

JOB SEARCHING AFTER 50



There is no question that looking for a job gets harder once you've turned 50. Even though age discrimination is illegal, doesn't mean that it never happens. Many of the employers have preconceived assumptions about older people trying to find a job. Among the most common would be that their salaries are higher, their energy is lower and they're not up-to-date on all of the latest technologies. "Recruiters and companies are definitely less interested in hiring people--regardless of how strong their career has been--when they reach the age of 50," says Tucker Mays, who is the co-author of the book "Fired at 50: How to Overcome the Greatest Executive Job Search Challenge." "Many are considered, by this age, to be inflexible in their management style--that they're not going to be able to adjust to, say, smaller companies if they're coming from a larger company. Of if they've been with a smaller company for a long period of time and are now leaving, that they're just going to be doing things the way that one company had trained them for all those years." If you are over the age of 50, the key to a well-done job search is to not only disprove the negative stereotypes that exist, but to also show the employers that you have more benefits because of your extra years of experience. Countering the Age Bias: There are many ways that job seekers over the age of 50 can mitigate employers' subconscious, age-related stereotypes says Bob Sloane, who is also the co-author of "Fired at 50" He says that it is very essential to make a good first impression. "It's so important for [job seekers over 50] to keep in shape, both in order to make that really great first impression and to demonstrate that they have the energy, which is often unfairly expected that they won't. They have to exude that energy." You should also make sure to emphasize your flexible management style, your technological proficiency, your ability to learn new skills and your willingness to work for a younger boss. "Very often today it's going to be likely that somebody over the age of 50 will be interviewing with a prospective boss who is considerably younger," notes Sloane. Proving Your Worth: After many decades in the workforce, the older workers possess more life skills, talent and abilities that the younger workers do not have. When you emphasize those certain strengths, you can set yourself apart from all of the other job seekers. "We cite four great strengths that you develop over time that give 50+ job seekers a superior advantage over younger individuals," says Mays. "They are problem solving skills, people management ability, good judgment and leadership. Experienced workers are usually able to solve problems faster by identifying them quicker and finding the right ways to solve them, for example. They can use their success stories in these four key areas to help prove their age is an asset."

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