

THE BOOMERS' GUIDE TO

GOOD WORK

An introduction to jobs
that make a difference

Ellen Freudenheim

Author of [Looking Forward: An Optimist's Guide to Retirement](#)

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MetLife Foundation and **Civic Ventures**

Baby boomers are **changing** the game...

Pioneers in a New Life Stage

Baby boomers start turning 60 in 2006. They are the healthiest, best educated, and largest generation of Americans ever to reach this age. Never before have so many had so much experience and—given the gains in longevity—so much time to use it.

Ask baby boomers what they want to do after they grow up, and many will say they want it all. They want to enjoy life. They want some of the exciting perks of retirement, like travel. They want time with family. And for a host of reasons, they want to continue working well past the chronological age when their own parents retired. Many hope to cycle between periods of work and leisure, reaping the best of both worlds.

But here's news: There's a deep strain of idealism among boomers in terms of what kind of work they might want to do. The 2005 MetLife Foundation/Civic Ventures *New Face of Work Survey* found that most want jobs in retirement that give them a "sense of purpose," that improve life in their communities, and that help those in need.

Experts warn of impending labor shortages in critical fields such as education, health care, and services for the poor and frail elderly. If the growing supply of boomers could fill jobs in these fields—well, that's a labor economist's dream!

Not so fast, you say? Is the American economy ready to offer a full menu of flexible, meaningful jobs to the millions of boomers who have an appetite for this type of work? And are you, with a life full of experience, ready to take the plunge into a new kind of work?

That's where this guide comes in. It can help you think about new directions and new ways of structuring your worklife.

Welcome to your own next chapter.



When you're using your business acumen to help people struggling with mental illness, get homeless youth off the street, or work with abused kids, while at the same time providing employment and wages, you may sometimes go home frustrated over work or finance problems. But you never go home wondering why you went to work in the first place; that's front and center all the time.

Jim McClurg, Social Enterprise Alliance



Consider Your Options

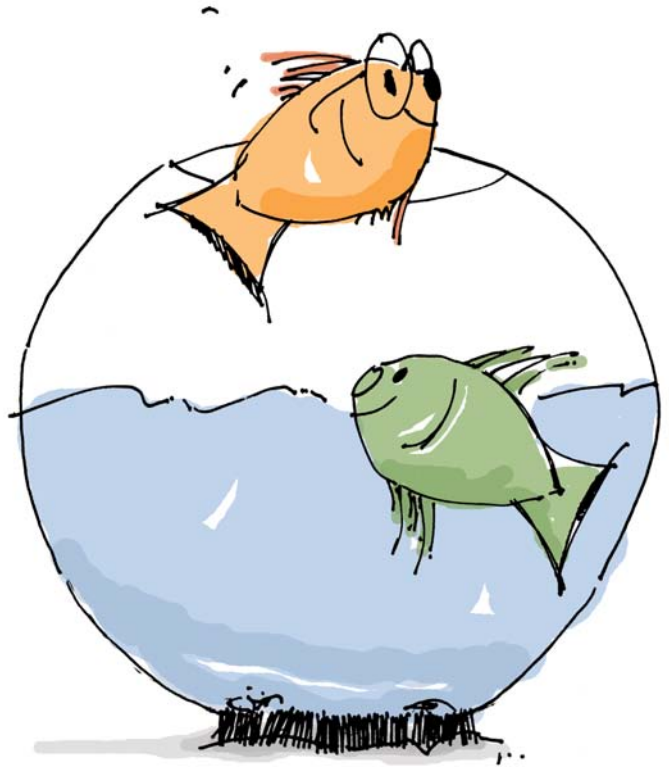
If you're interested in doing "good work" in the next phase of your worklife, be open to options in the same way a young adult might be. You could:

- ✓ Retrain and work full time in a new field
- ✓ Work part time in the same field you're in now
- ✓ Work at a lower salary, perhaps in a nonprofit or educational organization
- ✓ Discover an internship opportunity or a volunteer job that can lead to paid employment
- ✓ Work seasonally or on a project basis

To learn more about boomers' attitudes toward doing good work, see the MetLife Foundation/Civic Ventures *New Face of Work Survey*, at www.civicventures.org.

