve their safety.

In addition to the training courses that we have specially developed for senior citizens, our training sessions for drivers also focus on the needs of elderly passengers.

Practical experience shows that even the smallest efforts can make a big contribution to customer satisfaction and reduce stress for drivers and passengers alike.

These training manuals have been developed as part of the EU project Attaining Energy-Efficient Mobility in an Ageing Society (AENEAS). They support transportation companies in integrating “soft skills” into their driver training programmes with respect to daily interactions with elderly people.

Due to demographic changes, elderly people are becoming an increasingly important target group in public transportation. In the future, they will be essential to the economic success of transportation companies.

We wish you every success in implementing this programme. As consultants with experience in Salzburg, we are available to assist you in introducing projects for senior citizens.
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This manual was compiled for trainers and contains instructions for training procedures along with background information about each PowerPoint slide on the training DVD.

For each key topic there are PowerPoint slides, learning goals, related background information, exercises and additional material.

Some of the topics require the additional materials available in the “toolbox”, as well as flipchart, pens, paper and adhesive dots. The training session takes the form of a PowerPoint presentation and includes interactive elements.

The entire training session lasts approximately three hours and should include two 10-minute breaks. Although the timing of the breaks is flexible, we recommend combining one break with the “self-awareness” experiment (slide 19).
The training course is divided into seven sections:

I. General
II. Demographic changes, the future
III. Significance for the company — gaining customers, keeping customers
IV. What is old age? Typical age-related changes
V. The importance of mobility
VI. The importance of respect, friendliness and helpfulness
VII. Summary and outlook

How the training course is organised depends on the personal experience of the trainer and on the participating drivers.

We recommend that all discussions, results and presentations are recorded and made available to participants at the end of the training session.

“Toolbox” contents:

- Training DVD with PowerPoint presentation and video clips
- Film on the topic “Training for bus drivers”
- Film on the topic “Safety training for senior citizens”
- Questionnaire (original copy)
- Magnifying glass
• Simulation glasses + earplugs
• Adhesive dots
• Reading sample (master copy for slide 16)

Additional illustrative material from Salzburg:
• Brochure for elderly passengers: “Be Safe by Bus”
• Package with seven “Experience Salzburg!” leaflets
• Leaflet containing mobility tips and an invitation to a training course for senior citizens
• Mobility Day leaflet
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**SECTION I — General**

**Learning goal**
This brainstorming session serves as a warm-up exercise and is an opportunity to clarify the level of participants’ knowledge on the topic. The introductory questions should assist the trainer to find the most appropriate approach and/or to gauge the experience of the participants.

**Work task: Introductory questions to participants**
**Themes:** “Why are we sitting here?”, “What immediately comes to mind in connection with elderly passengers?” “Is the topic of elderly passengers important?”

**Process:** Questions are directed to all participants and answers emerge as a result of brainstorming. The trainer should make a note of comments and/or important issues. Reference can then be made to personal contributions by participants throughout the rest of the training.

**Time required:** Between five and 10 minutes (depending on group size and participation)

**Materials required:** None
Learning goal (slides 3 & 4)
Participants are encouraged to develop an understanding of senior citizens’ need for more time. Drivers need to recognise that allowing their passengers additional time will make driving smoother. They are asked to share their experiences and express their frustrations.

Background information (slides 3 & 4)
Public transportation operations are very tightly calculated: schedules allow little freedom and delays must be avoided. This is in direct contrast to the needs of senior citizens, who are safer when they have more time. Conflicts are inevitable. The tempo of public transportation can be frightening for elderly people, who find it difficult to keep up. The resulting stress often leads to errors of judgement and accidents.

Slide 3
Drivers’ problems — daily stressors
- Time pressure due to schedules
- Conflicts with other road users (car drivers, cyclists, pedestrians)
- Hold-ups caused by breakdowns, construction works, traffic jams etc.
- Demanding passengers
- Accidents
Work task: Group work (slides 3 & 4)

Task 1: Working out problems that drivers have with elderly passengers

Task 2: Working out problems that elderly passengers have with public transportation (Note: this has nothing to do with what elderly passengers are doing wrong.)

Process: Divide participants into two groups and assign one of the tasks to each group. Results should be noted on the flip chart and then presented to the other group.

