

Job Hunting

Job searching is a challenging and stressful task that requires good organization and planning. It is essential that you have a clear idea of the job you are seeking. It is equally important that you know about yourself - your requirements, interests and abilities. Writing a good resume, preparing for an interview and making the right impression all contribute to your success in job hunting.

An effective job search is a well-planned and orchestrated campaign that has a single aim - to get you the best available job in the market that suits your needs and skills. To find the right job, direct the job search along the action plan given below. Each level should bring you closer to the right job.

Job Search Organization

Opportunity comes to those who waitâ€ if they work while they wait! Those who have lived all their lives having their activities organized for them had better wake up and start working at mastering the skill of organization. Work experience alone will not help you if you can't manage and organize your daily activities for yourself.

Work out a plan for your job hunt and stick to it. It will be very easy to be tempted to give up the search and settle down back into the old rut. Don't allow anything or anyone to distract you from your goalâ€ to find a new job.

Time and Job Hunting

Looking for a new job is a fulltime job in itself! The first and biggest hurdle is to overcome the inertia. Once the heels are set into motion, it will be easier to keep them moving. Try and be consistent in this endeavor. It's hardly any use if you start enthusiastically and then your enthusiasm withers out.

If you are jobless, you can and should put in more time and effort into finding a job. If you are busy with your existing job most of the day, you will have to squeeze in some time for job hunting into your schedule.

For the unemployed, starting a job search is like being self-employed to flaunt your skills and convince prospective employers why you could be a prize-catch. For the already employed, a job search is a part-time job.

Advance Scheduling

Make a schedule and stick to it religiously. First decide how many hours a day you can devote towards this occupation. Then decide what you will do in that time slot everyday for each day of the week.

Make Yourself Accountable

Keep everything related to your job search in one place and ear-mark that place only for job search related activities. This will help you save time when you need to find related information at short notice and also tune your brain to get into job hunt mode when you are in that area. Make a checklist of goals you think you should accomplish in the stipulated time and try to abide by it. If you don't, try and figure out why you couldn't and try harder the next time.

Involving another person in this project or joining a group of people in the same boat could also be a big help.

Keep Accurate Records

The biggest mistake you could make is to assume you will remember details of all those who may be helpful. You won't! Make notes of every name you come across and write down all you know about the name—either of companies or of people. File this information in an organized manner where you will find it easily.

The telephone revolution is here to stay! And what's more, you can use this effective communication tool to land you great jobs. Wonder how? All you need to do is master the art of telephone marketing techniques in your job search campaign. These skills are easy to learn.

Essential steps for effective telephone skills

Scripting: The first step is to capture the attention of these hard-to-reach people with effective communication. So keep the conversation crisp and accurate. For this, you need to have a script ready. What's a script? It's planning what you want to say. Jot down points to state your point. But don't read out. Make it sound perfectly natural with your script in front of you.

Points to remember while scripting:

The most important step in scripting is to know what the purpose of your call is. Are you seeking information? Are you presenting your qualifications? Start by introducing yourself. Make your point and grab the attention of the person at the other end. State your objective and finally close the call after you get what you want.

Basic principles of telephone communication:

Practice, practice and more practice. Remember Rome was not built in a day! Try practicing with a friend. Learn to deal with voice mails. However boring it may seem to be talking to a machine, it is important that you learn to leave polite messages on answering machines and voice mails. Make sure you call from a quiet place and call only when you are ready with your script and job search notes.

Most importantly, learn to listen. Listen carefully. If there are any objections or answers that can end the call, be a little persuasive. Be persistent and have a scheduled time for the caller to call you back or for you to call him/her back. This way you won't have to wait endlessly for a call that may not come.

Comparing two or more job offers

Are you feeling on top of the world after receiving three or more job offers? After all the hard work you put in while job hunting, you must surely be relieved. But wait! You may soon have to decide which one of these offers to accept. You are now faced with the daunting task of picking one offer that gets you the best deal. How does one find out?

There are a few points that must be kept in mind while analyzing the pay packet. Instead of only looking at who's paying the highest salary, take a close look at the benefits that are being offered in the pay packet. After all, benefits form a major percentage of your total compensation.

Take a hard look at the benefits that are being offered like the pension plan, medical insurance and life and disability insurance. Medical and pension benefits play a major role in the course of life and have to be considered in the final financial analysis.