Think **outside** your fishbowl.

People of retirement age are going back to work part time, starting in different careers, retraining, volunteering, mentoring, and refocusing. They're bringing old hobbies and new interests into play. The so-called retirement years, once staid, are suddenly kaleidoscopic and alive with dynamic possibilities—including the notion of doing “good work.”



Reinventing your worklife does call for an act of imagination.

After years of being identified as a salesperson, lawyer, dentist, accountant, or office assistant, it's challenging to see yourself in a different light.

If you're fed up with your work and ready for a serious change, listen to your inner voice and seek out a new direction.

If you're satisfied with the content of your career, but want more freedom, fewer hours, or a different job, you may have to create your own opportunities. For instance, you might pitch a new flex-time work arrangement to an employer who has never considered one before.

To find meaningful work, and get paid to do it, you might need to get creative. In other words, think outside your fishbowl.

A third of Americans age 50 to 70 have looked into the type of job they might want in a second career.

1

There are many ways to redirect your life toward more meaningful work.

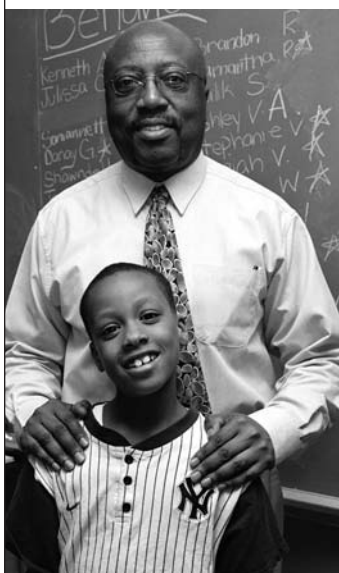
Career recyclers: You can use your expertise in one field to transition to the next. Like a salesperson who becomes a development director for a nonprofit organization. Or a truck driver who becomes a driver for disabled citizens. Or someone like Kaye Warren, a long-time computer specialist who launched a satisfying new career teaching computer science at a community college.

2

Career changers: The uncertainty and excitement of starting fresh has a certain appeal. For instance, Brigadier General Michael P. Mulqueen left the Marine Corps 14 years ago to take the top job at the Greater Chicago Food Depository, one of the nation's biggest hunger-relief outfits, and has attracted national attention for the ways he's improved, even revolutionized, services there. Or Carol Harris-Mannes, who gave up a long career in acting, went back to college, earned a master's degree, and became a social worker with The Actor's Fund in New York City.

3

Career makers: Other people figure out how to take a lifelong interest and parlay it into a job that helps others, provides some financial compensation, and offers the joy of being engaged in a favorite activity. Emily Kimball lived her dream at 62—to ride her bike across the United States—then joined the lecture circuit, earning a small income speaking to older adults about the importance of being active. Jo Manhart had a successful career working with a trade association. After leaving that career, she started an employment agency in her Missouri hometown to help older workers find jobs.



What works for **you**?

If you're thinking about switching to a new field, whether full time or part time, or you're considering work for reduced pay or even on a volunteer basis, here are some ways to get started.

Assess your skills and experience—think “transferable”

Know thyself. First, identify what experience and skills you can offer—and what kind of environment and challenge you're seeking.

Perhaps you're good with numbers, or good with people, or a great listener. Maybe you're a creative type or a logistics management whiz. Accounting, marketing, communication, database management, human resource development, fundraising, special events organizing, and information technology are useful in all kinds of jobs for the greater good. Whatever your skills, there may be an opportunity to use your experience in a new way that benefits others.

Find help finding yourself

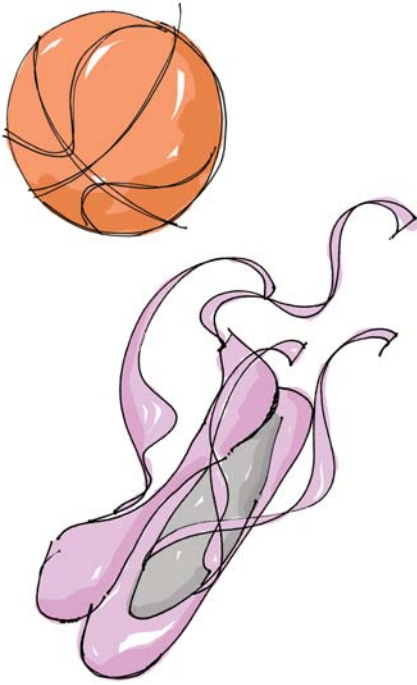
If you're having trouble visualizing a “new you,” access some information and help. Check AARP (www.aarp.org/money/careers/findingajob) or the U.S. Department of Labor, where you can obtain job descriptions and industry projections (www.careervoyages.gov/careerchangers-main.cfm).