Time required: Approximately 15 minutes for the group work and three minutes for each group presentation.

Materials required: Flipchart, paper, pens

Slide 4

Elderly passengers’ problems – daily anxiety and insecurity

- Time pressure: everything moves too fast
- Too much technology and too many innovations
- Doors closing too quickly
- Vehicles travelling too fast
- Getting on and off vehicles when other passengers are pushing
- Finding a seat and sitting down before the vehicle starts moving
- Reaching connecting buses
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SECTION II — Demographic changes, the future

Learning goal (slide 7)
The risks arising as a result of demographic trends and the related potential for transportation companies are discussed. Participants are encouraged to recognise the responsibility of transportation companies as mobility providers. The discussion should include an analysis of the age pyramid (and how it is affected by wars, life expectancy) and consideration of personal concerns (parents, grandparents, number of children).

Background information (slide 7)
According to projections by the Statistical Office of the European Union (Eurostat), the proportion of the total population over 50 years of age will increase from the current 35 percent to 49 percent by 2050. This also means that approximately 40 percent more people will be working and using the roads in their free time. As a result, the road system will have to cope with nearly 40 percent more private cars if advance action is not taken to promote alternative mobility modes.
One such action is to familiarise elderly people with using the public transport system or, where there are insecurities, to provide targeted measures to overcome them. Ensuring mobility and independence among the elderly will be a key issue in the future. Burdens on society, in the form of increased healthcare costs due to loss of mobility, can be significantly reduced by adapting local public transportation to the needs of senior citizens. Courses for drivers and instructions for older passengers on using public transportation will help prevent accidents and contribute to improving the overall situation.

**Slide 8**

**Car drivers and climate change**
- A generation of car drivers is ageing
- Cars are used increasingly often for short trips
- Car drivers find public transportation unattractive
- More and more women have a driver’s licence and own a car
- There is a lack of information on optimal public transportation use

= Approximately 40 percent more private cars will be on the roads in 2050

**Learning goal (slide 8)**

It is important for participants to recognise the responsibility and pivotal role of public transportation companies in relation to environmental protection and as mobility providers. Drivers’ environmental awareness should be raised, and they should be encouraged to regard their work as a vital contribution to environmental protection.
Background information (slide 8)

Ecological and economic responsibility in the future

While the current generation of parents and grandparents tend to walk, cycle or use public transportation, future generations are likely to be tied to car use. This is particularly true of women, who have become drivers and car owners in significant numbers only in recent years. As long as people continue to use their cars into old age as a normal form of mobility, and as long as they do not question, and are not encouraged to question, doing so, the burden on the environment will increase in the coming decades. This includes a sharp increase in CO₂ emissions and noise pollution, and a rise in the spatial demands of passenger cars within the overall volume of traffic. An important aspect of the dialogue for more “gentle” mobility is therefore to point out suitable alternatives to private car use. Promoting environmentally friendly ways of getting around, such as walking and cycling, using public transportation, car pooling or organising collective driving services, are all part of this. Demonstrating multi-modal forms of mobility allows us to expand the theoretical and practical spectrum of action.
SECTION III — Significance for the company: Gaining customers, keeping customers

Learning goal (slides 9 & 10)
Participants should recognise that a public transportation company is providing and selling a service, and that the profits from sales ensure the company’s economic success and safeguard jobs.

Background information (slides 9 & 10)
Public transportation systems are commonly thought of as being state enterprises that are highly influenced by politics, especially in the area of price setting. This is a misconception. Transportation companies are in fact usually private companies that offer products and services and that need to operate profitably.

Passengers are paying to use a service, and ticket sales generate the transportation company’s income. Having more passengers means generating more income. It is therefore in the economic interests of every transportation company to achieve high (but still socially compatible) profits from ticket sales.

However, the company is selling a service, which implies the need to provide customer satisfaction. All citizens should be able to use public transportation comfortably and independently, including elderly people and the very old. Such high-quality service can only be ensured by qualified and dedicated drivers.
Learning goal (slide 11)
As the proportion of older people within the total population rises, their economic significance for public transportation companies is also increasing. It is therefore very important for transportation companies to hold on to their older customers for as long as possible in order to ensure the companies’ financial success.