Apart from the salary and compensation there are a whole lot of other factors that need to be considered too. What's the reputation of the company? How interesting is the work allotted to you? Another major factor to be looked into is the company's policy on offering hikes. After all, you don't want to be stuck in the same place. You need to see how to climb upon the ladder.

Other factors that may seem attractive and may add some extra value to the deal would be paid holidays and vacation time. The corporate culture prevalent in the company and the quality of life in terms of availability of good schools, social life are also worth considering.

Depending on your needs, you must also look into the working hours, how flexible these timings are and the commute from your home to the work place. If employee stock options are available, that's a major advantage too. So take your time before you choose a job offer and give due consideration to all these aspects of your pay packet.

Networking your way to success

Have you ever tried referring one of your friends for a job, or been referred for one by your old college professor? Seeking employment through established contacts is one of the most effective methods of job hunting. This art of alliance building, or networking, is not a process that kicks in just when you are looking for a job, but is something you do almost subconsciously within your daily routine.

You can increase your chances of finding that dream job by contacting the people you know or by joining business networking groups where you can learn about developments and potential job opportunities.

Networking Subconsciously

Networking begins long before searching for work and is not always done with the aim of using that person later on to find out about potential opportunities. Networking can be as informal as:

- chatting with people in your dance class
- doing social work with various people
- voicing your appreciation of a restaurant to the owner
- joining mailing groups
- attending conferences
- striking up conversations with people at your local place of worship
- chatting with your neighbors

The ways in which to network are endless. What makes this method so effective in job hunting? The logic is quite self evident. If you had to hire a nanny to take care of your child would you not be more comfortable either hiring a person who has been referred by someone you know or hire someone who you know directly? Similarly, you would prefer hiring someone who has been referred by a current employee or someone you know.

Online Networking

There are so many ways in which to network. A particularly effective way is by meeting people online. The internet offers a certain anonymity that allows people to be more forthcoming than in a face to face meeting. However, the inability to express through body language or tone in virtual correspondence makes your use of words important in giving the right impression.

The Advantages of Networking Using the Internet

- The internet is a rich source for networking with several discussion groups and public forums covering a vast range of topics.
- You can 'meet' the person and get to know them before actually meeting them in person.
- Your body language cannot be observed so your nervous twitch or inability to stop your legs from shaking cannot be seen!
- Several companies hang around these places trying to find future employees.

However, these very advantages can be drawbacks as well. It can be as difficult to form a real personal relationship online as it is offline. The inability to see your nervous twitch may also turn out to be a drawback if the words you use reflect your confused state of mind.

Where do I start Networking?

There are several places on the internet where you can network.

Some of these are:

- mailing lists
- chat rooms
- networking websites
- public forums

These sites are often used to discuss industry developments, trends, careers and other related areas and are a rich source of information for any job seeker. Mailing lists are also great sources and by participating in one or several you gain access to great networking opportunities.

It is also important to know who to contact. It is best to look out for people who provide complete contact details and are open about the company they work for and their designation within the organization.

A Guide for Working with Employment Agencies

If you have decided that you want a professional to guide you through your job hunt, then a commercial employment agency is the place to go to. Now comes the tough part. Finding one to suit your needs from around 20,000 such agencies in the United States can be quite a task in itself—especially in an industry which cannot be trusted too much. The terminology used is rather confusing and unless you are well prepared as to what you should expect, there is a definite chance of being lost in the jungle of headhunters. The following explanation is an attempt to ease this bumpy ride:

Outplacement Organizations: They charge for private outplacement (of individuals) as well as corporate outplacements (individuals backed by the employer) for their services. The fee known as a retained fee is paid at the beginning and the firm markets the candidate.

Employment Agencies: Their primary service is to find you an employer or if you are a prospective employer, to find you an employee. And of course charge for it, but only when they succeed. This is known as a contingent fee.

Contingent Search Firms: They are hired and paid by an employer to find a suitable candidate and hand him over. All the intermediate responsibilities, such as locating a candidate to fulfil requirements and interviewing him, are shouldered by them.

Retained Search Firms: The only difference between these and the Contingent Search firms mentioned above is that these are paid as and when a progress is made, i.e. on a retained basis.

