

## **“I’M TOO OLD TO CHANGE JOBS!”**

By Don Skipper, MS, MMAS, CCM, CECC, CEIC  
CEO/President – Career Beginnings, Inc.

One of the great myths that haunts us into middle age is the mistaken belief that, at some point, we become too old to change jobs or seek new career opportunities.

As the CEO of a Career Consulting Firm I have often heard clients lament that they are “too old to be considered for hire” or “How will I ever get another job at my age?” These comments are not coming from an octogenarian but from forty and fifty-year olds who are using the age factor as an excuse to avoid the efforts required to conduct a successful job search campaign and secure a new position!

I don’t mean to imply that we should ignore the age factor. In reality, age has always been a prejudicial factor, not just in the job market, but in most facets of our modern lives. We are an age conscious society. Just look at the number of ads in the media for potions, creams, and “magic elixirs” too arrest the aging process and make us look, feel, and act younger.

In the job market, age does play an important role in many decisions made by employers. Will an older applicant be flexible enough to learn new technology and new processes? Will the older job seeker “fit in” with a younger group of workers? Can an older job applicant work for and take direction from a younger supervisor?

There are no easy answers to these questions. However, I have some general ideas and thoughts that will make seeking employment in your older years easier and perhaps give you the confidence you need to secure a good position.

Worrying about the age factor in a job search indicates that you are indeed ready to make that change. What are you waiting for? You won’t be any younger tomorrow! Go for it TODAY. Done properly, a job search campaign will help you uncover new opportunities, new challenges, a new environment, and, perhaps, a whole new you.

How are you going to be able to achieve success when you are already worrying about your age as a possible detriment to new employment? There are a few things over which you have complete control that will make a key difference in your chances for success.

Attitude is a good place to start. As you prepare for interviews, review all the valuable experience you bring to the table. Be positive, radiate energy, and create value during interviews. Be careful not to lecture the interviewer on “how things were done in your day” Do point out that, while you may be 50 years old, you offer years of seasoned experience, coupled with mature judgment to meet the employer’s needs. If age is mentioned, be quick to point out that, at 50, you are only two thirds of the way through your productive lifespan and you are about to enter the most productive portion of that span.

Keep in mind that your age is actually an advantage over other, younger, applicants. You have more experience to support your decision making as well as the ability to discover fresh ways to handle problems. Your personal life is more settled and that your age is actually an asset!

Be sure to instill this positive outlook in your resume and letters. There is no need today to advertise your age by using a chronological resume – one that concentrates on a year-to-year history. Instead to a functional resume that emphasizes your achievements and potential.

Employers should also take note that by not considering the older worker for a position, you may actually be doing your firm an injustice since hiring a less qualified or inexperienced worker (younger) may actually hurt your production and bottom line.

---



*Donald B. Skipper has been associated with the executive transition process as a senior consultant for 22 years and is currently the CEO of Career Beginnings, Inc. He is a Credentialed Career Master, Certified Employment Interview Consultant, and Certified Electronic Career Coach. Don is an active member of the Professional Resume Writing and Research Association, the Association of Job Search Trainers, and the Career Master's Institute. He has just been nominated as Honorary State Chairman for the NRCC's Business Advisory Council. You may contact him via email at [dskipper@nofeartransitions.us](mailto:dskipper@nofeartransitions.us) or by phone at 866-657-8466 / 770-922-6161.*