Many college career offices offer a reasonably priced career-changer package, including standardized tests plus a session with a counselor. Or you can hire a career or life coach—but look for one who specializes in pre-retirement transition issues.

Six key questions

1. How would you like to spend the next 5 or 10 years?
2. Do you need to earn income? How much?
3. How would you like to make a contribution to your community?
4. Do you want to stay in the same field? Explore something new?
5. Do you want to start your own organization or work for an existing one?
6. Are you willing and able to go back to school or get other training?





Good reads

Don't Retire, REWIRE!

by Jeri Sedlar and Rick Miners
(Alpha Books, 2002)

From Making a Profit to Making a Difference by Richard M. King
(Planning/Communications, 2000)

The Harvard Business School Guide to Careers in the Nonprofit Sector

by Stephanie Lowell (Harvard Business School Press, 2000)

Looking Forward: An Optimist's Guide to Retirement

by Ellen Freudenheim
(Stewart, Tabori and Chang, 2004)

My Time: Making the Most of the Rest of Your Life

by Abigail Trafford
(Basic Books, 2004)

Prime Time: How Baby Boomers Will Revolutionize Retirement and Transform America

by Marc Freedman
(Public Affairs, 1999)

Search: Winning Strategies to Get Your Next Job in the Nonprofit World

by Larry Slesinger
(Piemonte Press, 2004)

Maybe you can't be a ballet dancer, but you can dance

If you secretly longed to be a ballet dancer or basketball star all those years while you ran the family widget business, you're not too old to do some good with your dream. The could-have-been ballet dancer might work with older dancers; the wanna-be basketball star might fundraise for a youth athletic league.

Nibble before you bite

Take your time and try a few things before leaping headlong into a commitment. Perhaps you can find an internship or work part time as a temp on an exploratory basis. Even within the same field of interest, say hunger relief, one nonprofit agency can differ enormously from another.

If at first you don't succeed...well, be flexible

If you don't connect with a paid position, consider volunteering as a steppingstone to a job. Of course, there are no promises in such an arrangement.

Tip: Be sure to let your boss and colleagues know you're seeking paid employment.

Think about compensation in a new way

You'll face trade-offs in building a new life based, in part, on service. Some people trade the freedom of early retirement for a job with health benefits.

Others trade a high salary for the chance to work on interesting problems and the rewards of spending time doing something important. If you're concerned about salaries in the nonprofit world, check out these publications: *The NonProfit Times Annual Salary Survey, 2003* (www.nptimes.com); *Compensation in Nonprofit Organizations* by Abbot and Langer (www.abbott-langer.com), and the *Guidestar Compensation Report* (www.guidestar.org).

The Value of Experience? Priceless!

If you're of a certain age, you may worry that you can't compete in the marketplace, especially if you're switching gears or fields. So repackage your age—as an asset. Life experience, and the wisdom that comes through living, are strengths in the workplace.

Corny as it sounds, time is a great teacher. You've experienced success, failure, and challenge. You've managed family matters (of relatives older and younger), dealt with financial issues (both good news and bad), handled medical problems and life transitions, coped with rapid technological change, and followed the news for decades in a rapidly shrinking world.

Precisely what are the benefits of your years of experience? If anyone asks, you can rattle off:

- ✓ Reliability
- ✓ Good judgment
- ✓ Problem-solving ability
- ✓ Ability to navigate a crisis
- ✓ Experience in negotiating compromise
- ✓ Ability to listen
- ✓ Ability to assess cost-benefit trade-offs
- ✓ Comfort level in working with all types of personalities
- ✓ A sense of responsibility
- ✓ An established identity
- ✓ A sense of purpose

In sum, people of different ages also bring to a team different and valuable life experiences, perspectives, and ideas. You add a positive, new dimension to a diverse workforce.