Once you have made your decision to allow an employment agency to handle your case, be very clear about the hidden costs—monetary and otherwise. Here are some tips that you must keep in mind:

- Beware of '900' telephone numbers. As per the Federal Trade Commission rules, you will be charged either by the minute or a flat rate for your call. Reputed firms will generally make this clear to you from the beginning.
- It's a good idea to pay attention to the classifieds. If you notice an agency that's advertising on a regular basis every week you can be sure they are collecting resumes for a client.
- All that glitters is not gold. Advertisements that promise a huge pay packet topped with fat bonuses that look too good to be true are exactly those—too good to be true. Don't fall for such traps since they are, more often than not, an easy way to attract clients.
- Make it clear that you want to know all the details concerning the job, such as the number of employees in the firm, the pay package etc. Don't bother asking for the name of the company because it's generally against the agency policy to reveal their clients' name.
- Firmly ask for only fee-paid jobs. This is to make sure you don't end up paying the agency for little effort they put in to find the job for you.
- Be extremely careful of signing anything in fine print. Fine print is never good news! A person qualified to understand what's on it should first peruse any contract that you are asked to sign. Make sure you've understood every single line of the contract. Once you sign it you are bound by it and there'll be no turning back.

If the agency refuses when you ask to verify the existence of the job you were originally after, either leave or file a complaint with Consumer Protection.

- Demand a hardcopy of the job specification before you attend the interview.
- Make sure you attend only relevant interviews. Some agencies bully candidates into attending a barrage of interviews in the hope of getting their commission. Many firms have a policy not to allow a candidate to be interviewed twice in a stipulated period of time. Hence, attending an interview for which you know you are not qualified can only hamper your opportunities for the future.
- Be choosy. Don't be bullied into taking whatever you get. Such bullying only lands the agent his/her commission.
 - If you experience anything unethical make it a point to complain. Such things will keep happening unless someone brings it out into the open. Bring it to the notice of your area's consumer protection agency or the like.

Low wage jobs - finding a better job

'The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Workers of the world, unite!' - Marx & Engels, Communist Manifesto

The Marxist theory is of relevance, albeit capitalism being a relative entity today. Post the era of proletariats and bourgeoisies followed the Blue Collared and White Collared job culture, which has now molded itself into Low Wage Jobs.

Statistics say that one out of every four Americans has a low wage job. The bulk of low wage employees in the United States occupy skilled and semi-skilled positions, predominantly in the service sector.

The white ladies, with limited formal high school education comprise a major chunk of those with low waged jobs. However, the minorities and the immigrants emphasize their predominance in this category.

If you have been under the impression that, those with low wages would remain so lifelong then you are highly mistaken. With a little strategy and effort, the low waged can graduate to the high waged strata.

Meet the Counselor: Counseling centers provide any kind of assistance to job-seekers. With more and more counseling centers having shot up, it is not a very expensive deal. Universities and colleges also have their own counseling departments.

Understand the Self: It is important to realize the potential in oneself. Every experience is a learning experience and you must have cultivated various skills while on jobs and during college. A self analysis thus helps in short-listing the suitable jobs.

Handpick your Employer: While shopping, everyone weighs the pros and cons of buying a product. We tend analyze what the product offers us at large. On similar lines, it is necessary to analyze the pros and cons of your employer and the various incentives offered to you. These could include insurance, loans, flexi-timing at job and other similar benefits.

Study Further: Any kind of qualification always gives you the extra edge over others while seeking a job. Although, you may be employed, do not brush off the idea of a higher education program.

Salary History and Negotiations

One of the most important stages in the process of getting into a job of your choice is salary negotiation. At this stage of the recruitment process, employers ask for your current salary statements or salary history. The salary history you provide to a prospective employer at this stage is very critical as the information that you provide becomes a factor in determining your salary offer.

Providing salary history might be disadvantageous at times when the prospective employer offers you a salary which is higher than your current salary but not the amount that you expect, especially if you are expecting a huge raise. In such cases, you might not be in a position to negotiate much on the offer. It becomes important therefore to decide carefully and do some homework before including salary history as part of your application.

Level 1: Information Search and Negotiation

Your salary history allows your prospective employer to establish the fact that you are working for the organization you claim to be working with. It also acts as a screening device. In most cases, job seekers with salary expectations which match the internal salary ranges of an organization are considered for the job.

Exercise One: Basic Requirements

To effectively negotiate for a salary which is acceptable to both you and your prospective employer, you will need to use your network to find information on:

- The actual internal salary range for the job if possible.
- The salary offered for similar jobs in your organization.
- The salary offered for similar jobs in prospective organization.
- The similar jobs pertaining to the same industry in similar locations.

