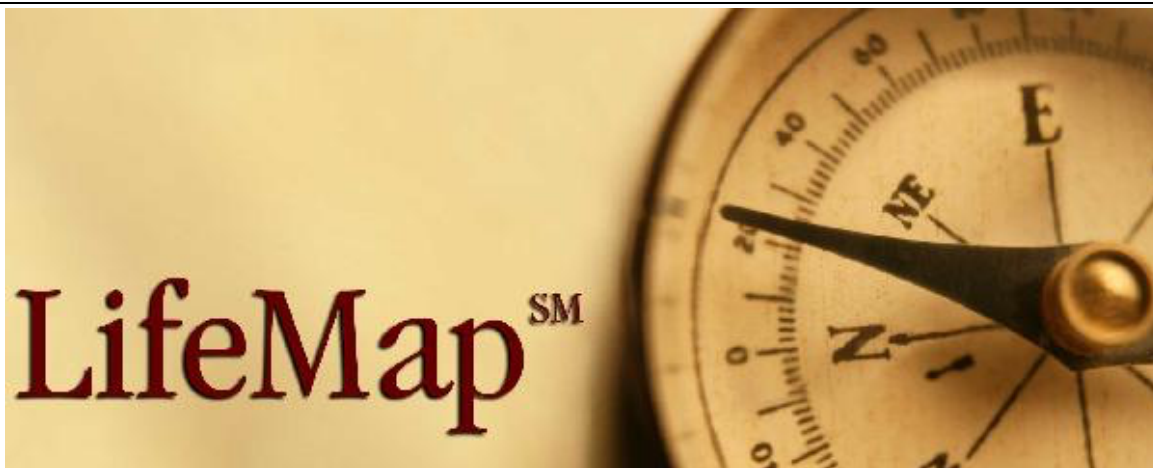


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Our belief is that you can achieve a more rewarding career, a more productive organization and a more satisfying life.

Summer 2018

This Month's Message:

Job Hunting Longer and Older.

Paths Forward:

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Job Hunting Longer and Older.

Quite frequently these days I hear something that greatly disturbs me. It is that it takes older job hunters longer - much longer - to find reemployment than younger workers - and studies on this topic bear out my anecdotal findings. This is especially hard to swallow as the press continues to tout low unemployment numbers. If this scenario applies to you there is no better advice than to hang in there. Below I share some other ideas and suggestions to help you to reenergize your job search. If this applies to someone close to you please share this issue of LifeMap and encourage him or her to stay active and positive. Your support can have a strong impact.

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Despite the unemployment rate of 4.3% (a 16 year low) I continue to hear from folks who are having a hard time

continue to hear from folks who are having a hard time finding appropriate work. I hear repeatedly that the longer you are unemployed and/or the older you are the harder it is. When these two factors are combined it feels twice as difficult. Wanting to dig deeper into this I went looking for some hard numbers to clarify this situation. Here's what I found.

- Being out of work for over six months is considered long-term unemployment.
- One third of job seekers 55 years and older are long-term unemployed.
- The job finding rate drops by about 50% within eight months of unemployment. (Stanford University & Fed Reserve Bank of NY)
- The average length of unemployment for job hunters 55 years and older (1.2 million people) is seven to nine months.
- A University of Maryland U.S. Census study shows "unemployment duration has a strongly negative effect on the likelihood of subsequent employment".
- As of April 1.6 million unemployed Americans have been out of work for six months or longer. Nearly a million have been jobless for more than a year. (US Bureau of Labor Statistics).
- I couldn't find any studies that specifically addressed the racism or ageism that job hunters mention to me regarding interviewing and hiring procedures but talk to any job hunter 50 years or older or with a head of gray hair or a resume with certain zip codes frequently associated with income levels or race and you will hear that it is a real thing. And the longer one is out of work the more likely it is that the stereotype of your skills being "rusty" will be applied to you regardless of what you have actually been doing in the interim between jobs. This is but one area where the human resources function needs to step up to improve the working lives of Americans.