Background information (slide 11)
Demographic trends clearly indicate that in the future there will be fewer children and thus fewer students using the buses. Until now, students have ensured basic bus financing in many counties, safeguarded by agreements with municipalities, counties or the federation. With a drop in student numbers, these funds will be reduced.
In order for transport companies to survive, action must be taken to cover this future loss of revenue by increasing the income received from elderly passengers. Companies must make efforts to retain elderly customers into advanced old age while at the same time actively attracting new passengers from the senior citizens target group. In the future, more and more very old people will need to rely on public transportation, but it is only when they are happy to use the buses regularly that this important source of income will be ensured.

The formula for the future is simple: the more senior citizens gained as passengers, the greater the transportation company’s income and the more secure jobs.

**Learning goal (slide 12)**
Participants are shown that each employee can contribute to the success of the company. Driving staff are also responsible for positively shaping the public image of the transportation company. Bus drivers should bear in mind that they are the company’s calling card.

**Background information (slide 12)**
Bus drivers are generally the only people in the company who come into direct contact with customers. Drivers’ conduct is therefore directly equated with the company’s image. In addition to driving, their job includes ticket sales and customer service. If a driver is friendly and service-oriented, the entire company is perceived as friendly and helpful. But if a driver is disrespectful and inconsiderate, it reflects poorly on the company as a whole. Since each driver is responsible for shaping the image of the company, a successfully operating public transportation company needs good and reliable employees. The company’s income is from its passengers, who, in the final analysis, can be regarded as the employer.
Work task: Open discussion before the presentation of slide 12

**Theme:** “What opportunities do you have as a driver to contribute to the success of the company?”

**Process:** The trainer asks the question and moderates the subsequent discussion. The results/ideas from participants are noted on the flipchart and then related to the following slide.

**Time required:** 10 to 15 minutes

**Materials required:** Flipchart, pens

**Learning goal (slide 13)**
Elderly people are often loyal customers as long as their needs are met. If they have a bad experience, they may be lost for good as customers.
Elderly passengers ...
... are usually loyal and satisfied customers;
... are generally more appreciative than younger customers;
... often express their gratitude for good public transportation services;
... are sensitive to being treated disrespectfully;
... withdraw when they have a bad experience.
Background information (slide 13)

As people get older, walking becomes more difficult and cycling becomes dangerous. Once they reach the age of 80, people tend to give up driving because they are no longer physically capable or because they no longer feel safe. In order to remain mobile for as long as possible, elderly people therefore become dependent on public transport.

The good news: According to passenger surveys, elderly people are often more satisfied than younger passengers with the services provided by transportation companies — and they are happy to talk about it. They are less demanding and self-absorbed. Many of them use public transportation on a daily basis, even for short trips, and are very loyal customers.

The bad news: Senior citizens are deeply affected when not treated with due respect or when their needs in relation to safety, accessibility and user friendliness are disregarded. Again, they are happy to talk about their experiences and can contribute to shaping the image of a public transportation company. If elderly passengers frequently have bad experiences when using the buses (rudeness, accidents) they will stop travelling by bus altogether. While this results in them losing mobility and independence, it also means that the transportation company loses valuable paying customers.
Work task: Discussion group (before slide 14)

**Theme:** “What is good customer service?”

**Process:** The trainer asks the question and moderates the subsequent discussion. The results/ideas from participants are noted on the flipchart and then related to the following slide.

**Time required:** Maximum 10 to 15 minutes, depending on participation

**Materials required:** Flipchart, pens, projector

**Learning goal (slide 14)**

A transportation company is a service company and must always look for ways to offer more services to its customers. Bus drivers must ensure customer satisfaction, especially among elderly passengers. Providing variety will be appreciated by customers and will increase employees’ satisfaction.
Transporting passengers from A to B is only the basic service provided by the transportation company. It will not attract new customers, nor will it ensure the long-term commitment of existing customers. Customers are satisfied when something additional is offered. A smile, for example, is the best and most economical form of customer service: it creates a pleasant atmosphere and inspires trust. It also enriches the employee’s own working day.

Good customer service implies meeting the concrete needs of passengers:

- lowering bus floors;
- stopping closer to the pavement;
- waiting until passengers are safely on board or have safely left the vehicle; and
- having consideration for passengers arriving late.
Discussion idea (slide 14)

**Themes:** “How do you surprise your customers?” “What is your special service?” “What makes your passengers more satisfied than others?” “What distinguishes a special service-oriented employee?”