Exercise Two: Authentic Negotiation

There are situations where people try and fudge the numbers on their salary statements in the fear of being rejected as underpaid or for getting better salaries. This is not advisable as your credibility as a professional in the industry will suffer. Therefore, ensure that:

- You do not under quote or over quote your expected salary amount.
- You do not tamper with your existing salary statements.
- You are able to support all the claims made by you related to your salary with authentic proof.
- You are honest in justifying your salary requirements and how you have arrived at them.

Job Search when Employed

Familiarity has bred contempt, and you have become complacent in your job. You are on the lookout for something more challenging and kicking.

But you do not know how to go about finding a new job. You have already sent mails, but nobody has reverted back to you. Disappointing!

Your current job is demanding and takes up most of you time. Do you resign form your job and then search for a new job?

Here are a few tips to enhance your new job search when employed.

Time Management

Time management is of utmost importance. It is very common to see people work for 8 to 10 hours and get back and hit the sack. Primarily, it is necessary for you to set a time-table, and reserve time for each activity. Why don't you wake up a little early and spend sometime exclusively for your job hunt? Research jobs on the internet, newspapers, magazines and classifieds. Email your resume to the specified.

Communication

Don't expect an immediate response from the employers. Remember, you are not the only person who has mailed them. They should be convinced that you are 'the candidate'. Frequent communication and constant follow up is a must.

Slow and steady wins the race

Take it easy. You would not reap the fruits of your job hunt overnight. It is a circuitous and tedious process and you have to deal with it patiently. Rejections can be a part of the story; but don't feel let down by this.

Must

- Approach your network of friends and relatives for prospective employers
- Keep yourself up to date with the industry scenario
- Follow-up with the company
- Fix up interviews and appointments
- Set weekly goals and abide by it
- Look for a job offering a either a higher position or higher pay or both

Never

- Use your office facilities for your job hunt
- Fix up appointments and interviews during office hours
- Hint your employer about your plans to quit your current job
- Quit the job you have, before having another job in hand
- Settle for a job that gives u a lower position or lesser pay than your current job

The Informational Interview

A new way to find the job you wanted

Are you looking out for a job that you always dreamt about and wondering what to do? Here's a magic mantra for you. The mantra is Informational Interview. As the term suggests it is an interview but with a different connotation to it. Informational Interview is a means of networking with people having established careers in areas that you want to create a foothold.

Level 1: Conducting an Informational Interview

Here is simple method to go about conducting an Informational Interview. You will need to:

- Identify and make a list of companies that are operating in your area of interest.
- Find out who is who in each of these companies that you have identified.
- Try and figure out their contact information.
- Request to talk to a person working in your career field.
- Set up an interview at a time convenient to the person.

When you set-up the interview with somebody, it is important that you set the context right for meeting with the person. Emphasize on the fact that the goal of the interview is not acquiring a job but learning from the person about the challenges and opportunities the person foresees in the area. The meeting could trigger off a job for you if the person finds you genuinely interested or the person may give you references, at the least.

Level 2: Informational Interview: Some Other Perspectives

Informational Interview could also be a good option to explore for mid-career changes. If you have a good friend with an established career in the area you intend to pursue, it would be a good idea to have a formal informational interview with the person. This will bring out your seriousness of pursuing a career in the area of your friend at the same time the person will not be obligated to provide you a job. He will have the conviction to recommend you to others and give you good references.

Overall, Informational Interview is much more effective than any other conventional means for moving closer to your dream job as it emphasizes purely on your initiative and passion for making a breakthrough in to a career of your choice.

How To Fill a Job Application

Your job application can make or break your job. A very crucial aspect of job-seeking is meticulously '**tackle**' your job application.

A job application is more or less similar to your resume except for a few questions here and there. Apart from it being a convenient technique, most companies ask the candidates to fill the job application to maintain uniformity in selection.

Here are a few things to keep in mind while '**tackling**' your job application

Precise Answers: Most job applications follow a similar pattern, however it is advisable to read all the details asked properly and answer accordingly. Try to give out the optimum details. It is alright to give a little extra information, but certainly not worth leaving out on specific details asked for.

Presentation: First impression is the last impression. Ink blots, cancellations et al can get you negative markings. It is also not a very positive sign to leave columns blank unless not applicable. Make sure you fill in every detail and maintain neatness throughout the application. This would also give an impression of you as a no-nonsense person.

