

Age Is An Asset

How many boomers will keep working past traditional retirement age? Estimates range anywhere from half to the vast majority with many boomers saying they plan to work because that's what they want to do. And because many experts are predicting a talent shortage once these boomers retire, there will certainly be a demand for experienced workers.

Advice for Older Workers Looking for a Job

If you're over 40 and unemployed, don't despair. Try these suggestions.

- Keep your skills current. Computer skills are especially important.
- If you've been downsized, look for new work as soon as you can. The longer you're out of work, the harder it will be to get into a new position.
- Seek out companies that want older workers. Networking is especially important for older workers because jobs at the senior levels are the least likely to be advertised.
- Consider flexible options that may be advantageous to both you and the employer, such as a compressed work week, flextime, job reassignment, job redesign, part-time work, job sharing, phased retirement, or telecommuting.
- Consider offering to work during odd hours that younger workers with family obligations might not be able to work.
- Be sure your résumé doesn't identify your age.
- Limit your work experience to 10 to 15 years.

10 Positive Characteristics of Workers Over 50

Below are ten reasons why hiring older workers can help maintain a reliable, dedicated workforce and provide a significant cost savings for both the short and long term.

- **Dedicated** workers produce a high quality of work, which can result in a significant savings in cost.
- **"Punctual"** often describes older workers who are likely to arrive on time and be ready to work.
- **Detail-oriented, focused and attentive** workers add an intangible value that rubs off on all employees and can save a business thousands of dollars.
- **Good listeners** make great employees because they're easier to train; older employees listen carefully because they want to avoid mistakes.
- **Organizational skills** found in older workers mean they are less likely to be a part of this startling statistic: More than a million work hours are lost each year due to workplace disorganization.
- **Efficiency and the confidence** to share their recommendations and ideas make older workers ideal employees.
- **Maturity** comes from years of life and work experience creating workers who get less "rattled" when problems occur. Setting an example for

Have Questions?

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other employees is an intangible value many business owners appreciate.

- **Communication skills** like knowing when and how to communicate generally grow through years of experience.
- **Reduced labor costs** can be a huge benefit when hiring older workers because many have insurance plans from previous employers and other sources of income.
- **Experience and know how** makes older workers more confident in their decisions.

Retirement - Now What?

For many, retirement age is not necessarily the end of working. It may be a career and lifestyle change, where the retiree has multiple options such as continuing to work (though perhaps at a different pace), returning to school for additional training or education, changing careers, starting a business, becoming more involved in volunteer work, or simply enjoying leisure and travel possibilities.

How to Find Employers

Whenever you search for employers, follow these tips:

- Ask everyone you know or run into for ideas of employers to investigate. If this doesn't come naturally for you, set a goal to ask a certain number of people each week. Try for at least five per week. Just ask. Then reward yourself.
- Focus, focus, focus on finding and learning about employers.

- Set a goal for each search session. This can be quick and informal. Just grab scratch paper. At the top, write something like, "Find 10 employers within 25 miles. Get names of someone to call. Use one or two sources only." Another goal may sound more like, "Find five pieces of information that I could use in my interview to show that I understand how the company works and what I could contribute."
- Divide your search into manageable chunks. For example, after finding 10 employers, you could spend another session to "Figure out which of the 10 I'd most want to work for." You could list three positive things and one caution to explore further about each employer.
- Time yourself. Jot down something like, "45 minutes." Use a timer. Search time goes faster than you realize while browsing through books or Web pages. Limiting your time also helps focus the mind.
- Look at employers' own websites to search for job openings. Businesses often post and update openings on their own sites more than they do on big job boards.

Job Networking Websites

www.quintcareers.com
www.jobstar.org
www.employmentspot.com
www.aarp.org/work/



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