**Process:** The trainer notes down ideas for enriching everyday work and enhancing customer satisfaction. Copies are distributed to participants.

**Time required:** About 15 minutes, depending on participation
Learning goal (slide 15)
Retaining elderly passengers into advanced old age and attracting senior citizens as new passengers are both important goals. Good customer service is the key to success and can be supported by special offers for senior citizens.

Background information (slide 15)
Retaining existing customers is easier than attracting new ones. In both cases, however, good service is essential to success. In gaining new customers, two large target groups should be considered.
**Pensioners**

In the transition from working life to retirement, habits and activities change and the focus shifts to looking after oneself and enjoying one’s leisure time. In order to retain newly retired people as public transport customers, it is very important to respond to their wishes and requests immediately and proactively. Pensioners must feel that travelling by bus is uncomplicated, pleasant, comfortable and safe. If they experience excessive demands or insecurity, or if they feel threatened and anxious, they will quickly lose confidence and will be lost for good as paying customers.

**Elderly car drivers**

Elderly people who have formerly been reliant on private car use are often obliged to give up driving for health reasons. In order to maintain their mobility they are often forced to learn to use public transportation. Good customer service in this case means eliminating fear and providing all the necessary help so that potentially unwilling passengers learn to value public transportation as a pleasant, safe and comfortable form of mobility.
SECTION IV — What is old age?
Typical age-related changes

Learning goal (slide 18)
Eyesight changes significantly in old age. An important element of the training is therefore to encourage drivers to respond with more understanding and sensitivity to the safety needs of elderly passengers. Participants can also learn how to slow down their own ageing process by appropriate measures, including wearing sunglasses, ensuring an adequate intake of vitamins and protecting the eyes.

Background information (slide 18)
Age-related changes in eyesight are caused by a variety of physiological changes that are too numerous and complex to list in the context of this training course. Generally speaking, however, these changes mean that elderly people need more time to orient themselves and to feel safe when using public transportation. To beware means to be alert to danger, that is, to be aware of potential problems so that precautions can be taken.

It is also important to bear in mind that elderly people find it hard to retrieve information, for example from timetables, especially when the information is poorly presented. Older passengers may find that text printed in 12 pt. type is barely legible and will therefore ask for information from the driver even when a timetable is available.
**Work task: Practice — experiencing something yourself**

**Themes:** Understanding poor eyesight through personal experience.

**Process:** Text samples and timetables are distributed; participants put on the supplied glasses and read the texts while walking around the room.

**Time required:** About 5 minutes

**Materials required:** Simulation glasses, text samples from the toolbox, timetable
Hearing in old age
- Symmetrical hearing loss on both sides
- Reduced directional hearing
- Difficulties perceiving higher frequencies (e.g. bicycle bells)
- Trouble understanding speech
- Slower processing of tones and speech sounds
- Delayed reaction to acoustic signals (e.g. door signal)

Learning goal (slide 19)
Participants can experience for themselves how hearing changes due to the natural ageing process and gain awareness of the difficulties this can cause.

Background information (slide 19)
We all know that our hearing deteriorates as we get older, although most of us tend to deny it for as long as possible. Many older people are reluctant to start using a hearing aid, which is a significant handicap when it comes to traffic safety. Drivers should assume that many of their passengers cannot hear very well.
Work task I: Group exercise

Themes: “What does the transmitter need to take into account for the recipient to get the message?” “How can I get an older passenger to understand me when they cannot hear very well?”

Process: Participants should form groups and discuss the most important criteria for successful communication. These should be noted on a flipchart and briefly presented to the other groups.

Time required: 10 minutes plus a three-minute presentation per group

Materials required: Flipcharts, pens

Work task II: Experiment during the break

Themes: Communication during the break should take place with an artificially imposed hearing impairment.

Process: All participants should be given earplugs to wear during the break. This simple exercise will make them keenly aware of the needs of people who are hard of hearing. Participants can reflect on the experience after the break.

Time required: Break time plus five minutes to reflect after the break.

Materials required: Ear plugs from the toolbox
Learning goal (slide 20)
The aim is to gain understanding of changes in elderly passengers’ ability to hear, and for drivers to adjust their behaviour to the special needs of elderly people.