Straightforward: Kite flying in your job application is a strict 'No-No'. Writing about your achievements does not mean giving false information or lying in the application. It is also not advisable to play the bluff-master simply to avoid leaving the space blank.

Feel Good: Remember, not to write any detail that expresses something negative. It could be about your attitude or about what you think about some certain job or a person or anything that demands you to express an opinion. Your job application should be capable enough to create an aura of feel good around yourself.

No Goof-ups: once you are done completing your job application, check it all over again. The job application must be fool-proof. On being cross-questioned on any of the details provided, you must be in a position to answer confidently and not stare blankly.

And for fulfilling the above mentioned criteria successfully, the most important is to be **well-prepared**.

What are the Different Things That People Over 40 Have to Use When Looking for a Job

Making a [career change](#) is usually not very easy for anyone of any age; however, it can be exceptionally tricky for people over 40, especially if they have been [out of the job](#) market for a number of years. With a few helpful tips, however, someone over 40 can make some exciting things happen in their job search. Below are some of the best uses of your time if you find yourself in this category:

[NETWORKING](#)- If someone has been in the working world for a decent period of time, and most people over 40 have been, they may have made contacts with people in their industry through professional organizations, business dealings with other companies, chambers of commerce, etc. These connections should be used to your best advantage- this is not to say that you

should just start calling people asking them for jobs, but rather make some casual contacts with the people that you know to find out if anything is available. Casually mention that you are seeking a position, and it is likely that one of your contacts will either give you some valuable information or point you in the direction of job openings outright.

SUPPORT GROUPS- We're not talking about some type of group therapy session for discouraged job seekers, but what we are talking about are meetings that are held in many community centers, churches, and local [job centers](#) that can offer valuable help in a [successful job search](#). These meetings typically include tips on how to [dress](#) for job interviews, the types of questions you can expect to be asked, and even job openings, as many [employers](#) who are seeking experienced employees contact these groups directly as a recruiting tool. Best of all, these meetings are usually free of charge and located in your community; just keep your eye on the local newspaper, community bulletin board, or your church newsletter.

- **STATE JOB CENTERS**- Most every state has a job center as part of the services that are offered to the public, free of charge. These localized offices can also help with [resume preparation](#) and provide leads on job openings, as many employers take advantage of the benefit of free job posting, which is also offered as a service to the employers of the state. Many times as well, the state job centers offer free Internet access, so that you can surf the Internet for job postings and submit your resume electronically, saving you time and money.

GO ONLINE - Related to the state job centers idea, the Internet is now the [prime marketplace](#) for employers and employees. This also gives you the advantage of having a potential employer evaluate your [experience](#) before they can prejudge you on your [age](#). Although age discrimination is illegal, the fact of the matter is that it happens anyway, so you owe it to yourself to have every advantage at your disposal.

In closing, just remember to keep with it and keep your chin up; eventually, your determination, and your experience, will land you the job you want. Your age will be nothing but a number!

Job search for the over 50

The [motivation](#) for the 50 plus person [seeking a job](#) may be different today from what it was some 10-20 years ago; as are many other statistics. If you are 50 and are in the [market for a job](#), you are part of an elite and fast expanding market for senior positions. 'Elite' because most senior people are highly [experienced](#) and valued workers and 'expanding' because the market is waking up to recognize the wealth and wisdom of employing seniors. There are a few [marketing techniques](#) however to help you [land the job](#) you would savor and which would give you the returns that you deserve. As with everything else the technique(s) need to be mastered in order to get the best results.

- Identify your exact [reason for work](#): The most important aspect while seeking a job is to have your priorities worked out. Are you keeping a job for pleasure? For filling up your free time? For supplementing your income? For fulfillment? Or for paying back to the society?

Pleasure – when you seek a job for pleasure you will need to focus on what gives you pleasure and narrow your searching area to those industries or occupation(s) which fall into that purview.

Keep busy – here you can take up anything at all, as long as you are capable to do it; and at 50 there will be very few jobs that would really be tough for you to do – giving you a wide searching area.

