

## USE EXPERIENCE TO LAND AN EXCITING NEW POSITION

**Summary:** Find out how to leverage your past work experience into a job offer, even when your educational history isn't up to par.



**Question:** I was just laid off from my job as a senior executive in the software and consulting sector because of my company's financial struggles. As I enter the job market for the first time in my career (jobs always came to me), I find myself stymied because I don't have a bachelor's degree and M.B.A. How do I get around degree requirements and capture the attention of recruiters? What should my education goals be at age 41?

**Answer:** Contacts are the surest route to recruiters. Go directly to any recruiters you used to source candidates in your previous role as a senior executive. Creating a dynamite resume that reflects your key competencies and experiences as they relate to your target positions is another good bet. Send your resume to specialty recruiters whose niche is software or consulting.

To keep attention away from your lack of degree, highlight the depth of your experience. Showcase your software savvy, identify corporate accounts, and quantify the revenue you've generated. Be specific and dazzle with your results in lieu of a degree. Be sure to include companies that are hungry for experience such as start-ups, in your campaign.

As for your learning goals, education isn't age-specific. Adopt a lifelong-learning approach. If you find that not having a degree is a formidable obstacle, start taking classes and working toward one. There are many alternatives, such as online learning, that offer convenience and flexibility. Ideally, you'll get your foot in the door with an employer that values continuous improvement and will provide some form of tuition reimbursement.

See [Soft Skills Sell When You Lack Experience](#) for more information.