

Be prepared when choosing to unretire

Work landscape has changed since you left it

[Tom Carney](#) / North Shore News

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Some people love retirement and some people don't.

If you're retired from the workforce and you want back in, this column is for you.

With a few exceptions, matadors and people who work with explosives come to mind, people who work longer live longer. Older workers, by virtue of their experience, know a thing or two about how people and processes work. You might not remember where you parked your car but if you can get your IT and human resources departments to talk to each other your employer will want to keep you around forever.

Often the hardest part of embarking on a second career is knowing where to begin. Let's be honest here. If you haven't looked at your resume for 30 years, it's out of date. If you don't know how to format a document, create a spreadsheet or find information on the web, your technology skills are out of date. And if you're not LinkedIn (a social media site), you're out of date.

Lots of older workers are clueless about the role social media plays in the workplace. Do you really need to post your profile and a photo on a multitude of social media sites? You do if you're serious about finding a job. Isn't that selfpromotional? Absolutely! Most employers are concerned that older employees won't want to learn new skills or have outdated technological skills. So, brush up on your computer skills, polish your presentation skills and have a great LinkedIn profile.

Next, decide what you want to do. Running your own business can be appealing but it's more than a full-time job. Are you able physically to take on that challenge? What about trying a completely different line of work? Sure, but know that bankers don't usually retire to become bakers.

Once you've made a decision about your encore career you're ready to tackle the biggest challenge of all: getting an interview. Age discrimination is real. Just be aware that it works both ways. Granted, you might have sweaters that are older than the staffer who interviews you. But if you don't want to be labelled, then the place to start is with yourself. That "kid" interviewing you has a job. You don't. And who knows, you just might be talking to your new boss. So, watch your body language and tone. Be prepared for two questions that may be new to you. When the employer tells you that their staff communicates largely by texting and uses digital media, they're really asking if you have the same skill set.

If I was interviewing for a job today I'd bring a smartphone and a laptop to the meeting. Question answered.

When you're asked what you see yourself doing in the next five years the employer wants to know if you're serious about returning to work. Your response should be that you're employable, committed and that you want to give something back.

If you make the decision to unretire, your age doesn't have to be a drawback. But you need to understand that

the workplace has changed a lot since you left.

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