- Income – this is the toughest avenue because when you look for pay, you will have to match your skills to the available vacancies and compete for the position with younger candidates.
- Fulfilment – here you can do a lot of things for your own satisfaction in a honorary position or for a token remuneration; you will find plenty of organizations who would like to use your expertise and experience in exchange of a honorary title and token payment.
- Social service – this is volunteer work and it is seen in the recent past that more and more people want to give back to the society by doing something worthwhile for the downtrodden and less privileged. There is tremendous satisfaction of work here, though it is a bit less rewarding money wise.
- Identify your market: Depending on what you want to do you need to identify your market/ organizations/ industries so you can narrow down to the places where you can offer your candidature.
- Create an impressive CV: The gate pass to any job is your CV. When you are at 50 your CV will have to be dynamite or you will be rejected outright in favor of the younger candidates. Hence, you will need to draw the attention of the prospective employers away from your age and focus it to the quality package your long experience offers the company. Your CV should broadcast your expertise in the job at hand and your capability to deliver in terms of quality. Highlight clearly your achievements in the past so it is obvious from your CV itself how much the company gains from hiring a senior and experienced person like you.
- Network heavily: There is nothing more powerful than a good networking when you seek a job in your fifties. Your network not only would know your capabilities and expertise but also would know exactly where you could best fit next. Over the years this network, if groomed properly, would actually be your best reference point as well as source for your next job opening. All you have to do is to announce subtly that you are looking for an opening in whatever field you prefer. Offers will come to you within no time.
- Be up-to-date with the present technology: Before you join the ranks of job seekers make it a point to be technology savvy. In today's world computer usage is part and parcel of a vast variety of occupations. Be sure you are comfortable with computers, emails, blue tooth, infrared, internet and other such features that today have become a part of our lives. If your job entails it, go through a crash course which will bring totally up-to-date in your field before drafting out your CV. Training courses are a great value addition to your experience because these show you as a person who keeps in tune with the changing times.
- Compete fiercely: Your candidature will be compared to that of people half your age. In order to ensure that you come across as the best choice you will have to top all the qualities a younger person has to offer, i.e. enthusiasm, eagerness to work, stamina and humility. In other words, you will need to showcase your capability to outshine a fresher by highlighting the worthiness of your 20-25 years experience in the field. Hence, your CV should be clear and concise in matching the fit of the job requirement not only to your qualifications but also to your long standing experience and the knowledge you gained in the process.
- Be presentable: A lot is gained or lost with first impressions. When you are seeking a job –your looks is one of the most important criteria. People tend to think that a 50 plus person is old, haggard and needs constant attention. However, nothing can be further from truth. Today people in their 70s also are healthy and full of vitality. When you are applying for a job, appearing for interview or even enquiring around, make sure that you leave the right impression behind. Be full of life, well groomed, and project a healthy and full of stamina image. It is a fact that the 45-60 years of age is the golden age of man today because he is wise, moderate in taking risks, and highly experienced. Let this fact shine through your behavior and looks. An employer would be highly inclined to offer you

[a job](#) if you look active, and healthy than if you look pale and weak. Remember the employer is out to get an asset for the company not a liability.

- Enlist the help of a good [placement agency](#): I said 'good' here because it takes special skills to 'sell' senior [job seekers](#). Hence, you will need to seek out placement agencies who specialize in senior placement and check out which is the best. Keep in mind that job seeking is tough – whether you are in your 20s or 50s it still gives butterflies in the stomach. However, it is more heartbreaking for an older person than it is for a younger one – so be prepared for an emotional roller-coaster anyway but seek out the best placement agency available.

[Become an entrepreneur](#): With your expertise and experience, many times the best solution is to go into business for yourself. Being a professional, bank loans would be available for you and you can very easily start a good business which in 10 years time would not only give satisfaction but also high economic results.

- **Become a consultant/ trainer:** There is no lack of companies which need experts to conduct in-house training programs. A similar market is coming up in MBA colleges where they invite corporate veterans to take classes and teach the difference between theory and practice. It gives great satisfaction to teach and share your experience and expertise with others and many seniors find this occupation extremely rewarding both financially as well as professionally.

Job search for the over 40

Seeking a job is always a nerve-wracking experience and it has been observed that it accentuates in direct proportion with age. The middle-age person finds the market flooded with young [college graduates](#) who land jobs faster than them. This happens due to a number of factors such as:

[Salary](#):

Freshers (young college graduates) will be willing to start on a lower salary than a 40-year old experienced candidate.

Relationship:

Many organizations have young managers who feel better working with a go-getter young team rather than middle-aged persons (who might also have their pre-conceived ideas about jobs and how it needs to be done)

Work capacity:

Freshers being young, unmarried and eager to gather [experience](#), are willing to work longer hours. They are also eager to try new things and open to new methods of work.