Background information (slide 20)
Hearing deteriorates as part of the natural ageing process. Between the ages of 65 and 70 (or in some cases even earlier), this is manifested in a sharp elevation in the auditory threshold. This mainly affects high-frequency tones, which become more difficult to perceive.

Elderly people often suffer from impaired speech perception. Unclear, rapid speech and background noise will compound such problems. In addition, high-tone soft consonants and groups of consonants such as f, g, s, sh and t are often hard to distinguish, leading to confusion and misunderstanding.

Learning goal (slide 21)
Participants acquire a basic knowledge and understanding of the physiological changes to the musculoskeletal system. They will then recognise the dangers elderly people face according to the principle “minor causes — major problems”.

Background information (slide 21)
With ageing, hand grip strength declines 30 to 40 percent. Older people have difficulty holding onto things and grabbing something to prevent themselves from falling. If possible, bus drivers should wait until elderly passengers have safely taken their seats before driving off.
Difficulties or slowness in standing up make it very hard for elderly passengers to get up and walk to the doors while the bus is moving. It is therefore very important for drivers to check in their inside mirror to see whether elderly passengers are able to get to the exit doors.

Another balance-related problem is that shoulder joints are susceptible to age-related pain and limited movement. This means that hanging hand straps are completely unsuitable for older passengers.

Due to the higher incidence of osteoporosis, even the smallest fall can have a devastating effect on an elderly passenger. A minor overload can lead to a complicated bone break, and the slower healing process can result in immobility.

Changes to the musculoskeletal system also make precise stepping more difficult due to slowness and reduced step length and step height. This makes climbing steps particularly hard, thus increasing the
risk of falling when getting on or off the bus, or in general when the bus is moving. Being less agile, any kind of larger movement can be problematic (such as negotiating the gap between the vehicle and the pavement).

**Learning goal (slide 22)**
The human sense of balance is a very complex system that depends on many factors. Changes to the organs of equilibrium in the inner ear, to sensory perception in general and to the circulation system during the natural ageing process all affect the balance. Changes in the motor system can be attributed to the age-related deterioration in balance.

**Slide 22**

**Sense of balance**
- Miscalculation of movements, longer reaction times and imprecise movements (especially of the head)
- Delay in posture-correcting responses
- Poorer awareness and preplanning of movements, changes in balance strategies
- Difficulty coping with sudden movements that can cause the body to sway backwards
- Dizziness
Background information (slide 22)
Balance is the ability of the body to assume an upright posture and carry out targeted movements when freely sitting or standing. Our sense of balance weakens as we age: movements are misjudged and reaction times are slower. Counterbalancing movements also become more difficult and new strategies for maintaining balance have to be developed. Sudden motions can cause the body to sway backwards, which elderly people find difficult to cope with. Many elderly people suffer from frequent or constant dizziness, a problem that is exacerbated by the motion of a vehicle. Senior citizens therefore usually prefer to sit facing the direction of travel.

Learning goal (slide 23)
In order to prevent misunderstanding and avoid having to repeat something several times, good communication with elderly passengers is essential. Important aspects to remember are eye contact, clear articulation, and the appropriate volume.

Background information (slide 23)
“Saying something is not necessarily hearing it. Hearing something is not necessarily understanding it. Agreeing with something is not necessarily grasping it.” (Paul Watzlawik)

Communication is inherently challenging. Communication between younger and older people is no exception. In fact, there are additional challenges in this case between the transmitter and receiver due to the physiological process of ageing.
Eye contact
When speaking to an elderly passenger, it is important to make eye contact. This makes it easier for the older person to understand what is being said, as words that are not heard clearly can be interpreted with the help of facial expression, lip reading and gestures.

Articulation and volume
Clear, plain and measured articulation makes it easier to comprehend what is heard. Drivers must speak at an appropriate volume, taking care not to speak too loudly or shout.

Interference
Interference or background noise often makes it harder for elderly people to understand what is being said. They cannot always be avoided, especially in traffic, thus special attention should be paid to eye contact, clear articulation and appropriate volume.
SECTION V — The importance of mobility

Background information
Mobility can be defined as the “quality of moving freely”. It is important for all of us to be mobile and to stay mobile for as long as possible. Whether on foot, by public transport, in one’s own car or a shared car, or with a travel companion, staying mobile ensures participation, independence, quality of life and vitality, and it enables us to cope with everyday life.

