

**Highlights:**

Reduce job search time by:

1. Completing personal skills inventory.
2. Being flexible.
3. Determining career (job) goal.
4. Preparing a resume marketing your skills.
5. Targeting companies that hire persons with your skill sets.
6. Networking; networking; networking.

**Source(s):**

Bass, D. (2003). Despite Progress, Age Bias Persists. <http://www.careerjournal.com>  
 Luh, S. S. (2003). Age Can Affect How Your Find Your Next Job. <http://www.careerjournal.com>.

## Age Bias and the Job Market

Hardest hit during the recent market downturn are workers who are 55 or older. But, why? After all, older workers represent experience, wisdom and knowledge. Mature workers also represent higher salaries. During a time when increasing the bottom line in a depressed economy was a primary business goal, cutting those with the highest earnings meant cutting fewer jobs while boosting company profits. However, many companies increased profits while losing valuable knowledge and experience.

Many experienced workers were being forced out of their jobs at a time when many of those same individuals watched in horror as their retirements were almost wiped out. Many were then forced to return to a job market that is not known to be kind to aging workers.

Older workers, many of whom had not looked for a job in more than a decade, encountered various problems as they searched for new positions. Although many opted to work either part-time or become self-employed, it took most twice as long to find a job as their younger competitors. As many as 50 percent of those looking for employment could not find jobs within their old industry. Of those returning to full-time employment, about half would experience a pay cut in their new positions.

Are the problems facing older, displaced workers looking for jobs age biased? Data indicate that those over 50 will be invited for an interview half as often as those under 35. The reason given is that more mature, experienced workers expect higher salaries than young job seekers. Although human resources personnel typically say that financial constraints is the motivating factor in dismissing and failing to hire older workers.

Finding a job in today's tough job market may be hard for seasoned employees but not impossible. The amount of job search time may be significantly reduced by following the following steps:

1. Complete a personal skills inventory.
2. Be flexible; consider jobs in industry new to you.
3. Determine your career (job) goal.
4. Prepare a resume that markets your skills.

5. Target companies that hire persons with your particular skill sets.
6. Network; network; network.

**Free assistance is available.** *There is no cost for the services of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System. Job search seminars can be tailored to meet the needs of the audience. Workshops may be two or four hours.*

Workshops—*New Beginnings: Life After Job Loss*—are available to assist employees who are losing their jobs. The workshops focus on how to mount a job search and look for a job in a competitive environment. For more information about setting up one of these workshops, contact Dr. Jacquelyn P. Robinson, Workforce Development Specialist, at 334-844-5353 or [jrobinso@aces.edu](mailto:jrobinso@aces.edu).

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