Relevance of [qualifications](#):

The present-day technology has brought tremendous amount of changes in the ways things are done today. The younger generation is well tuned in with the technology development. The qualification of the 40 plus generation many times feels (and is) a bit outdated and not relevant to the needs of the today's industry.

Attitude:

The basic traits of a person who reached their forties is stability of mind and attitude. While this trait is great under normal circumstances, in a job is actually a negative trait. [Recruiters](#) look for people who have an open attitude to learning and experiencing new things, while the forty-plus

person seeks stability and well-proved methods of work. There is a definite attitude mismatch between the 20 plus and 40 plus candidates.

Though the above factors are serious deterrents, a little preparation can indeed the negative to a positive trend. The forty-plus professionals should be ready to negotiate well and work shoulder-to-shoulder with the younger generation. In order to improve the odds to land a job, the forty plus professionals should follow a few ground principles:

[Updated CV](#) - Your CV should be in tune to the today's market. Mention briefly the jobs you have had in the past 10-15 years, [elaborating](#) only those areas where these are relevant to the present job. Your CV should ideally not exceed two pages and it must include the salary you expect so the recruiter will have a base for negotiations.

Undergo skill-based [training\(s\)](#): Today every job requires the application of [technology](#) in some measure. You must be in tune with the present-day technology and its application to your job. A crash course or short skill-based training would put you in tune with the current scenario and highly improve your employability.

[Research well](#): The job requirements of ten years ago and of today are totally different. Be sure you know what the job entails today; even if you have a rich 10-12 years experience, unless you are aware of what it involves today, you may loose out to the candidate who is half your age, but who knows the right ropes.

Identify companies who need experienced personnel: The adage, "There is a market for everything" is totally true and applicable to people as well. There are companies out there who seek to employ only experienced people - seek these work places out through placement agencies, Internet research and classifieds.

[Network](#): Here is one place where the age is on your side. People who are forty-plus have a wealth of networks at senior positions; there is a high possibility that any of those senior positions may be vacant and if you are in constant touch, you will be given an offer to join.

Consultancy: Many 40 plus persons have some 10-15 years of experience and that can you a veritable expert in your field. Be open to offer consultancy to companies and individuals in your field of expertise. Since the technology is in continuously up-gradation mode, many companies seek out in-house trainers which can be cost-efficient as well as have good coverage. In this scenario your age and experience can be extremely complementary. However, in order to be successful as a trainer, you need to love [teaching](#).

Cover a larger base: Approach the job search as a project with strengths, weaknesses, opportunity and threats (SWOT) and assign specific targets (getting ONE job). In order to reach your target you need to identify your target base. Once identified, ensure you cover sufficient number of companies/ organization so you can have a choice of offers. Do not limit yourself to one or two. Seek out a minimum dozen companies and actively follow it up.

Be flexible and ready to negotiate terms: Being senior and experienced you obviously expect a [high salary](#) which many times some companies would not be very happy to pay. Be open to negotiate permutations of work and salary so both end up with a win-win situation. For example you could work for 15 days a month, or a few days a week or on assignment basis for a lower salary (and less mandays) allowing the company to use your expertise at their budget while you work part time (and hence still command your market value). Also, many companies offer a number of perks which when translated into cash amount to a tidy sum. Make sure you

understand all that is offered as cost-to-company total before deciding whether the remuneration is okay or not.

Consider a total [change of profession](#): Many people who have worked for a long time in [corporate sector](#) do well in teaching in [MBA colleges](#) or similar higher education institutions. Some would do well in research - while at the same pursuing PhD degrees, while yet others find their calling in the social field. The middle age may be a good time to consider a total change. Many people feel totally charged and motivated with a new line, and a high percentage of people find great success exactly due to this aspect.

Internet based employment: The Internet has ushered in a great host of jobs that can be done right from the comfort of your bedroom - with the help of a laptop/ comp. In case you are comfortable with a computer, you can easily take up any of the millions of freelance job available on the net and build your income from there. A medium level professional can very easily make a comfortable income from the Internet. Check out the freelance market.

[Entrepreneurship](#): Having 15 years experience can be great in starting your own venture. Many banks offer loans based on the feasibility of business plan and the qualifications of the professional applying. Entrepreneurship can be the right answer for many people not only in generating employment for self but also for a few others. Entrepreneurship is actually the acid test of your experience - however, success here will be highly dependent upon your aptitude.