It is important to remember that elderly people are not always travelling for enjoyment: they need to move around in order to look after themselves and others. Senior citizens have obligations and need to be punctual for appointments (e.g. at the doctor’s). Needing to arrive on time so as not to cause difficulties for themselves and others may cause additional stress when travelling.

Slide 24-25
Video Clip:
“What does it mean to you to be independently mobile?”
“What would it mean to you to lose your independence?”
Learning goal (slide 26)
Mobility is important for citizens of all ages. Drivers can be encouraged to understand the influence of their own work in the social context.

Background information (slide 26)
It is a common misconception that mobility is all about long trips and permanently being on the move. In fact, mobility is first and foremost about being able to move optimally and safely when the need arises, and staying mobile in order to look after our families and ourselves, if possible without any outside help. Mobility means participation in society, quality of life, vitality and independence.
Work task: Group work

Themes: “What would it mean to you personally to be immobile?” “Can you imagine, for instance, being stuck in your home even temporarily due to injury or illness?” “What consequences would this have on your life?”

Process: Participants should form groups and discuss what immobility would mean for their lives. They should also discuss how needing help influences feelings of self-worth.

Time required: 10 minutes plus a three-minute presentation per group

Materials required: Flipchart, pens

Slide 27

Mobile people save (us all) money!

In addition to personal benefits and independence, mobility means:

- Reduced expense on support services and assistance
- Positive impact on mental health
- Positive impact on physical health
- Fewer falls and accidents = lower medical costs for acute care and rehabilitation
Learning goal (slide 27)
Economic considerations are part of the big picture. Drivers should appreciate that their own work is an extremely important contribution to others’ successful participation in society.

Background information (slide 27)
There will be far fewer young people in the future than ever before, and a far larger group of elderly people. This reversal in the age pyramid will mean, among other things, that there will be a shortage of care assistants and nurses. Covering the costs of caring for so many elderly people will present an enormous challenge.

In the context of this demographic trend, it will become more and more important to support elderly people to stay independent for as long as they can in order to reduce costs. Public transportation companies will make a decisive contribution by enabling mobility.

Learning goal (slides 28 & 29)
The goal of this sequence is to convey to training course participants that it is also up to them whether and how long elderly people can care for themselves independently. As a responsible driver, you can make a significant contribution to your passengers’ safety and quality of life.

Background information (slides 28 & 29)
Changes to an elderly person’s musculoskeletal system, sensory perceptions and sense of balance, in combination with the stress of road traffic, can undermine their confidence when using public transport. At
the same time, bus drivers have to negotiate heavy traffic and overcome various difficulties. In this situation, it is vital not to neglect visual and auditory communication in order to prevent loss of confidence.

Most elderly people know the risks they face when travelling. Fear of falling will result in an elderly person avoiding dangerous situations. This means that they give up more and more of their usual activities. This type of withdrawal can lead to severe isolation accompanied by a loss of independence, mobility and quality of life. Feelings of anxiety and insecurity often stop elderly people from using public transportation.
Learning goal (slide 30)
The goal of this sequence is to convey to training course participants that it is also up to them whether and how long elderly people can care for themselves independently. As responsible drivers, they can make a significant contribution to their passengers’ safety and quality of life.

Background information (slide 30)
Style of driving
Elderly people generally have difficulty keeping their balance and have less hand grip strength, making it harder to hold on in a moving vehicle. Quick acceleration from a bus stop and abrupt braking can make elderly passengers anxious. Because of slower response times, they have difficulty with rapid changes in speed and are more likely to fall down. Non-aggressive, courteous driving can help prevent accidents.
**Vehicle condition**
Elderly people are particularly aware of dirt in the vehicles, and rubbish left lying on the floor can cause them to trip and fall.

**Punctuality**
Even people who have retired are unhappy at wasting time waiting. Elderly passengers also have appointments for which they must be punctual.

**Seats**
To an elderly person, a seat means a feeling of security. If no free seats are available when they get on the bus, elderly people are likely to feel anxious. Older passengers generally prefer to sit facing the direction of travel because otherwise they can become dizzy.