Where in the nonprofit world can you make a difference?

Help wanted!

600,000 nurses.

Millions of teachers.

Plus mentors, librarians, accountants, technology experts, chief executives, project managers, drivers, home health aides, yoga instructors, and more.

If you're leaning toward work in a nonprofit organization, there are literally more than a million choices. There are about 1.8 million nonprofit organizations in the U.S.—and no two are exactly alike.

Finding the right match

With years of work and life experience, and a rolodex of contacts under your belt, you might be well situated to help with the meat-and-potatoes work of any nonprofit—fundraising, management, and board and program development. Experience in public relations, marketing, and special events is in demand. If you have expertise in such fields as government relations, accounting, proposal writing, or strategic planning, you might be able to find work in a medium-size or large nonprofit.

If you have a background in technology, law, social work, or are fluent in a foreign language, you might be able to translate your experience into efforts to assist children, recent immigrants, the elderly, or those living in poverty.

Business owners can put their experience to use, too. In recent years, thousands of nonprofits have sought to reduce their dependency on charitable gifts by starting for-profit businesses such as cleaning services, publishing houses, cafes, rehabilitation housing, and light manufacturing. For details, see www.se-alliance.org.

First things first: Start by identifying the issues you care about and the organizations that address them. Then zero in on how your experience might help advance the group's mission. Most nonprofit organizations have web sites and list job openings online. It may be obvious, but checking an organization's web site is one way to stay abreast of openings.



About nonprofits

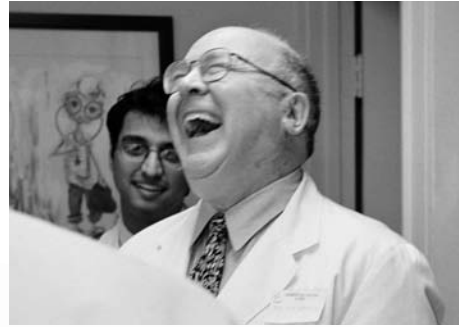
Get acquainted with the nonprofit sector:

- Check out Bridgestar, www.bridgestar.org; Guide Star, www.guidestar.org; Independent Sector, www.independentsector.org; and the National Council of Nonprofit Associations, www.ncna.org.
- Read *The NonProfit Times*, www.nptimes.com.
- Take a course on nonprofit organizations at your local university, community college, or online.



Go to page 15 for online job listings.

Good work in health care.



Many health professions are among the top job growth areas in America, which explains why the American Hospital Association actively encourages hospitals to recruit midlife career changers.

You don't have to be a doctor or nurse to work in health care, of course. There are more than a hundred areas of specialization—from music and art therapy to occupational health and safety—all generally known as the “allied health professions.”

In response to health care labor shortages, new opportunities are opening up for streamlined training, including train-while-you-work positions.

For instance, at Cozby-Germany Hospital in Grand Saline, Texas, employees are offered the opportunity to advance their skills and education when the hospital needs employees in higher-level jobs. They don't set age limits, but they do consider whether an employee will be long-term. Those who make at least a two-year commitment, and live up to it, don't have to pay the hospital back for financial assistance provided in the form of loans.

There's strong demand for numerous positions that require one, two, or three years of training, including “imaging technologists” who work with X-rays, MRIs, mammograms, and other imaging diagnostics; clinical lab workers; registered nurses;

For information on fast-track programs in which you can train to enter the health field, contact the American Hospital Association or your local hospital.

medical assistants; and homecare attendants for the disabled or elderly. Health institutions also need non-clinical workers, for instance, in information technology and record keeping.

In some areas and occupations, you may be able to find part-time work at a hospital while participating in a clinical training program for a new career.

And finally, if you have worked in the health care industry in the past, you might consider returning. In Atlanta, Emory University Hospital has established re-entry programs offering a fully paid eight-week training program for qualified employees who agree to work for the hospital for one or two years.

“There’s a need for workers of every type in health care, both clinical and non-clinical.”

