

Finding work after 50

Unemployment isn't easy for anyone, regardless of their age. But unemployed men and women over 50 may find it especially difficult to find work.

Whether it's a byproduct of age-related discrimination or any of a host of additional variables, jobless older workers often struggle to find work. In a 2016 analysis of government figures, the Schwartz Center for Economic Policy Analysis at the New School estimated

that the jobless rate for workers 55 and older in August of 2016, six years after the Great Recession, was nearly nine percent. At the time, the national jobless rate hovered around five percent.

Unemployed men and women over 50 who are struggling to find work can consider the following strategies as they look to rejoin the workforce.

- Revisit your résumé. Unemployed men and women over 50 have no doubt

updated their résumés to reflect their most recent professional experience. But they may need to trim some of the fat in regard to their work life 10 or more years ago. Today's hiring managers may only be concerned with recent experience that illustrates skillsets that are relevant to today's jobs. Men and women over 50 may consider their experience from 20 years ago invaluable, but if that experience does not meet the specific needs of the jobs they're now seeking, then they should remove it from their résumés so hiring managers can quickly access the more relevant information from their work histories.

- Embrace 21st century job hunting. Finding a job in the second decade of the 21st century is unlike job hunting in decades prior, and wholly different from how men and women over 50 looked for jobs upon beginning their professional lives. Networking can mean the difference between unemployment and landing a job. Go to job fairs attended by hiring managers and join professional organizations that host events where professionals in your field can gather.

- Turn your age into a positive. Men and women over 50 should accept the likelihood that their new managers and/or hiring managers will be younger than them. When interviewing for a job, men and women over 50 should make an effort to showcase their enthusiasm about working with and learning from younger colleagues, while also noting their desire to commit long-term to a company. Some hiring managers may surprise older ap-



plicants, viewing them as potentially more reliable than younger workers simply looking to gain some experience in a particular industry before moving on to the next opportunity.

- Make use of your existing downtime. Another strategy unemployed men and women over 50 can try as they look for work is to make better use of their existing downtime. Enrolling in online courses can give prospective employers the impression that applicants over 50 are both tech-savvy and willing to learn new things. Each of those things can help men and women over 50 overcome any unjustified, tech-related stigmas that hiring managers may attach to older job candidates.

Finding work after 50 is not always easy, and job seekers may need to adjust their approach before they can get back in the workforce.

How traveling after turning 50 can be great

Many people face turning 50 with a little trepidation. They may miss the things they did during their youth and might feel like the hands of time are moving much too quickly. But instead of looking at aging as growing older, men and women can embrace turning 50 and the growing freedom that typically accompanies reaching this milestone.

Increased opportunities to travel is one aspect of reaching 50 that excites many men and women. Nielsen reports that, over the next five years, around 80 million Americans will fit into the 50+ age bracket. Many of these people will have extra time to devote to leisure activities. AARP, the leading nonprofit organization for aging adults, says that of the people with AARP memberships, nearly two-thirds take advantage of travel discounts and other benefits in a typical year. The following are some such travel perks.

- Age can mean discounts. The minimum age to qualify for "senior" discounts varies among companies and for different products and services, so it's up to travelers to see what is available to them. Not all companies advertise their

senior discounts. Read reviews in travel forums or on travel websites to find out which brands or places offer the best deals.

- More discretionary time. Even if retirement is a ways down the road, older adults may have accrued more vacation time than their younger colleagues. That time can be translated into longer or more frequent trips.

- Age-based memberships. Reaching age 50 or 60 may entitle people to join groups that negotiate deals for their members. For example, the minimum membership age for AARP is 50, meaning travelers who join AARP can enjoy discounts roughly five years before they're eligible for senior discounts offered by other organizations.

- Travel during off seasons. When not constrained by school schedules, men and women over 50 can travel during times of the year when prices are most affordable. This means savings and smaller crowds. This flexibility also can translate into airline discounts, as men and women over 50 with no time constraints can choose to be standby passengers in exchange for discounted or free tickets.

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