"Life begins at forty" - can be quite true and finding yourself without a job can be the right vehicle for you to start on a new and totally satisfying life.

How computer literacy can help you in your job search

What is computer literacy by definition? '[Computer literacy](#)' generally bears indication to the ability of a person to use computer applications. These people are also called 'power users'. Those who know to program these machines are known as programmers.

Computers are today part and parcel of our lives and just as being literate is being taken for granted so is computer literacy taken for granted. A professional is expected to know to use computers and their application in his/ her field of operation, even if it is at the most basic level possible. Besides the fact that every job today entails some or other requirement of computer knowledge, [finding a job](#) itself is highly dependent upon the level of one's computer literacy.

Let us see how computer literacy can help you in your job search:

- Education: There is a sea of wealth on the Internet on how things can be done best when [applying for a job](#). There is advice on how to conduct yourself at [interviews](#), [how to dress](#), how to answer questions and also what question [to put to your interviewers](#). The advice extends itself on how to handle trick questions and how to take care of many things that are crucial to [bagging a job](#).
- Wide coverage: There is a tremendous coverage that one can get through the Internet. A computer literate person can use the Net for his/her advantage and apply to a [global market](#) electronically rather than regional on pen and paper regionally. There are a wide range of online job search engines which will match your [CV](#) to the best suitable [job available](#). In this way you not only can get a vast number of jobs to choose from, you also are able to reach out to far off regions in your country and even other countries. There is no other way to cover so much geographical area other than with the help of the computers.

- Immense opportunity: When you are looking for a job you are not having instantly the exact company and exact type of job that you really want - unless you are a doctor or engineer (and even there you can still have a lot leverage in choosing). For all others the Internet will offer you a great wide array of choices that you can never find otherwise in the physical world. The opportunities out there are mind boggling - but without the computer and the knowledge of harnessing its capacity, you can never discover them; with a computer, your opportunities are just a click away. All you have to do is key in your job requirements and the search engine will give you a sea of jobs to choose from.
- Time saver: Today with the help of computers your one uploaded CV can simultaneously [reach thousands of companies in one instant](#). This simple and amazing thing can actually bring to your doorstep a great number of offers within an extremely limited time. Time which you could actually use to get the job and start earning rather than continuing to apply to different companies intermittently. The saving of time has another great side effect - i.e. it helps a [job seeker](#) enjoy a much higher level of confidence because he/she will be constantly assailed with [job offers](#); people who apply through post or answering advertisements are much more slower in receiving offers than while using the Internet.
- Tailor made CV and applications: Knowing computers will help you apply to a thousand companies on an individual manner with a tailor made [cover letter](#) specifically written with that company's needs in mind. In this way you raise your odds for being chosen as the right candidate by more than 50 per cent. Actually mass printouts of CVs for applications are one of the main reasons for receiving rejection. A company likes to see that the candidate that wants to fill a vacancy with them takes the trouble to know what they need and how their skills and knowledge match the company's requirements. The HR personnel has most of the times only about 10 seconds to decide which [CVs are good](#) and which are not for the first shortlist; and only those CVs which can at a glance focus on the best match, will stand a good chance.

Training opportunities: Computer literacy best plus point is that it gives you access to a world of training programs and material which will indeed help you in bettering yourself for any job whatsoever. The training and self-study material available on the internet is limitless. There is no topic that does not have some indepth answer on the Internet and for the person who know how and where to look, one can build up sufficient knowledge base to outperform the best available hands in the market.

- Online degrees: Though this is not directly connected to searching of a job, an additional degree will definitely improve anyone's chances to land their dream jobs. Today the Internet brings within the reach of the common man the greatest universities of national and international repute; this is called distance education through the Net. You do not need to leave your present work place, or residential area, or even go for applying for admission. All you have to do is open the Internet and register online for any degree you need or want to pursue for a [satisfying career](#).

Computer usage is at its best when you put the Internet to work for you. And harnessing the strength of the Internet is possible only when you master the medium that houses it, i.e. computers. Hence, you need to be a computer literate to be able to use apply your best foot forward when searching for a job. For those who are still green about computers - do not worry. Computer courses are the most popular crash courses across the globe today. Just check your neighborhood out for a class and sign in TODAY. Be a winner TOMORROW.