While some positively motivated organizations and individual professionals are working to address systemic problems in the current hiring process it is necessary for the older and / or long-term unemployed person to reenergize themselves, recalibrate their job hunt and work both harder and smarter to attain the meaningful employment they seek. I do not advocate for waiting for the world to change. I say let's go out right now and make it happen. Here are some ways how.

Paths Forward:

Sharpen Your Tools. Have your contacts review your resume to make sure you're using up to date lingo. Be sure to include any seminars or courses you've recently taken to update your skills. Not all dates need to be stated; this is a marketing document not an autobiography. Include relevant blog posts, on-line discussions you've participated in, and any press mentions or articles in which you've been quoted. Get busy and make some of these happen.

Buddy Up. You don't have to go through this alone. In fact, you shouldn't because this process can be lonely and isolating. Attend networking groups to find one or two job-hunting buddies with whom you can share job hunting ideas

hunting buddies with whom you can share job-hunting ideas, feedback and keep each other upbeat and motivated. Use the interviewing tools you can find in [Don't Wear Flip-Flops to Your Interview](#) to continue to polish your interviewing skills via practice sessions.

Get Out of Your Cave. Avoid being a hermit. Social networking is fine as far as it goes but people do not hire an on-line profile; they hire a person they would want to see every day. It is absolutely essential to stay socially active and connected in order to maintain a positive attitude that will come through in your emails, your phone conversations and your interviews.

You Are NOT Out of Work. Saying "I'm out of work" or "I'm unemployed" is not a selling point. You *should be* working at something- mentoring, teaching, volunteering, learning, networking, consulting, searching for a great job doing, whatever. Ok, maybe you're not getting paid but that doesn't mean you're not working. There is no need to be ashamed or defensive about being unemployed. In today's world it's a common thing. But in and of itself it is not a selling point. Don't dwell on it. Talk about what you're doing, not about what you're not doing.

Fill the Resume Gap. This is closely related to the point above. Always be doing something. If you do there is no need for a gap because your resume is supposed to be about accomplishments not just where you've been on the payroll. If you're a programmer do some programming, if you're a trainer do some training, if you're a welder do some welding or teach a course or seminar in your area of expertise.

Work a Full Week. Job-hunting is hard work. It's frustrating and easy to walk away from. But don't. Invest 30 hours a week minimum. If you're scratching for ideas get back to your networking group or find a new one to add to your list. If you still have open time get out and volunteer. There are tons of community groups that need your help and skills; you can find them in any newspaper. The busier you are, the better you'll feel.

One New Resource. The AARP has enrolled nearly 400 companies in an Employer Pledge Program to help 50-plus job hunters connect with potential employers. These organizations have publicly committed to hiring experienced workers and pay to post job openings. Check out their new job board (jobs.aarp.org). It's free to you and you may find one of those right-minded employers right around the corner.

Start a Gratitude Journal. Yes, this process is tough and longer than it should be. But how much harder could it be? It helps to focus on what is working in your favor and how your glass is half full not half empty. Sounds trite but here's how. Every day write one line about something you for which you are grateful. Did you get one decent call back? Did you find one good new resource? Do you have the use of your arms, or legs, or eyes, or brain? Do you have people who love you? Are you grateful for the country in which you live? Does the bright sunshine from above give you energy or do the stars at night inspire awe? Maintaining a positive attitude is just as

at night inspire awe: maintaining a positive attitude is just as important as any other aspect of your job hunt. If you find yourself getting down you must do something to pump yourself up. The gratitude journal is one tool. Others include prayer, meditation, volunteering, exercise, music, art or counseling. But in this difficult process it's up to you to add some activity to your self-care routine.

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For the past 30 years I've surveyed successful job hunters and captured their proven shortcuts, insider knowledge and time-saving / stress-reducing tips.

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