Debra Stock
Vice President,
American Hospital Association

Resources

Occupational Outlook Handbook
www.bls.gov/oco

From the U.S. Department of Labor; includes job descriptions and other useful details about health care jobs.

The American Medical Association (AMA)
www.ama-assn.org

Includes annual guide, *Health Professions Career and Education Directory*, plus a list of health care professional associations, salaries, and training requirements (www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/2322.html). Free monthly *Health Professions E-letter* (www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/2302.html) covers educational trends and career issues for more than 60 health-related professions.

Discover Nursing
www.discovernursing.com

Information on jobs and training programs in nursing.

Health Care Workforce
www.healthcareworkforce.org

“Ideas in Action” links to dozens of innovative programs.

American Society for Healthcare Human Resources Administration
www.ashhra.org

Information on training, plus links to postings for jobs in administrative and clinical health care.

Health Professions Network
www.healthpronet.org

Monthly newsletter features different allied health professions.

Good work in **education.**



The nation is in need of teachers. The shortage is most acute in cities. And everywhere, there's great need for teachers in math, sciences, and special education.

Why teach? Experienced teachers tell pollsters that the single biggest reason to teach is the pleasure of working with young people. Achieving success with young people is incredibly fulfilling. And, as a mature adult, you have the life experience to work with parents, knowing that their attitude and involvement can make a big difference in a child's education.

If you have a bachelor's degree—in any field—you could qualify for an alternative teacher preparation program that enables you to begin teaching, with salary and benefits, within a short time. But don't underestimate the need to learn more about classroom management, local curricula requirements, and evaluation of student progress.

If you're going to make the commitment to teaching, presumably you'd like to be able to continue this new career for awhile. Research suggests that mid-career transfers into teaching can benefit by getting a good preview of the job. To get a flavor for teaching, try it out first. Sign up with your local school district to become a substitute teacher. Learn as much as you can about the school community where you'd like to work—the culture, the students' backgrounds and academic profiles, what kinds of formal and informal supports exist, and how much help and supervision you're likely to receive.

In addition to full-time K-12 teaching and part-time subbing, there are plenty of other options for those interested in educating young people. There's a need for daycare providers and teachers, staff members in after-school programs, teaching assistants (particularly those who are interested in working with special education students), tutors (paid and unpaid), and

adjunct professors who teach a course or two at a local university or community college. Check into options in your community.

If you'd like to tutor or mentor elementary school students, Experience Corps® may be for you. Now in more than a dozen cities, Experience Corps trains, places, and supports teams of Americans over 55 to work in hard-hit schools, helping kids learn to read.

In 2004, 43 states offered fast-track, alternative teacher certification. One out of every five teachers in New York, New Jersey, and Texas entered the profession on this track.

For details, check out *Alternative Routes to Teacher Certification*, a free booklet from the U.S. Department of Education at www.ed.gov/admins/tchrqual/recruit/altroutes/index.html.

Resources

American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence

www.abcte.org/passport.html

Provides a "Passport to Teaching" certification for individuals interested in entering teaching, including retirees.

Experience Corps

www.experiencecorps.org

For Americans over 55 who want to tutor and mentor kids in underserved schools. Stipends available.

Federal Transition to Teaching program

www.transitiontoteaching.org

Operated by Howard University to recruit teachers for the Washington, D.C., public schools.

Troops to Teachers

www.jobs2teach.doded.mil

Funded by the Department of Defense to help military retirees enter teaching.

National Center for Alternative Certification

1-866-778-2784 (toll-free)

www.teach-now.org

A clearinghouse for information about alternative routes to certification, funded by the U.S. Department of Education.

National Teacher Recruitment Clearinghouse

www.recruitingteachers.org/channels/clearinghouse

Resources for career changers interested in becoming teachers.



Good work in **elder care.**



Resources

National Family Caregivers Association

www.thefamilycaregiver.org

Resources, information, and contacts on caregiving.

Generations United

www.gu.org

The nation's largest database of intergenerational programs.

Temple University Center for Intergenerational Learning

www.temple.edu/cil

Resources about model intergenerational programs, volunteer opportunities, and networking.