**Getting on and off the vehicle**
When boarding or leaving a bus, elderly passengers are at the greatest risk of falling. However, if drivers are considerate, accidents can be prevented.

**Friendliness and courtesy**
Elderly people value personal contact and enjoy exchanging a few words with the driver. They appreciate friendliness and are particularly sensitive to rudeness and lack of respect.
SECTION VI — The importance of respect, friendliness and helpfulness

Learning goal (slides 31, 32 & 33)

Drivers’ attitudes play a crucial role in how other people feel when they use public transport. By making their elderly passengers’ travel experience better or worse, drivers can influence whether they are able to continue leading an independent life.

Slide 31

Act courteously
- Put yourself in the place of your elderly passengers.
- Bear in mind that public transportation is often the only possibility for elderly people to be mobile.
- Understand how a fall can affect an elderly person’s life.
- Be aware that fear of falling can lead to an older person no longer wanting to leave their home.

Video Clip:
“What do you want from a driver?”

Slide 32-33

S E R V I N G O L D E R P A S S E N G E R S
Background information (slides 31, 32 & 33)

Drivers have control over whether the trip is a good experience for passengers or a bad experience that will cause anxiety in the future. Always being aware of this will strongly influence a driver’s driving style and their behaviour towards their elderly passengers or passengers with reduced mobility.

A few points should be borne in mind to ensure that elderly passengers and passengers with reduced mobility find drivers helpful and their bus trip a pleasant experience.

Learning goal (slide 34)

The way that drivers treat elderly passengers and those with reduced mobility will determine how they feel during their trip and whether they will have the confidence to use public transportation in the future.

**Slide 34**

**Respect and consideration**

- Ensure that elderly passengers and passengers with reduced mobility are not made to feel that they are holding up operations or that they are a nuisance.
- Convey the message to elderly passengers that it is entirely normal and acceptable if they need a little extra time.
- Let your passengers know that you are happy to serve them, which will give them a feeling of security.
- Accept old age and reduced mobility as normal and give your passengers the same feeling.
Background information (slide 34)

If elderly passengers are certain of encountering helpful and supportive people every time they travel by public transport, they are far more likely to have the confidence to travel unaccompanied by bus or other form of public transport. Drivers have a decisive role to play here.
Work task discussion idea before slide 34

**Theme:** “How do you express respect, friendliness and helpfulness towards elderly passengers?”

**Process:** Brainstorming and point-based approach: The trainer gathers input and writes key words on the flipchart. Participants then receive three adhesive dots each and are asked to indicate the key words they consider most important.
Time required: 10 minutes

Materials required: Flipchart, three adhesive dots per participant

Learning goal (slide 35)
Participants are encouraged to work out individually what makes a very good driver when it comes to dealing with elderly passengers.

Work task (slide 35)
Themes: Groups should discuss the qualities needed by a perfect driver and how drivers should behave towards elderly passengers.

Process: All participants describe the “perfect driver”. The trainer takes note of the comments and compiles them into five ranked points. A poster is created and hung in the waiting room or on the notice board.

Time required: Five minutes

Materials required: Flipchart, pens
SERVING OLDER PASSENGERS
Background information

Alongside training courses for drivers, other measures can be implemented to help elderly people maintain their mobility. The following measures have been tested in Salzburg in recent years:

- Salzburg Mobility Day for senior citizens, with an exhibition of resources for promoting mobility
- “Experience Salzburg”: a leaflet available on each bus line highlighting Salzburg sites and short walks for the elderly and persons with reduced mobility
- Guided city walks and bus tours
- Safety brochure “Be Safe by Bus!” containing travel tips
- Information stands at weekly markets, street festivals etc.
- Transportation company open days
- Provision of special seats for senior citizens near the bus door
- Improvements to vehicles (signs, grab handles...)
- Marketing and special information directed at senior citizens (posters, leaflets, newspaper articles, direct mailings...)
- Visits to old peoples associations, including transport company presentations with mobility safety tips
**Work task (slide 40)**

**Themes:** Which of the measures shown in the film particularly appealed to the participants? What can and will be undertaken? (Are there further ideas about how safety and service orientation can be increased?)

**Process:** Training course participants vote for their favourite project. A ranking of the different measures is created. This can be the starting point for future action.

**Time required:** About five minutes

**Materials required:** Flipchart, pens