One-on-one work with a disabled or impaired older individual can be tremendously rewarding. This is a realm in which your own judgment, life experience, patience, and humor can make a real difference in someone's life. Indeed, many midlife men and women who have informally provided care for a family member discover in themselves an aptitude for this kind of interpersonal care and grow interested in it as a new career.

You'd be right if you assumed that this area of work might entail meal preparation, shopping, making appointments, and providing transportation to and from doctors' appointments, as well as companionship and personal care.

There may also be a place in the world of elder care for other kinds of contributors: storytellers, oral historians to record the memories of older folks, yoga teachers and line dance instructors, not to mention people who can teach computer skills. With the success of pilot projects that bring children and mature adults together in schools and daycare centers, intergenerational programs may also generate jobs for retired grade school teachers, instructional assistants, librarians, and psychologists.

Welcome to the challenge of finding good work in the second half of your life. Opportunity awaits those who seek it. With creativity and persistence, you, too, can do well by doing good!

Online job listings

Paid jobs, internships, and volunteer opportunities in the nonprofit sector

Bridgestar

www.bridgestar.org

Job listings of senior positions in nonprofit organizations.

Charitychannel.com Career Search Online

www.charitychannel.com

Job listings that can be sorted by job title, organization, or location.

The Chronicle of Philanthropy's Philanthropy Careers

<http://philanthropy.com/jobs>

Listing of jobs primarily in foundations.

Community Career Center

www.nonprofitjobs.org

Searchable job openings in nonprofit organizations.

ExecSearches.com

www.execsearches.com

Executive, fundraising, and mid-level jobs in government, health care, education, and other nonprofit sectors.

Energize, Inc.

www.energizeinc.com/placements.html

Listing of jobs and internships related to volunteer management.

Idealist.org

www.idealist.org

Lists jobs and internships in nonprofit organizations, plus tips on finding work in the nonprofit sector.

Job Finders Online

www.planningcommunications.com/jf/index.htm

Includes guidebooks on government and nonprofit jobs.

Monster.com

<http://diversity.monster.com/olwo>

Large general job site including special section with advice and resources for older workers.

National Organizers Alliance

www.noacentral.org

Job listings in organizations that work for social, economic, and environmental justice.

Nonprofit Oyster

www.nonprofitoyster.com

Searchable job listings and a place to post your resume.

OpportunityKnocks.org

www.opportunityknocks.org

Search for nonprofit jobs by keyword or multiple criteria.

Philanthropy News Digest Job Corner

www.fdncenter.org/pnd/jobs

Openings at U.S.-based foundations, grantmaking public charities, corporate grantmaking programs, and nonprofit organizations.

Senior Job Bank

www.seniorjobbank.com

Geared to help older adults find flexible, satisfying jobs.

Social Enterprise Alliance

www.se-alliance.org

Information, contacts, and events about nonprofit organizations with business ventures.

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MetLife Foundation

MetLife Foundation was established in 1976 by MetLife to carry on its long-standing tradition of corporate contributions and community involvement. Grants support health, education, civic, and cultural programs. In aging, the Foundation funds programs that promote healthy aging and address issues of caregiving, intergenerational activities, mental fitness, and volunteerism. The Foundation also supports research on Alzheimer's disease through its Awards for Medical Research program. More information about the Foundation is available at www.metlife.org.

Civic Ventures

Civic Ventures is a think tank and incubator, generating ideas and inventing programs to help society achieve the greatest return on experience. Learn more at www.civicventures.org.

Civic Ventures

139 Townsend Street, Suite 505
San Francisco, CA 94107

tel 415.430.0141

web www.civicventures.org

About the author

Ellen Freudenheim is the author of *Looking Forward: An Optimist's Guide to Retirement*. A lifestyle guide for boomers, *Looking Forward* has been recommended by *The Wall Street Journal* and ranks among the best-selling retirement books. For details, go to www.lookingforward2.com. Freudenheim is also a guest columnist for Retirement Weekly, a service of

MarketWatch from DOWJONES, and a frequent guest on national television and radio news programs. A speaker and activist, Freudenheim is author of six books, including *Healthspeak*, a dictionary defining 2,000 health care terms. She holds master's degrees from the University of Chicago and Columbia University School of Public Health.

This guide is online.

Go to www.civicventures.org.

Pass it on to others who are looking for good work.